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

INTERVIEW OF: DUSTIN THOMPSON

Wednesday, November 16, 2022
Washington, D.C.

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

Present: Representative Kinzinger.
Appearances:

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

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

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

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

Thank you.

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

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

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

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

Thank you, Mr. Stewart.

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

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

We ask you that you provide complete answers based on your best recollection of events. If a question is not clear, please ask us to repeat it. If you don't know the
answer, please say so. You may only refuse to answer a question to preserve a privilege recognized by the select committee, like the Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

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

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

Do you understand?

Mr. Thompson. Yeah.

Great.

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

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

Do you understand?

Mr. Thompson. Yes.

Thank you.

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

However, we will not disclose the contents of what we discuss today until properly authorized for release by the chair and the rest of the committee.
Do you understand?

Mr. Thompson. Yes.

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

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

Do you understand?

Mr. Thompson. Yes.

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

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

All good?

Mr. Thompson. Yes.

Mr. Stewart. Yes, sir.

Great.

EXAMINATION

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

Q How long have you lived there?
A Ohio all my life.

Q And what is your educational background?
A I graduated from the Ohio State University 2008 or '09. I think it was '09.

Q And what do you do for a living?
A Previously, I was doing furniture repair. I've kind of bounced around; I've done several jobs. But that was my last one I was doing up until trial.

Q And throughout the time in question -- we're talking about 2020 into 2021 -- what were you doing for your career?
A I was doing pest control up until March of 2020, and then I was laid off on March 17th. Then I was unemployed until January 9th of '22.

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

Q Was that related to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic?
A I believe so. Yeah.

Q Understood.

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

A You said during 2020?
Q Yeah.
A Yeah. I would say, like, pretty, like -- I don’t know -- like, pretty close, I guess, following stuff, like, daily news and stuff, listening to talk radio when I was working.
Q Understood. That's helpful.

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

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

Q Okay. That's helpful.

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

A Yeah.

Q So, first, 4chan?

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

Q Okay. 8kun?

A No.

Q No. Facebook?

A No.

Q Parler?

A No.

Q Reddit?

A Yeah, I've been on Reddit.

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

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

Q Okay.

A Like, main stories, I guess.

Q Okay, got it. Telegram?

A No.
Q TikTok?
A I’ve been on it, but for wasting time. Nothing --
Q Understood.
A -- productive happens on there.
Q Twitter?
A Yeah, I would be on Twitter. I followed a few people. No one -- I mean, I followed Trump, I guess, but, like, outside that, nothing really, normally, political.
Q Okay. What about Gettr?
A No.
Q TheDonald.win?
A No.
Q Gab?
A No.
Q Okay. Discord?
A No.
Q Okay. There was, like, Qmap.pub was, like, a QAnon website that I’d have, like, posts about QAnon drops, they were called, like -- and I would check those out.
Q Could you say the name of that website again?
A Qmap.pub.
Q Okay. Qmap.pub. Okay.
Q So would you say you subscribed to QAnon beliefs throughout 2020?
A I mean, I found it interesting. I don’t really see, like, an exact belief system. I feel like it was more asking questions and, you know, letting people come to their own conclusions. But, yeah, I guess, you could say I read them and tried to make sense of it.
Q When would you say you started engaging with QAnon theories? Perhaps
a better term than "beliefs."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Q How do you mean?

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

Q Aware of the problem?

A Yeah, the posts. Yeah.

Q Oh, the posts. Okay. Okay.
And what about his role in this sort of dynamic you described as the deep state controlling the government? As the head of the government, where does he fit in?

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

Q Okay.

A Yeah.

Q Understood.

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

A No.

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

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

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

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

A Yeah. I did.

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

A To be on the side of good.

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

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

Q Were there particular issues where you thought he was the underdog or
being asked that really motivated you to support him?

A Nothing stands out, no.

Q Okay. That's very helpful.

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

But, seeing none --

[REDACTED] Not right now. Thanks.

[REDACTED] Thank you.

BY [REDACTED]

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

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

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

A No.

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

A No. I just remember, like, the 2 weeks to flatten the curve, you know, and I
thought that was, like, a good idea at the time, but -- no.

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

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

Q Okay. Got it.

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

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

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

A No.

Q That's helpful.

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

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

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

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

A  No.

Q  Why did you want to get away from it?

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

Q  Understood.

