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Transcript of Rusty Cranford Interview

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Transcription for DOJ (Criminal)

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2 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

3

4 INTERVIEW OF RUSTY CRANFORD

5 Interviewed by:

6 Assistant United States Attorney Ben Wulff

7

8 Also Present:

9 Special Agent Alicia Campbell, Assistant United States
10 Attorney Stephanie Mizzanti, Assistant United States
11 Attorney Steve Mohlhenrich, DOJ Trial Attorney Marco
12 Palmieri, DOL Special Agent Sean Kilcoyne, Attorney
13 Nathan Garrett, and Attorney Kathleen Fischer

14

15 February 20, 2019

16

12:52 p.m.

17

18

19 United States Department of Justice

20 Criminal Division

21 1400 New York Avenue, Suite 12100

22 Washington, D.C. 20005

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 SA CAMPBELL: The date is February 20th, 2019.

3 The is time is 2:44 p.m. This is Special Agent Alicia
4 Campbell. I've started the recorder with a proffer
5 with Mr. Rusty Cranford.

6 MR. GARRETT: The time is 12:44 p.m.

7 SA CAMPBELL: Yeah, it's 12:44 p.m.

8 AUSA WULFF: -- the date?

9 SA CAMPBELL: Yeah.

10 AUSA WULFF: Okay. And so just for the purpose of
11 this interview, this is Ben Wulff speaking, an
12 assistant United States attorney for the Western
13 District of Arkansas, and a special assistant United
14 States attorney for the Western District of Missouri,
15 for the purpose of this investigation and grand jury
16 presentation.

17 Just identifying the people around the room.

18 Steve Mohlhenrich is here from the Western District of
19 Missouri; Marco Palmieri from the Department of Justice
20 Public Integrity Section; Stephanie Mizzanti from the
21 Eastern District of Missouri who's also a special in
22 the Western District of Missouri. And what is your

1 name?

2 MR. KILCOYNE: Sean Kilcoyne --

3 MR. WULFF: Yeah, Sean Kilcoyne.

4 SA KILCOYNE: -- U.S. Department of Labor special
5 agent.

6 MR. WULFF: We also have Rusty Cranford with his
7 attorneys, Nathan Garrett and Kathleen Fischer.

8 The purpose of this interview -- we are between
9 grand jury sessions -- is to -- is to interview him
10 about -- interview Mr. Cranford about some additional
11 information we need from Senator Woods extortion
12 attempt as well as matters relating to Bob Cessario.
13 We might also ask him about some information that he
14 might know about due to press -- recent press reports
15 on Jeff Wardlaw, and we want to make sure that this
16 information is recorded.

17 Mr. Cranford, are you ready to proceed?

18 MR. CRANFORD: Yes, sir.

19 AUSA WULFF: Okay. You are here with your
20 attorneys. If at any point you need a time out to
21 speak with them, please let me know. But I want to
22 start on the Woods extortion attempt. Can you just

1 describe in your own words what happened with Senator
2 Woods?

3 MR. CRANFORD: Yes. He kept contacting me wanting
4 to see me, wanting to come to my house, to my home for
5 -- several days before he showed up at my office, and I
6 kept avoiding him. Matter of fact, I sent him a
7 picture of Eddie Cooper's leg getting snake bit. Told
8 him I can't leave so he'd leave us alone, but he just
9 kept on, kept on --

10 AUSA WULFF: Why were you dodging him?

11 MR. CRANFORD: Because I wasn't giving him anymore
12 money. I'd give him enough.

13 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

14 RUSTY CRANFORD: And I wasn't going to give him
15 anymore. And --

16 AUSA WULFF: So you suspected he was going to hit
17 you up for some more cash?

18 MR. CRANFORD: I 100 percent suspected.

19 AUSA WULFF: And is that based upon your prior
20 interactions with Senator Woods?

21 MR. CRANFORD: Yes. Yes, sir.

22 AUSA WULFF: All right.

1 MR. CRANFORD: And so I -- after Mother's Day, I
2 went down to the capital. I went to my office in
3 Little Rock, and Senator Woods came by my office. And
4 first he texted me wanting to see me -- I mean, wanted
5 -- said he needed to talk to me. Well, I knew what
6 that meant. He wanted money. And so he come over to
7 my office, walked in, didn't even tell Melissa, my
8 secretary didn't -- my assistant. Didn't even tell --
9 I mean, he just walked right past her, walked straight
10 through to my office. Walked in.

