

SUSIE WILES NAMED IN A(NOTHER?) TRUMP- RELATED INDICTMENT

ABC has identified two more people referred to in Trump's Espionage Act indictment.

In addition to confirming earlier reports that Molly Michael is Trump Employee 2 – the person who, with Walt Nauta, helped Trump sort through boxes in advance of returning a subset of boxes in January 2022 – ABC describes that Trump Employee 1 is Hayley (née D'Antuono) Harrison.

Sources have also further identified some of the other figures mentioned by Smith's team in the indictment. Hayley Harrison and Molly Michael are said to be "Trump Employee 1" and "Trump Employee 2," respectively.

Michael, whose name was previously reported as an individual identified in the indictment, is Trump's former executive assistant who no longer works for him, while Harrison is currently an aide to Trump's wife, Melania Trump.

The role of Trump Employee 1 in the indictment is fairly minor: in a discussion with Michael she suggested moving *other* stuff to storage to make space in the gaudy bathroom for boxes of documents.

People often raise questions about whether she has familial ties with Steve D'Antuono, the former FBI Assistant Director who kept thwarting investigations into Trump; they share a last name but no known familial ties.

More interesting is the role of her spouse, Beau, whom she married last year. Both Beau and Hayley were employed by Trump's PAC, and Beau was represented (as Cassidy Hutchinson had been) by Stephen Passantino. Beau made two appearances before the January 6 Committee, in the second of

which his testimony evolved to match Tony Ornato's testimony disclaiming Trump's efforts to go to the Capitol on January 6. Harrison was interviewed in the January 6 investigation late last year.

The Harrisons are a couple in the thick of things.

ABC's *other* identification is a much bigger deal – and Trump is making it one. According to ABC, Susie Wiles is the PAC Representative to whom Trump is described as showing a classified map in September 2021.

Susie Wiles, one of Trump's most trusted advisers leading his second reelection effort, is the individual singled out in Smith's indictment as the "PAC Representative" who Trump is alleged to have shown a classified map to in August or September of 2021, sources said.

Trump, in the indictment, is alleged to have shown the classified map of an unidentified country to Wiles while discussing a military operation that Trump said "was not going well," while adding that he "should not be showing the map" to her and "not to get too close."

[snip]

If the identification of Wiles by sources is accurate, it also raises the prospect that should Trump's case go to trial prior to the 2024 election, one of the top figures leading his reelection bid could be called to testify as a key witness. Wiles, who previously helped lead Trump's now-GOP primary opponent Ron DeSantis's two campaigns for governor, is seen as one of Trump's most trusted confidants.

She also led Trump's campaign operations in Florida in 2016, and was later CEO of Trump's Save America political action

committee.

Note that Trump could not be surprised by Wiles' inclusion in the indictment; the map-sharing incident was widely reported before the indictment.

Still, Wiles' ID is important for several reasons. Even more than the prospect that Wiles might have to testify during the campaign, which ABC notes, consider how the primary release condition – that Trump not discuss the facts of the case with any witnesses – would affect this. Trump wants to turn being an accused felon into a key campaign plank. He's running on being a victim. But the contact prohibition would make it more difficult for Trump and Wiles to discuss the best way to do that. And it would make any false claims the Trump campaign made about the prosecution legally problematic, because Wiles is a witness.

That would be true irrespective of Wiles' role in running Save America PAC, which is the key subject of the fundraising prong of the investigation. But there's a non-zero likelihood that Wiles' conduct is being scrutinized for spending money raised for one purpose and spent on another. One way or another, Wiles was involved in a suspected Trump scheme to raise money based off a promise to spend it on election integrity, only to use the money for lawyers representing Trump in other matters.

More interesting still: this may not be Wiles' first inclusion in a Trump-related indictment. At the very least, Wiles was the former 2016 campaign staffer who had to answer for the multiple contacts Yevgeniy Prigozhin's trolls made with Trump's Florida campaign as laid out in the Internet Research Agency indictment, and she may well have been one of the three campaign officials referred to in it.

74. On or about August 15, 2016, Defendants and their co-conspirators received an email at one of their false

U.S. persona accounts from a real U.S. person, a Florida-based political activist identified as the "Chair for the Trump Campaign" in a particular Florida county. The activist identified two additional sites in Florida for possible rallies. Defendants and their co-conspirators subsequently used their false U.S. persona accounts to communicate with the activist about logistics and an additional rally in Florida.

75. On or about August 16, 2016, Defendants and their co-conspirators used a false U.S. persona Instagram account connected to the ORGANIZATION-created group "Tea Party News" to purchase advertisements for the "Florida Goes Trump" rally.

76. On or about August 18, 2016, the real "Florida for Trump" Facebook account responded to the false U.S. persona "Matt Skiber" account with instructions to contact **a member of the Trump Campaign ("Campaign Official 1") involved in the campaign's Florida operations** and provided Campaign Official 1's email address at the campaign domain donaldtrump.com. On approximately the same day, Defendants and their **co-conspirators used the email address of a false U.S. persona, joshmilton024@gmail.com, to send an email to Campaign Official 1 at that donaldtrump.com email account,** which read in part:

Hello [Campaign Official 1], [w]e are organizing a state-wide event in Florida on August, 20 to support Mr. Trump. Let us introduce ourselves first. "Being Patriotic" is a grassroots conservative online movement trying to unite people offline. . . . [W]e gained a huge

lot of followers and decided to somehow help Mr. Trump get elected. You know, simple yelling on the Internet is not enough. There should be real action. We organized rallies in New York before. Now we're focusing on purple states such as Florida.