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

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

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

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

A  No.

Q  No.  Okay.

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

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

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

A  No.
Q So, towards the middle of the summer, as these protests were really heating up, there were several groups that became more prominently involved in counter-protests that we already mentioned: Black Lives Matter, and I mentioned the possibility of antifa that was mentioned by President Trump quite a bit, but there were also documented instances of the Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers and other militia groups like the Three Percenters kind of being in and around these events.

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

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

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

A No.

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

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

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

A Right.

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

A I mean, it's -- it was concerning, I guess. It is -- like, I was just -- like, I felt like the division in America was, you know, at, like, a bad place, probably the worst it's been in a while. So --
Q  Uh-huh.
A  -- that was my takeaway from it, really.
Q  And, at that point, do you remember anything salient from QAnon forums talking about the protests and the ensuing unrest?
A  Nothing particular, no.
Q  So, moving into the fall of 2020, do you recall the first time you started to hear concerns about the potential for election fraud?
A  Yeah, I don't remember exactly, but I remember -- I don't remember exactly when it was, but I remember hearing things like, "Yeah, if I don't win, there was fraud," or something like that from Trump.
Q  Did you have a view on -- talking about before the election -- did you have a view on these claims that the President was making?
A  No. I just thought it was kind of talk. Like, I didn't -- no.
Q  All right. So, by the time election day 2020 came around, did you believe that the election was going to be stolen?
A  Not -- not -- no, not the day of.
Q  So when did you start to believe that the election may have been stolen?
A  I guess it would've been, like, the next day. Like, I just remember it was, like, 3:00 a.m. and they were like, you know, "We're gonna stop counting votes. Everyone go to bed." And then, like, at 6:00 a.m., I got up and it was like, "Biden won the President." And I was like, "I thought you were gonna stop counting the votes."
Q  So did you watch President Trump's speech that night, the early morning of the day after election day?
A  I don't believe so.
Q  Okay. So, generally, you would say that your beliefs started to shift when
you saw the change in ballot totals the morning after?

A  Correct.

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

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

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

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

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

A  No. Not at that time, no.

Could I jump in?

Sure. Go ahead.

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

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

So I was wondering, you know, trying to square what is asking you about here, how much of an influence did President Trump have on your beliefs that the election was stolen?
A: I mean, I'd say quite a bit. You know, like, he was the one saying it, and that's where I was getting all my information from, basically, about the election, was from, you know, Trump and the news, you know. But, basically, when he said it, I believed it to be true.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A  Like, at the time? Like --

Q  Yeah.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Q  Uh-huh. Did you believe President Trump had been targeted for defeat by political enemies?
A: Yeah, I guess you could say that.

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

A: No. I felt like it was already decided and it was gonna happen regardless.

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

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

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

A: Yeah.

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

A: Right.

Q: Okay.

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

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

Q: So, obviously, there was a lot of organizing on the ground surrounding the
election results. And I'm curious if you participated in any activities to protest the results after election day.

A No.

Q Talking about November, December.

A No.

Q Nothing?

A No.

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

A No.

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

A No.

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

A No.

Q What about the Three Percenters?

A No.

Q Groypers?

A No.

Q No.

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

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

Q And did you think that there was any prominent threat posed by antifa in
the, sort of, post-election moment?

A No.

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

A No.

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

A I'm sorry. Could you repeat that?

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

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

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

A Correct.

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

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

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

A It was just the day before or 2 days before. It was pretty last-minute,
You mentioned that President Trump said it was gonna be a wild time. There was a tweet on December 19th where President Trump first mentioned January 6th and said, "Be there, will be wild!" Do you recall seeing that tweet?

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

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

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

Yeah, it does.

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

No.

Can I just ask, --

Sure.

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

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

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

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

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

Q: So, obviously, the event was branded "Save America." "Stop the steal" was also part of the branding online for the event. Did that in any way conflict with your idea that it would be a retirement party?

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

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

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

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

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

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

A: Just to be with like-minded people and, you know, just to have a good time.
Q  Were you concerned about the potential for violence?
A  No.
Q  And why did you think it was important for you to be there?
A  Because I felt like it was, like, the last -- like, my only chance to see Trump
and, like -- so, like, the last chance to kind of see him and be around his supporters,
people like me. So I went.
Q  Understood.

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

[redacted] Just a quick one.