11 AUSA WULFF: Who was present in your office when
12 he walked in?

13 MR. CRANFORD: Eddie Cooper.

14 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

15 MR. CRANFORD: And pulled his shirt up -- took his
16 coat off, pulled his shirt up, and said, "I need some
17 money."

18 AUSA WULFF: And why did -- why do -- why do you
19 think he pulled his shirt up, to show he wasn't wearing
20 a wire?

21 MR. CRANFORD: Right, yeah. I'm pretty sure.

22 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

1 MR. CRANFORD: And so pulled his shirt up, and I
2 told him, I said, "I'm not giving you any money." And
3 then he said, "Well, tomorrow is going to suck for both
4 of us, isn't it?" Then he left, stormed out, left. I
5 got a text message. Oh, I'm sorry. He wrote down on a
6 note that he wanted -- he wanted \$30,000.

7 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm.

8 MR. CRANFORD: And he wanted -- and I told him I
9 wasn't giving him none. Then he said, "Tomorrow is
10 going to suck for both of us."

11 AUSA WULFF: What do you think he meant by that?

12 MR. CRANFORD: That he was going to go to the FBI
13 or the authorities. That's the way I took it.

14 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

15 MR. CRANFORD: That is exactly the way I took it.

16 AUSA WULFF: And is that over the previous bribes
17 that you've given him?

18 MR. CRANFORD: Yes, sir.

19 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

20 MR. CRANFORD: And so --

21 AUSA WULFF: Do you know what he was needing that
22 money for? Do you have any context, clues --

1 MR. CRANFORD: I don't have a cue.

2 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

3 MR. CRANFORD: I mean, and even if he told you, I
4 mean, it wasn't going to be the truth. I mean, his car
5 broke down 19 times.

6 AUSA WULFF: Yep.

7 MR. CRANFORD: You know, many times.

8 AUSA WULFF: So how much was the demand for on the
9 note?

10 MR. CRANFORD: I think it was \$30,000 -- \$35,000.
11 Thirty-five I think.

12 AUSA WULFF: And looking back at that note, just
13 in your mind's eye, was it signed by him or did it just
14 have a figure on it? Did it have --

15 MR. CRANFORD: No, he handwrote --

16 AUSA WULFF: And what did it say?

17 MR. CRANFORD: -- "I need," and the number is \$35
18 -- I think it said \$35,000. It's been a long time.

19 AUSA WULFF: Thirty or \$35,000 to the best of your
20 recollection?

21 MR. CRANFORD: Yeah. Yeah. And I told him I
22 wasn't giving him anything, but he wrote it on a note

1 and handed it to me.

2 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

3 MR. CRANFORD: I called Jeremy Hutchinson right
4 then.

5 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm.

6 MR. CRANFORD: And I said, "You need to get over
7 to my office." He said, "What's wrong?" I said, "John
8 Woods just left here. You need to get over here." He
9 said, "What's wrong?" I said, "Get over here and I'll
10 tell you." Jeremy got there within 20 minutes. I
11 showed Jeremy -- I said -- I asked Eddie Cooper what
12 just happened, and I handed Jeremy the note. I told
13 him. He said, "What?" And I said, "Yeah, here's the
14 note." He said, "Yeah, I need the note."

15 AUSA WULFF: So Eddie recounted the events that --
16 of the extortion attempt. We'll just call it the
17 extortion attempt.

18 MR. CRANFORD: Yeah.

19 AUSA WULFF: Eddie recounted the events in front
20 of Jeremy at your urging.

21 MR. CRANFORD: Yes.

22 AUSA WULFF: And then he turned to you to confirm

1 it?

2 MR. CRANFORD: Right, and I handed him the note.

3 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

4 MR. CRANFORD: And he said, "Are you serious?" I
5 said, "Well, yeah, I'm serious. There's his
6 handwriting right there." And Jeremy said, "Well, I
7 need to keep the note. I need the note." And so then
8 later that -- later that night -- I think it was later
9 that night -- I got a text message, and then the next
10 day I got a text message. He said, "I need to see you.
11 Today is really going to suck for us."

12 AUSA WULFF: And that's from John Woods.

13 MR. CRANFORD: Yes, sir.

14 AUSA WULFF: All right. Now, were -- was it --
15 did you want Jeremy to --

16 (Break.)

17 SA CAMPBELL: It's February 20th, 2019. The time
18 is 12:52 p.m. I've restarted the recorder after a low
19 battery, the proffer with Mr. Rusty Cranford.

