

BORIS EPSHTEYN'S ONE-TWO PUNCH ON DOJ

Politico had a detail about the Matt Gaetz selection that I've seen no one else pick up.

It was Boris Epshteyn's idea.

How did we get here? That story is still coming out, but here's what we know. As of Monday, Gaetz was not on the short list to be Trump's choice for attorney general. But Trump wasn't satisfied with those options, our Meridith McGraw tells Playbook.

[snip]

The Gaetz-for-AG plan came together yesterday, just hours before it was announced, Meridith tells us. It was hatched aboard Trump's airplane en route to Washington, on which Gaetz was a passenger. A Trump official revealed more details to Playbook late last night: BORIS EPSHTEYN played a central role in the development, lobbying Trump to choose Gaetz while incoming White House chief of staff SUSIE WILES was in a different, adjacent room on the plane, apparently unaware.

Maggie and Swan have retconned that detail to describe, only, that Boris, Elon, and Susie Wiles were all on the plane, then fluffed it all into bullshit about clarity of what he wants.

Boris' role in Trump's apparent plan to destroy the country has gotten little notice amid the parlor games focused on when the two narcissists, Elon and Trump, will tear each other down. But his apparent role *in this decision* bears more notice.

After all, he's unindicted co-conspirator 6 in the January 6 indictment. He had a central (though uncharged) role in the documents case,

orchestrating parts of the plan to have Evan Corcoran do the search but have Christina Bobb do the certification. And he was or may still be under investigation, with Steve Bannon, for a cryptocurrency scheme that cheated Trump's rubes.

His communications with now Chief of Staff designate Susie Wiles appear to have been a subject of interest for investigators – a subject tied to what a witness that is likely Eric Herschmann described as an effort to cover his own past legal exposure with a retroactive claim to have been acting as an attorney.

And the potentially belated access to the contents of his phone are what expanded the focus of the immunity brief to incorporate Bannon as an unindicted co-conspirator and Bannon's prediction that "All Hell will break loose" part of the plot.

Donald Trump was considering actual lawyers for the role of Attorney General, but (per Marc Caputo) didn't like them because they talked Constitution and all that.

"Everyone else looked at AG as if they were applying for a judicial appointment. They talked about their vaunted legal theories and constitutional bullshit. Gaetz was the only one who said, 'Yeah, I'll go over there and start cuttin' fuckin' heads.'"

And then, at least according to Politico, Wiles left the room and Boris convinced Trump to pick Gaetz.

After that, Trump has announced plans to install his defense team – Todd Blanche, Emil Bove, and John Sauer – as Deputy Attorney General, PADAG, and Solicitor General, respectively (note: PADAG is not a confirmed position, so Trump only announced it to make the intent crystal clear).

Now, Bove and Sauer are at least competent to the positions Trump will install them in. All

three men know their way around DOJ. Blanche is less horrible than the Gaetz pick – again, if you ignore the symbolism of converting the Department of Justice into the defense firm for the President.

And he's also Boris' defense attorney. He was Boris' defense attorney and then, possibly at Boris' suggestion, added Trump as a client, creating some challenges regarding discovery.

According to Politico, a key player in Trump's assault on the Constitution, on the Capitol, is the guy who picked Matt Gaetz to be Attorney General (or who suggested Matt Gaetz be proposed for Attorney General, creating an impossible loyalty test for the Senate).

And the competent people reporting to Gaetz are there to mount a defense.