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

Were any of those thoughts in your mind ahead of January 6th? Did you
believe -- like, since you believed the election was stolen, did you hope that this rally
would do something to, you know, prevent the end of American democracy?
A  No.
Q  Okay.

[redacted] Thank you, [redacted]

[redacted] BY [redacted]

Q  Mr. Thompson, when did you actually leave from Columbus to travel to D.C.?
A  It was the night of the 5th. Like --
Q  Okay. So -- oh, sorry. Go ahead.
A Like, I believe it was, like -- it was late, about 6:00 or 7:00 p.m.
Q So you said you had decided a couple of days beforehand. And then you just left that night before?
A Yeah, if not -- I mean, I think, really, kind of decided it the day before, on the 5th, to go. And it was just kind of figuring out -- like, I was gonna go, maybe, with two people, and then it just ended up being one other person. And we left that night of the 5th.
Q And who was that other person?
A That drove, was Robert, my co-defendant.

Mr. Stewart. What's his last name?

Mr. Thompson. Lyon.

Q Robert Lyon?
A Yeah.
Q And how did you know Mr. Lyon?
A We have been friends for a while. Kind of met through another friend, friend of a friend.
Q And did Mr. Lyon express similar ideas to you about what January 6th was?
A Yeah, I believe so. He wanted to go kind of because he thought it would be a good time.
Q Whose idea was it to travel to D.C.?
A I believe it was my idea to go.
Q And did you end up staying in D.C. or somewhere else surrounding?
A I believe we stayed in Maryland.
Q Okay. And you arrived the night of the 5th. Did you do anything when
you got there?

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

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

A Not offhand, no.

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

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

Q Okay.

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

A I did not.

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

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

Q Did you bring any equipment with you?

A No.

Q There was no protective gear?

A No.

Q No vests, helmets, anything of that sort?

A No.

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

Mr. Thompson. I had found a vest at the Eclipse rally and put it on at that time
before walking to the Capitol, but I didn't bring it with me.

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

Q  Okay. So you found that the next day?
A  Correct.

Q  We'll get to that in a few.

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

A  Yeah, I was aware of that.

Q  Did you have any awareness of the Vice President's role in overseeing Congress that next day?
A  Not until the day of the 6th did I know that he, Mike Pence, played a role in it.

Q  Okay.
A  I wasn't aware of that.

Q  That's helpful.

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

A  Correct.

Q  All right.

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

Mr. Stewart. We could even do, like, a 5-minute break, if you wanted to do that.
Great. So let's say we'll go back on the record at 9:55?

Mr. Stewart. Okay.

All right.

Thanks very much, Mr. Thompson.

Mr. Thompson. Yep.

[Recess.]

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

BY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A At some point, we had circled around, and, like, we could see the stage and saw, like, the security magna-things to go through, but we didn’t wanna go through those. Just seemed like a hassle; there was this huge line. So we just kind of stayed out and watched it on the screen and listened to it on the speakers.
Q: So you did not want to go through the magnetometers.
A: Yeah, there was a line, so it seemed like a hassle, you know, waiting in the line.
Q: Could you describe the crowd, what the crowd was like outside of the magnetometers?
A: Large. There was a lot of people.
Q: What was the mood like?
A: It was -- people were happy, joyous.
Q: And, at that point, did you hear people talking about the possibility that you still could stop the steal?
A: I think people were saying it, but I -- I guess I don't know what they meant by it.
Q: So, when you kind of got into the crowd on the morning of the 6th before the President was speaking, you still were under the impression this was a retirement party, as you said?
A: Like -- I mean, I felt like I knew something was gonna happen, but I just didn't know what. And that's kind of why I came to it. It just seemed like something was gonna happen, and I just wanted to be there for it. I didn't know what it was, but I felt like it was an important -- important day.
Q: That idea that it was an important day, that was what motivated you to come in the first place to Washington?
A: Like, yeah, you can say that, yeah. I believe that.
Q: And you said "something important, you just didn't know what." Could you expand on that a little bit? What kind of things did you think could happen?
A: Like, I really didn't have any idea. I just felt like -- I just kind of had that
feeling that something was gonna happen, but I didn't know what.

Q  Something related to the election?

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

Q  Mr. Thompson?

A  Yeah?

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

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

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

A  Yeah.  The crowd seemed that way, yes.

Q  Did you see anyone who appeared to be armed?

A  I did not.