20 AUSA WULFF: I'm not sure of what we covered
21 earlier and what -- where the recording cut off.
22 However, do we know if any of it recorded?

1 SA CAMPBELL: It should've -- when it beeped,
2 that's when it shut down.

3 AUSA WULFF: Okay. All right.

4 SA CAMPBELL: So we should be good.

5 AUSA WULFF: So we will go back. So at that
6 point, what you had just related when it beeped was
7 that Mr. Cooper was present in the room when Mr. Woods
8 made this extortion attempt to you, and that you called
9 Jeremy immediately. Is that correct, Rusty?

10 MR. CRANFORD: Yes, sir.

11 AUSA WULFF: And then Jeremy came to the office
12 within 20 minutes. Then you asked -- you told Cooper
13 to tell Jeremy what had just happened. Is that right?

14 MR. CRANFORD: Yeah.

15 AUSA WULFF: And then he turned to you and said,
16 "Is that for real," or said something along --

17 MR. CRANFORD: He said, "Are you serious,"
18 something like that.

19 AUSA WULFF: "Are you serious?" And you said,
20 "Yes," and then you showed him the note.

21 MR. CRANFORD: Right.

22 AUSA WULFF: Okay. And then did Jeremy take the

1 note that day?

2 MR. CRANFORD: Jeremy said, "Let me have the
3 note," and he took the note and put it in his wallet.

4 AUSA WULFF: Okay. Was it your intention when you
5 talked to Mr. Hutchinson that he was going to intercede
6 with Mr. Woods?

7 MR. CRANFORD: That's 100 percent --

8 AUSA WULFF: Senator Woods. That's what you
9 wanted him to do.

10 MR. CRANFORD: Right.

11 AUSA WULFF: And did you give him any instruction
12 on that -- on that front to either fix it or --

13 MR. CRANFORD: I said, "You need to take care of
14 this. You need to handle this, Jeremy." And Jeremy is
15 a lot higher-ranking senator. I mean, Ace is his
16 uncle, you know?

17 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm .

18 MR. CRANFORD: So that's what I'm saying. I mean,
19 Ace is getting ready to come in. But anyway, Jeremy
20 had more pull than --

21 AUSA WULFF: So Jeremy -- so you understood that
22 Jeremy could use his influence to get Woods --

1 MR. CRANFORD: Oh, absolutely.

2 AUSA WULFF: -- back in line.

3 MR. CRANFORD: Yes.

4 AUSA WULFF: Okay. And so was it your intention
5 for Jeremy to go and confront Senator Woods after you
6 talked to him?

7 MR. CRANFORD: Yes.

8 AUSA WULFF: All right. Now, and is it fair to
9 say, and I'm just going to ask you this straight
10 because I don't know any other way to do it. Were you
11 looking for legal advice when you talked to Jeremy, or
12 were you looking for political help?

13 MR. CRANFORD: I was -- I wanted legal advice --

14 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

15 MR. CRANFORD: -- because --

16 AUSA WULFF: Because that's not what you're
17 describing to me.

18 MR. CRANFORD: Well, both kind of, however he
19 needed to do it because I didn't want John threatening
20 me.

21 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm.

22 MR. CRANFORD: And I didn't know what John was --

1 when he says "tomorrow is going -- today is going to
2 suck -- tomorrow is going to suck for both of us."

3 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm.

4 MR. CRANFORD: And so I wanted both.

5 AUSA WULFF: Okay. Did you call the police?

6 MR. CRANFORD: No.

7 AUSA WULFF: Okay. And so is it -- so you weren't
8 looking -- you didn't take that to be a physical threat
9 from Senator Woods, right?

10 MR. CRANFORD: Oh no, no, no, no, not at -- I
11 wasn't worried about that with Woods.

12 AUSA WULFF: All right. And so if you say that
13 you wanted both -- you detailed the political help that
14 you wanted basically because Jeremy was a higher-
15 ranking senator --

16 MR. CRANFORD: Right.

17 AUSA WULFF: -- and he could -- he had political
18 power that he could exert against Senator Woods to get
19 him in line.

20 MR. CRANFORD: Okay. Let me -- let me rephrase
21 that. I wanted Jeremy to have the note in case
22 something -- John did say something to the authorities

1 where Jeremy would have and say, hey, I'm his attorney,
2 he called me right after it happened, here's the
3 handwritten note, John Woods' handwriting. That's what
4 I wanted Jeremy on the legal part goes.

