

MOVING THE BOXES: TRUMP'S VALET AND ALLEGED CO- CONSPIRATOR BUYS THE BOSS A THREE-WEEK DELAY IN HIS TRIAL

According to the motion to seal filed in his case, DOJ warned Walt Nauta he was a target of the stolen documents case on May 24, 34 days ago.

After he and his boss were indicted on June 8, he was issued a judicial summons, alerting him that his prosecution would take place in the Southern District of Florida, which has strict rules requiring a local attorney to appear and remain counsel, and scheduling a June 13 arraignment. That was 19 days ago.

But Nauta was not arraigned on June 13, as Trump was, because he had not yet arranged for local counsel.

That delay was totally excusable. There aren't that many people in SDFL who are qualified for a case like this in the first place. And those that are may balk at the pre-existing conflict structure here, with Stan Woodward paid by Trump's PAC, which itself is under criminal investigation. And those aren't the only ethical concerns I would have about taking on this case.

But today's delay is far less defensible. Particularly given the theater Woodward created surrounding the event.

Woodward made much of the fact that poor Walt Nauta was stuck on the tarmac yesterday at Newark Airport with flight delays and cancellations due to the same bad weather that I was planning around last Saturday when I was in New York state.

That was all a distraction. Nauta's presence wasn't required at the arraignment. Magistrate Judge Jonathan Goodman excused Nauta's attendance at today's hearing during Trump's arraignment.

You only tell that story in a court room to get credulous journalists – like CNN – to report that as the primary reason for the delay. It had no legal import. (Note: Most initial Twitter coverage parroted Woodward's weather excuse, but most outlets fixed that on publication of their stories.)

The rain had nothing to do with today's delay. Nauta's failure, thus far, to retain a Florida attorney was the only reason for the delay.

And there's certainly reason to wonder whether *that delay* is intentional. Marc Caputo's report on Nauta's search for a Florida lawyer quotes someone "familiar with the discussions" stating that the trial won't happen before the election, so (or perhaps, "because") "there's no rush to" find a lawyer.

The pace of hiring an attorney for Nauta has been slow – as has been the speed with which Trump is beefing up his own criminal defense team. Nauta continues to work for Trump's organization and Trump's political committee is financing his employee's legal representation.

"If you ask three different people in Trump world what's going on, you'll get five different answers," said the source familiar with discussions. "But the reality is there's no rush to do this. This seems to be their posture: 'The case is probably going to happen after the election anyway [on Nov. 5, 2024]. So what's the rush?'"

Speaking to the Messenger before Tuesday's arraignment hearing got delayed, the source said Nauta would likely have a lawyer within the coming weeks.

So now Nauta is not scheduled to be arraigned until July 6 (his personal appearance has again been excused), a full four weeks after his indictment, and the same day on which Judge Cannon has ordered the defense to weigh in on proposed schedule for the trial.

This is, in my opinion, why Jay Bratt proposed a schedule showing that it is possible to try this case such that it would be done – even assuming three weeks of jury selection and three weeks of trial – before the first primary. Any delay past that schedule comes from Trump. And his alleged co-conspirator, Walt Nauta, whose job is to move boxes for the boss.

What is going to happen is that Trump will cause enough of a delay to push this into the primary season, and once that primary season trial happens, he will wail about how the trial interferes with his right to be elected President on false claims again, so he can steal more classified documents.

And his trusty valet, Walt Nauta, has just bought 23 days of delay for his arraignment to help ensure that happens. He's moving the boxes again to help his boss obstruct justice.

Update: WSJ has since updated a story that included only the storm excuse to note that the real reason for the delay was that Nauta has not yet retained a lawyer.