Q  Anyone in bulletproof vests, helmets, tactical gear?

A  Not at the -- not at the Ellipse.

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

A  No.

Can I just jump in here real quick?

Sure.  Go ahead.

Q  Back to the magnetometers, Mr. Thompson, did you see people, like, discarding backpacks or putting their clothing or anything else outside of the
magnetometers before they went through?

A Yeah.

Q Did you see a lot of them?

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

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

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

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

A I didn't hear them talk about that.

Q Okay.

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

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

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

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

Q Great. Thank you very much.

A Yep.

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

A No.
Q Did it ever occur to you that there could be weapons that could not go through the magnetometers in those bags?
A No. I felt like -- I had never been to anything where the President was at before, and so I just felt like, you know, it's the President and he was just very cautious about, you know, not letting anything in.
Q Uh-huh.
And you said that you picked up a bulletproof vest at some point in the morning. Did that occur during this period when you were outside the magnetometers?
A It was after the speech, and everyone was kind of going towards the Capitol. We, like, circled back through the crowd and waited to see if anyone was gonna take it, basically, and we didn't see anyone. It was laying next to a dumpster. And we kind of said that, like, no one's gonna take this, and so we just took it.
Q Okay. Well, I do want to get back to that, but we can talk about the speech first.
So did you hear any other speakers on the stage before President Trump?
A I don't believe so.
Q And can you describe your reaction to President Trump's speech generally?
A I mean, it seemed uplifting. It seemed, like, kind of similar to what I've heard him say in the past, just -- I do remember him saying, like, that he was gonna go to the Capitol and -- but it was after his speech that I asked people, I was like, "Are you going to the Capitol?" And they said, "Yes." And then I just kind of followed the group there. But I remember that from his speech.
Q So you were surprised to hear the President talking about going to the Capitol?
A Yeah. I was. I didn't know that that was a -- that was happening.

Q So what impact did those remarks have on you?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Do you recall those particular remarks?

A Um --

Mr. Stewart. Remember the tone [inaudible].

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

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

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

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

A Yeah. I did.

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

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

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

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

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

A No. Not at that time, no.

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

A No.
Honestly, I just thought it was cool. I didn't have one. I just -- and Robert was wearing a backpack, and so I just put it on. But, just because I didn't have one, I think that's why I grabbed it.

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

A | I had a sweatshirt, you know, a hoodie.
Q | So, if you were gonna embark on a walk -- it's not the shortest walk in the world from the Ellipse to the Capitol. Bulletproof vest, added weight. Why would you pick that up in the midst of all this hubbub if you thought there was no risk of violence?
A | I mean, I also kind of saw it as, like, better to be safe than sorry, you know, like -- so I just put it on.

Q | Could you expand on that? Why did you have to be safe? From whom?
A | I mean, it felt like -- kind of like the tension was rising and, you know, that, like, something was gonna happen. So I just thought, you know, I should maybe just be prepare in case anything happened.

Q | And did you mean tension between protesters? Tension between protesters and law enforcement? Protesters and other groups?
A | No, I would just say just the crowd seemed more, like, more energized and angry after the speech and when they were walking. And then, when I cut back through all of them, like, they just were more, like -- seemed, like, on a mission to get where they were going.

Q | Do you think they also thought they were following the President's orders? Is that your sense of the crowd?
A | Yeah.
Q | So, in a way, these people who were angry were on the same mission that
you felt you were on?

A  Correct.

Q  And what did you understand them to be doing?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A  I wanted to see what was gonna happen. I wasn't really scared by violence,
you know. I just wanted to go see what was gonna happen.
[10:12 a.m.]

BY [Redacted]:

Even if that something was violent?

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

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

A No.

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

A No.

Q Anything about Congress in general or Speaker Pelosi?

A I mean, people were just angry. I heard some chants of, you know, like, "Get Pelosi" or "Where's Pelosi"; you know what I mean? But it just seemed like everyone was just angry at Congress, Members as a whole.

I'll note for the record that Representative Kinzinger has joined the Webex.

Welcome, Mr. Kinzinger. Feel free to jump in if you have any questions, obviously.

So, Mr. Thompson, the anger then was driven by President Trump's speech, or was it natural, you know, before the speech that just kind of happened?

Mr. Thompson. No. I would say it came from his speech and then just kind of transgressed into the walking to the Capitol.
Thank you.