5 AUSA WULFF: Okay. To basically --

6 MR. CRANFORD: Just in case John -- if John did
7 call the authorities about something --

8 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm.

9 MR. CRANFORD: -- Jeremy could show that, well,
10 here's -- he's trying to extort him. As far as Jeremy
11 handling it, that was -- I wanted him to do that
12 through political, okay?

13 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

14 MR. CRANFORD: So I hope I cleared that up.

15 AUSA WULFF: So you wanted Jeremy to go fix it and
16 basically go speak to Woods directly about it.

17 MR. CRANFORD: Yes, sir.

18 AUSA WULFF: Not to go -- not to go to the cops.

19 MR. CRANFORD: Right.

20 AUSA WULFF: Not to go to the FBI.

21 MR. CRANFORD: Right.

22 AUSA WULFF: But to take this up with Senator

1 Woods directly.

2 MR. CRANFORD: Right, unless Woods followed
3 through with his threat to me.

4 AUSA WULFF: And then you had an alternate --

5 MR. CRANFORD: Right. I wanted Jeremy --

6 AUSA WULFF: You wanted him to have the evidence.

7 MR. CRANFORD: Absolutely.

8 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

9 MR. CRANFORD: Right.

10 AUSA WULFF: And so it was your intention for
11 Jeremy to go and speak to Woods about this threat as
12 soon as it happened to get him to calm down.

13 MR. CRANFORD: Absolutely.

14 AUSA WULFF: Okay. Now, when you originally
15 talked to Jeremy Hutchinson, was it your intention for
16 Jeremy to make this known to the FBI?

17 MR. CRANFORD: The note?

18 AUSA WULFF: Yes.

19 MR. CRANFORD: For Jeremy to make it?

20 AUSA WULFF: Yeah, for Jeremy to go to the FBI and
21 talk about it.

22 MR. CRANFORD: No.

1 AUSA WULFF: You didn't give him that instruction.

2 MR. CRANFORD: No, I did not.

3 AUSA WULFF: Okay. And --

4 MR. CRANFORD: The only --

5 AUSA WULFF: Go ahead.

6 MR. CRANFORD: The only reason I gave Jeremy the
7 note to start with was because he was my legal counsel.

8 I wanted him to be able to say within 20 minutes of
9 this happening, Rusty called me. I come over there.

10 He showed me the handwritten note. This is John Woods'
11 handwriting. Here's what happened. Here's his phone
12 with the text messages. Here's the text messages
13 leading up to this day.

14 AUSA WULFF: So to basically be a witness for you.

15 MR. CRANFORD: Yes, sir.

16 AUSA WULFF: Okay. So if the -- if law
17 enforcement did come calling, you wanted him to be a
18 witness to the extortion attempt.

19 MR. CRANFORD: Exactly. Right.

20 AUSA WULFF: Okay. All right. So what happened
21 to the note?

22 MR. CRANFORD: Jeremy said he lost it.

1 AUSA WULFF: All right. When did he tell you
2 that?

3 MR. CRANFORD: Jeremy told me that we needed -- I
4 needed to talk to Bud Cummins, and I said, okay. And
5 he said, "This is" -- this was later on, though.

6 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

7 MR. CRANFORD: But I asked Jeremy, I said, "You
8 still got the note?" "Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah,
9 yeah." So then when it come time for him to produce
10 it, he told Bud Cummins -- I met them at Soul's
11 Restaurant in Little Rock. For me to meet Bud
12 Cummings, I had to carry a \$10,000 check.

13 AUSA WULFF: For Bud?

14 MR. CRANFORD: For Bud.

15 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm.

16 MR. CRANFORD: I met him one time and he charged
17 me that. And good thing about it at that time I had
18 Kathleen and Nathan.

19 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

20 MR. CRANFORD: So and Jeremy couldn't produce the
21 check -- the photocopy then.

22 AUSA WULFF: Okay. What did he tell you happened

1 to the note?

2 MR. CRANFORD: He said, "Did you get it?" "Well
3 of course I gave it to you, Jeremy." Like, "I don't
4 know what I did with it."

5 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

6 MR. CRANFORD: And then later on, somebody told me
7 that he claims he washed it or something.

8 AUSA WULFF: Okay. But Jeremy never told you
9 that?

10 MR. CRANFORD: No, he never told me that.

11 AUSA WULFF: Okay. So after the threat came in,
12 who else did -- who else did you tell about the
13 extortion attempt in the immediate aftermath? So did
14 you -- Cooper was present, right? Cooper knew.