The email also identified thirteen "confirmed locations" in Florida for the rallies and requested the campaign provide "assistance in each location."

77. On or about August 18, 2016, Defendants and their co-conspirators sent money via interstate wire to another real U.S. person recruited by the ORGANIZATION, using one of their false U.S. personas, to build a cage large enough to hold an actress depicting Clinton in a prison uniform.

78. On or about August 19, 2016, a supporter of the Trump Campaign sent a message to the ORGANIZATION-controlled "March for Trump" Twitter account about **a member of the Trump Campaign ("Campaign Official 2") who was involved in the campaign's Florida operations** and provided Campaign Official 2's email address at the domain donalddtrump.com. On or about the same day, Defendants and their co-conspirators used the false U.S.

persona joshmilton024@gmail.com account to send an email to Campaign Official 2 at that donalddtrump.com email account.

79. On or about August 19, 2016, the real "Florida for Trump" Facebook account sent another message to the false U.S. persona "Matt Skiber" account to contact **a member of the Trump Campaign ("Campaign Official 3") involved in the campaign's Florida operations**. On or about August 20, 2016, Defendants and their co-conspirators

used the “Matt Skiber” Facebook account to contact Campaign Official 3. [my emphasis]

In the wake of the indictment, Wiles insisted, convincingly, that no official staffer wittingly cooperated with the trolls.

Susie Wiles, who was co-chair of the Trump campaign in Florida in August 2016 and later became the campaign’s chief Florida staffer, said no campaign official was aware of the Russian effort.

“It’s not the way I do the business; it’s not the way the Trump campaign in Florida did business,” she said. “It is spooky. It is awful. It makes you look over your shoulder. It shouldn’t happen. I’m anxious for this to be uncovered so this never happens again.”

Indeed, ultimately, DOJ argued that Prigozhin’s trolls had made approximately 26 real US persons *unwittingly* serve as agents of Russia, who otherwise *should* have registered under FARA. Had the Concord Consulting case gone to trial, the interactions of those real people with Prigozhin’s trolls would have been introduced as evidence.

But the focus on Florida led to a real focus on the Wiles family’s real actions tied to Russia. Notably, just days after the June 9, 2016 meeting with Natalia Veselnitskaya and Rinat Akhmetshin, Susie’s spouse Lanny arranged for Veselnitskaya to get a prominent seat at a Magnitsky sanctions hearing.

In fact, her seat had been reserved for her by a Republican consultant with close ties to the Trump campaign.

Lanny Wiles, whose wife, Susie, was then chairing the Trump campaign in Florida, said in an interview that he came early

to scout out the seat and was there at the request of Akhmetshin, with whom he was working as a consultant on the sanctions-related adoption issue.

Lanny and Susie Wiles both said she was unaware of his role in the lobbying effort. Lanny Wiles said he was unaware that the Russian lawyer whose seat he was saving had just days earlier met with Trump Jr.

"I wasn't part of it," Susie Wiles said.

First Politico, then BuzzFeed, reported that Lanny Wiles had some kind of financial role in Akhmetshin's anti-Magnitsky lobbying. And the Wiles' daughter, Caroline, had to be moved from a job in the White House to Treasury after she failed a background check.

That back story is what makes it more interesting that Trump was sharing a classified map with Wiles in 2021.

Update: CNN matches ABC's identification of Wiles, and adds that Wiles has been interviewed several times.

The campaign adviser, Susie Wiles, has spoken to federal investigators numerous times as part of the special counsel's Mar-a-Lago documents probe, multiple sources told CNN.

[snip]

During her interviews, sources say that prosecutors repeatedly asked Wiles about whether Trump showed her classified documents. They also inquired about a map and whether she had any knowledge regarding documents related to Joint Chiefs Chairman, Gen. Mark Milley, one source added.

[snip]

Wiles, one of Trump's closest advisers,

is effectively running his third bid for the presidency and has taken an active role in Trump's legal strategy, including helping find lawyers and helping arrange payment to attorneys representing Trump associates being questioned in the multiple federal and state investigations into the former president.

Wiles is also a close associate of Chris Kise, who is on Trump's legal team and appeared in court earlier this month when Trump was indicted.

Sources in Trump's inner circle tell CNN they were blindsided by the news.

Wiles declined to comment to CNN.

Trump campaign spokesperson Steven Cheung told CNN that Wiles would not be taking a step back from the campaign.

"Jack Smith and the Special Counsel's investigation is openly engaging in outright election interference and meddling by attacking one of the leaders of President Trump's re-election campaign," said Cheung.

Perhaps the most interesting detail in the CNN piece is that "sources in Trump's inner circle" didn't know this.

Update: A Trump rival (remember that Wiles used to work for DeSantis) finally finds something to attack Trump on – and in a Murdoch rag, no less: Wiles' ties to China.

Susie Wiles works on Donald Trump's 2024 campaign and is co-chair of Mercury Public Affairs, which has taken millions of dollars in recent years from Chinese companies such as Yealink, Hikvision and Alibaba.

[snip]

If confirmed, the episode is further complicated by both Wiles' high standing in the Trump campaign and her firm's lobbying for potential hostile entities – though a search of the Justice Department's registry of foreign agents indicated Wiles had not worked directly for those clients.

"Susie could put Trump away for years in just one minute of testimony to Jack Smith," a rival GOP operative told The Post. "She's got Trump by the balls, which means she can name her price for her loyalty and Trump can't say no."