Thank you.

And welcome, Mr. Kinzinger.

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

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

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

A Correct.

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

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

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

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

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

Q Exactly.

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

Q And you mentioned that, while you were marching, you heard chants of "Get Pelosi," "Get Nancy," "Where's Nancy?" Is that correct?
A Yeah. And it was -- seemed like it was more directed towards Pelosi, if I had to say like any one Member of Congress or the Vice President, like that would seemed like the kind of one person people were focused on from where I was at.

Q And did that raise any concerns for you?

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

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

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

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

A Uh-huh.

Q And you believed that he would be there?

A Yes, I did. Yup.

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

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

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

A Yeah. Yes, it did.

Q Can you expand on that?

A I was pretty much going there already, but that kind of re-enforced it, I guess
you could say. But, yeah.

Q  Re-enforced the importance of what he had said to you?
A  Re-enforced the idea of going to the Capitol.

Q  And, again, this was going to the Capitol with the goal of trying to influence Congress, correct?
A  Correct.

Q  And the Vice President?
A  Correct.

Q  So could you walk us through what happened as you got to the Capitol complex itself?
A  Yeah. Like, I remember walking up and like talking with some people. And I was, like, asked -- I was like, isn't there going to be like security, or you know -- I think I said fencing or something.

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

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

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

At that point, why stay? What did you think was going on?
A: I mean, I just wanted to see for myself what was happening.

Q: What was it that you thought was happening?

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

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

A: I did not.

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

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

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

A: I was.

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

A: Not at that time. I was still just walking, and I didn’t see any violence at that time.

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

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

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

A: Yeah. No.

Q: You didn’t think they were allowed to break the windows?
Q: Did you believe that this is what President Trump was hoping would happen or wanted to happen when he told you to march to the Capitol?
A: I guess -- I assume so because it just seemed -- I would just say, like, almost like natural -- like these people were doing was -- I mean, it just seemed like it was happening like -- I don't know if it was because they wanted to do it or if they felt that it's what Trump wanted, but it was just -- it was what was happening.

Q: So you thought that the movement towards the building was the organic movement of the crowd?
A: Correct.

Q: And how did you get close to the building yourself?
A: Like, walking up?
Q: Yeah. Do you remember where you walked up, things like that?
A: I just -- I was in the grass, and I don't know like which side of the building or anything.

Q: But were the doors open when you approached it?
A: No. No. When I -- after I saw the people on the window washer, there was a door to my left that I just kind of opened and people started going into it.

Q: So this is below -- a few stories below the people who are breaking the windows?
A: Yeah. This is on the ground level.

Q: And about what time did this occur?
A: It was after 2:30. I would say 2:30, a little after.

Q: And why did you make the decision to enter the building?
A: I just saw people going in and followed them in.
Q Was it your belief that you were still following President Trump's directive when you entered the building?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Q Why did you feel compelled to do it anyway?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Go ahead.

I'm sorry. I didn't have a question.

Okay.

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

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

Q Why were you recording things on your phone?

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

Q What was going through your mind as you entered the Parliamentarian's
office and saw other individuals ransacking it?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A  Yeah. I guess so, yeah.

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

A  Right.

Q  It was a bottle of liquor and something else?

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

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

A  Yeah. So I took the bottle liquor out, took a sip of it, and gave it to Robert
who I believe put it in his backpack and then told him that he needed to come in and see
what was going on in there. So me and him went back in. I was --

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

A  Right.

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

A  I hadn't seen any.

Mr. Stewart. Explain to him.

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

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

Mr. Thompson. Uh-uh.

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

Mr. Thompson. Right.

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

Understood. Thank you, Mr. Stewart.

Q  So, essentially, both times you entered, you only went into that first hallway
near the doorway?
A Yeah. And I feel like -- well, the second time, I saw like further down the hallway that there was armed guards and like geared up like with riot gear. And I believe those other offices were kind of like plain clothes officers, but they were probably preventing people from going further down the hallway. But, yeah, I just went in the door and went -- right in the first door on the right was the office, and so I didn't see them down the hallway further. I guess --

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

A Right.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A Not while I was inside there, no. I don't remember really anything of the conversation. There was just a lot of yelling.
Q Okay. Chanting "USA," that kind of thing?
A Yup.
Q Were people expressing support for President Trump when they were in the building?
A Yeah.
Q Through chants or --
A Yeah.
Q Can you explain how?
A I mean, I feel like just -- I mean, it's kind of hard I guess, but just by being there, and like you knew they were supporting Trump and what they thought they were doing was probably what Trump wanted them to do.
Q Is that still kind of what you were thinking as you were in the building the second time?
A Yeah. Like I said, I don't know what I was thinking really, but I was just -- yeah. It's hard to say. I don't really know. Still working through that.
Q And you mentioned earlier, just ticking through the topics that we had discussed, on your way to the Capitol, there was some conversation about the Vice President and some conversation about Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Did either of those officials get mentioned by folks while you were in the Capitol?
A I think I heard some people saying, you know, "Where is Pence" or "Where is Pelosi," but, I mean, there was just a lot going on, but, I mean, people were saying a lot of things.
Q And what did you think they meant when they were yelling "Where is Pence? Where is Pelosi?"
A I mean, they thought -- I think that they could get to them or something, that
they could stop the certification.

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

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

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

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

Mr. Thompson, given that the certification was actually delayed, do you remember how you felt about that?

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

Yeah. Do you remember talking to people about it, or did you hear people talking about that?

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

Was that a victory for the crowd or a victory for President Trump or some combination of the two?

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

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

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

Q So is it fair to say that the chaos that you were a part of inside the building was also in a way part of that order?
A: Yes.

Q: How so?

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

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

A: Correct.

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

Thank you.

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

Working through the day, but go ahead.

No. I'll hold off.

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

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

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

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

Q: Were there other people in the crowd who seemed like they were eager to
stay, perhaps have a conflict with the officers?

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

Q And why didn't you want to stay?

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

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

A No, not at that time.

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

A Right. Yeah.

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

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

Q So --

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

Q So the coat rack is fairly large, correct?

A Correct.

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

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

Q So you thought that entering the Capitol was an achievement of sorts that was worthy of a trophy?
A Correct.

Q And why was that?

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

Q -- go in -- go ahead.

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

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

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

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

A Yeah.

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

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

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

Q Why did you decide to leave your trophy behind?

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

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

A There was still people were going out different doors. I saw like
confrontations with the police. People were throwing things and pepper-spraying.

People were still trying to get in other doors.

Q Was there law enforcement there outside?

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

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

A Yes.

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

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

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

A No. No.

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

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

A Changed my mind about? Sorry.

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

So what changed?

A I -- up until that time, I hadn't seen the violence like that, like there was -- I
went to different doors, and I never seen the people trying to fight the police like that until that time. And then I realized, like, how it had escalated, what it had escalated to.

Q  That is a helpful clarification.

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

A  Correct.

Q  And that was a line you personally drew?

A  Right. I'm not a violent person.

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

A  Correct.

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

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

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

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

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

A  Yeah.
Q But that was after you had seen the rioters clashing with police, I take it?
A Correct. Yeah.
Q So -- go ahead.
A Yeah. Like, I can see how that's conflicting, but it was just a lot to kind of process at the time. But I guess it almost made like the violence justified if that makes sense, but I didn't -- I don't see violence as justified, but I think that that's what the crowd had to do to get what they wanted, and so that's what happened.
Q So, at the time, you saw the violence as part of an effort that was, in your words, justified?
A Yeah, I guess you could say that, yeah --
Oh, sorry, That was all in your mind directed by the President in an attempt to delay the certification?
Mr. Thompson. Correct.
BY
Q And was part of the justification, you know, aside from the President's order, was part of the justification that it would keep President Trump in power, that delaying the certification would mean that President Trump was still President?
A Yeah. I saw that the delaying of the certification would allow Trump to remain as President at the time.
Q Did you think that keeping President Trump in power was in a way to save democracy, to save the country?
A I did.
Q Did you have that belief because you were listening to President Trump for many months before the election and after the election?
Q: So why did you think that it was necessary for President Trump to stay in office in order to save democracy?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Q: Okay. That's really helpful context.

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

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

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

Q: Okay. So you were on Capitol Grounds?

A: I believe so.
Q So that video was quite a couple of hours later.
A Was it 4:30 or something like that I think.
Q Exactly.

4:17 to be exact.
4:17, give or take.

BY

Q So did you do anything -- what were you doing on Capitol Grounds in that sort of 2-hour interim?
A I made my way up I think it's called the tunnel, and I was just staying there watching that conflict for I'd say an hour or more.

Q So you were watching other individuals have physical conflict with law enforcement?
A Correct. Yeah. You couldn't really see exactly what was going on, but they would go into the tunnel, they would come back out. There was obviously fighting going on.

Q So why did you stay? Why did you stick around?
A I mean, I guess I was curious, and I didn't -- I didn't know maybe that the election had been -- or the certification had happened and -- because -- I don't know why I stayed. I was kind of maybe just in shock, couldn't take my eyes off what I was seeing.

Q So you said you weren't sure if the certification had happened.
A I'm sorry. Could you repeat that?

Mr. Stewart. Sorry. I'm coughing.

All good.
Q So you said you weren’t sure if the certification had happened while you were standing around?

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

Q Right. Right. Okay. So did you still believe that the conflicts you were seeing were part of that broad directive that President Trump had gave to the crowd, and you wanted to be there for it?

A Correct. Yeah.

Q Okay. So you were still part of that broader sense of achievement that was motivating you to take the coat rack and that sort of thing?

A Yes.

Q And, Mr. Thompson, sounds like you were outside the tunnel for about an hour. I’ll just represent to you that some of the worst violence happened between 3:18 and 4:30 at the tunnel. Officers were dragged out. Officers were tazed. Officers were getting beat with all sorts of weapons like hockey sticks and flagpoles and crutches. Were you seeing any of that take place?

A Yeah. I mean, it looked bad. What I saw was very intense. Yeah. Kind of blurry, but yeah, it was lots of violence.

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

A I was.

Q Okay. And, back to earlier question, at the time, you believed that this fight between rioters and law enforcement was part of Trump’s directive to stop the certification?
A: Correct.

Q: Thank you.

Q: And so, building on that question, at that point, you’re able to tell that there is conflict between police officers and rioters?

A: Correct.

Q: And that’s obviously pretty self-evidently criminal behavior, correct?

A: Correct.

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

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

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

A: That the rioters were? Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: I guess, yeah.

Q: Because you were all on President Trump’s side?

A: Correct.

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

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

Q: Was the crowd reacting?

A: Yeah. I mean, it seemed -- like I know I saw someone pass up like a ladder,
and then the crowd passed it back. But it seemed like most people were just watching.

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

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

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

A  Correct.

Q  To stop the certification?

A  Correct.

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

A  No. My phone had died, and I had been shutting it off to try and save what little battery I had. So I hadn't seen that. I was -- real quick, though, I did send a text at 4:05 to Robert. He was, I believe, still like sitting down, and I said: I'm going back in. Everyone interprets that to mean that I was going back in the building. And I just meant that I was going back into the crowd and I'd probably get separated from him. But, at 6, a little before 6, I heard about the curfew -- and then that area where I was standing, the officers came out and tear-gassed everybody, and like it was -- I couldn't breathe, and everyone left. And that's when I, you know, started trying to figure a way to get home or back to the hotel.

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

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

Q  Okay. So you fled the Capitol. And how did you end up getting
back -- like leaving D.C.?

A We left D.C. the next morning.

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

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

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

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

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

A Correct.

Q When the officers approached you, you said you were fearsome because of the altercations. Could you describe what was going through your mind when they approached you? Did you think you had done something wrong at that point?

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

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

A No.

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

A I was.

Q Did Mr. Lyon take off running with you?

A He did not.

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

A Yes.

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

A The next morning.

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

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

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

Q Was that disappointing?

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

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

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

Q Got it. And do you remember that night feeling anything in particular
towards President Trump as you shifted into, as you said, self-preservation mode?

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

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

A Correct.

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

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

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

A Correct. Yeah.

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

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

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

A Violence. Yeah.

Q -- incurred?

A Correct.

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

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

Q That's what you felt at that point?

A Right.

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

Mr. Stewart. That's fine.

All right. Great. Thank you very much.

We can go off the record at 11:07.

[Recess.]

We can go back on the record at 11:13 a.m.

Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

BY

Q Back to the 4:17 tweet, Mr. Thompson. I know your phone was dead. Was anyone else around you talking about President Trump telling rioters to go home?

A I do think I heard about it from other people, but it was kind of convoluted,
and there was like a sentiment of the crowd that didn't believe it I feel like, and yeah.

Like I had heard about it, but --

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

A  Correct.

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

Were you aware of that tweet at that time?

A  No, I can't say I was.

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

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

Q  Okay. Thank you.

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

Were you aware of that tweet?

A  I was not.

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

Before President Trump starting talking about election fraud issues, talking about the possibility of a stolen election, was election fraud even a political issue that you cared about?
A: Like, the word now is like voter integrity, but at the time I just -- it’s not something I really thought about. But, I mean, I wanted to know that elections were fair, you know, but it wasn’t like a forethought or something that I concerned myself with as a possibility.

Q: Great. Thank you very much.

A: Thank you. BY

Q: And, Mr. Thompson, I wanted to fast forward to current day. Looking back on January 6th and the events of that day, what are your thoughts about what happened?

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

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

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

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

A: No, I don’t.

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

A: I do.

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

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

Q: A pawn to what end?
A: I just -- you know, someone else's game. I don't really know what the end goal was.

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

A: Yeah. To -- yeah. To hold onto power was the goal, and I felt like I was used to get to that end.
[11:18 a.m.]

Q  Even though it failed.

A  Correct.

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

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

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

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

Q  Is it fair to say you felt misled?

A  Correct. Yes.

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

A  No, I do not.

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

A  No, I do not.

Q  What changed your mind about that?

A  I’ve just seen, like, the evidence and the debunking. Like, they’ve gone
through them all and explained how, like, what you saw, what you thought was
mishandling of ballots was actually how, like, things go. And, like, the, you know, call to
Georgia to find votes was just really bad. You know, like, doesn't make sense, but --
Q Uh-huh. So -- oh, go ahead.
A Just working -- I'm working with therapy, a therapist about, you know, the
kind of deprogramming and learning where I went wrong with conspiracy theories and
believing, like --
Q So why do you think you were so drawn to those theories in 2020?
A I feel like there was a lot of factors. I believed them before, but, now, with
kind of just being laid off and being home alone, drinking more, I just kind of went into a
bad place with it at that time, and just kind of everything kind of built up to January 6th.
Q Yeah. That's helpful. So some of what the President was saying about the
election, in your mind, was syncing up with the personal turmoil in your life?
A Yeah. Yeah, that's fair to say.
Q So you said to [redacted] that you didn't really care about election integrity,
voter fraud issues as a salient part of American life before President Trump brought these
to the fore in 2020.
We obviously just had another election, and there were claims that things had
gone fraudulently there too. Were you still concerned about fraud this time around?
A No. I'm not even really aware of what happened with this election. I'm --
Q Okay.
A -- distancing myself from politics altogether.
Q So what do you make of President Trump's continuing claims that the
election was stolen? He is still obviously saying it.
A I mean, I feel like he's wrong, but his -- I feel like his ego won't allow him to
admit it.

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

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

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

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

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

A Yeah. Yeah, I am.

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

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

Q Who do you blame for that?

A I think Trump.

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

A Yeah. Correct.
And you had no plans to march to the Capitol until the President directed you to, correct?

Correct.

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

Correct.

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

Correct. Yeah.

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

Yes.

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

Right.

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

Yes. Yep.

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

Yes.

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

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

Q   Do you still interact with QAnon conspiracy theories at all?
A   No. No.

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

Q   And could you just walk us through the status of that case?
A   I have a sentencing on Friday.

Q   Okay.

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

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

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

Q   Thank you.

All right. I'll hand it over to and Thanks.

Q   I just wanted to follow up on one thing that mentioned, which is
that, I don't know if you saw, but yesterday Mr. Trump announced that he was gonna be running for President again. And you mentioned that you would be concerned about the potential for violence.

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

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

Q: Why is that?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Q: Got it.

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

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

Q: Got it.

And asked you about the potential for violence. You know, looking at it
more broadly, are there other responses that you have to the fact that President Trump
announced another run yesterday?

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

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

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

Mr. Thompson. Yep.

[Redacted] Thank you both.

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

A No, I do not.

Q All right.

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

A Like, what I think --

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

A That people can be misled like I was, that -- and that, you know, it's
happened before and then, you know, that no one was held accountable except for the
people, like, lower people, but the people who, like, kind of orchestrate the violence
aren't held accountable.

Q Do you think President Trump should be held accountable?

A I believe so, yes.

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

And this interview can stand in --

Actually, just one second.

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

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

Q Thank you.

A Uh-huh.

Thank you

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

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