15 MR. CRANFORD: Right.

16 AUSA WULFF: Did you tell Robin Raveendran?

17 MR. CRANFORD: Robin knew, yes, sir.

18 AUSA WULFF: Okay. And how close in time to it --
19 to that threat?

20 MR. CRANFORD: Oh, heck, it was maybe that night.

21 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

22 MR. CRANFORD: Maybe that night.

1 AUSA WULFF: Did you tell Don Jones?

2 MR. CRANFORD: Later on I told Don Jones.

3 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

4 MR. CRANFORD: Later on.

5 AUSA WULFF: A week or two or --

6 MR. CRANFORD: Yeah, probably.

7 AUSA WULFF: All right.

8 MR. CRANFORD: I mean, I'm not exact sure, but --

9 AUSA WULFF: Why did you -- you told -- why did
10 you tell Raveendran?

11 MR. CRANFORD: Because he was in the next office
12 across the hall.

13 AUSA WULFF: Okay. And why did tell Don Jones?

14 MR. CRANFORD: He was in Little Rock working.

15 AUSA WULFF: He was in Little Rock working then?

16 MR. CRANFORD: Yeah.

17 AUSA WULFF: And so, okay. And he was working
18 with you?

19 MR. CRANFORD: Yes, sir.

20 AUSA WULFF: Were you trying to basically tell
21 them to steer clear of Woods if he comes around?

22 MR. CRANFORD: Yeah. Yeah, pretty much.

1 AUSA WULFF: Okay. All right. Now, I want to
2 talk to you about -- at some point you went to Florida
3 that summer, right?

4 MR. CRANFORD: Yes.

5 AUSA WULFF: And you -- were you there for four or
6 five weeks?

7 MR. CRANFORD: Yes, sir.

8 AUSA WULFF: And during the time that you were in
9 Florida, was Jeremy contacting you trying to get you to
10 talk to the -- talk to somebody about this?

11 MR. CRANFORD: The day I landed, I had Karen and
12 the children with me and we landed. We had just gotten
13 to the house, and I was on my bicycle.

14 AUSA WULFF: Landed coming home or landed in
15 Florida?

16 MR. CRANFORD: No, landed in Florida.

17 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

18 MR. CRANFORD: And so I was on my bicycle and it
19 was later that afternoon. My phone rang and I was
20 Jeremy. I thought he was just calling to see if we
21 made it. He said, "Hey," he said, "the FBI wants to
22 meet with you." I said, "What," and I pulled over on

1 the side of the road. And he said, "I've got a client
2 that is an FBI agent, and I'm handling a domestic
3 matter for him. And he asked me off the record today
4 did I know anything about Senator John Woods and what I
5 thought of him because we're colleagues in the Senate.

6 And I told him, well, I don't know much. I mean, we
7 think he's on the take, what have you." He said, "But
8 I've got a client that could probably answer that real
9 easy for you and give you more insight than I could."

10 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm.

11 MR. CRANFORD: And Jeremy said -- and I said,
12 "Who's your client, Jeremy?" He said, "Well, I told
13 him that you could tell me about John because he's
14 always hanging out with Chace" and what have you, "and
15 talking to you and stuff." I said, "Jeremy, why in
16 God's name would you mention my name?"

17 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm.

18 MR. CRANFORD: And he said, "Because," he said,
19 "we got a meeting set up. The FBI wants to talk to
20 you. We need to schedule a date for you to go in and
21 talk to them." And I said, "Jeremy" -- he said, "You
22 need to fly back here." I said, "Jeremy, I ain't

1 flying back," and that's what I told him. I said, "The
2 FBI ain't contacting me. Why did you even bring my
3 name up?" And that's what happened.

4 AUSA WULFF: Okay. And did he -- did he call you
5 more times while you were in Florida about meeting with
6 the FBI?

7 MR. CRANFORD: Oh yeah.

8 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

9 MR. CRANFORD: I mean, matter of fact, I called
10 him probably, too.

11 AUSA WULFF: Do you need a napkin? It looks like
12 you're bleeding a little bit.

13 MS. FISCHER: No, it's --

14 AUSA WULFF: There's one right there.

15 MS. FISCHER: Oh, okay. There you go.

16 MR. CRANFORD: Thank you.

17 AUSA WULFF: So did he -- I'm sorry. I lost track
18 of that answer. Did he --

19 MR. CRANFORD: I called him several times.

20 AUSA WULFF: About this meeting with the FBI?

21 MR. CRANFORD: He pretty much ruined my whole
22 trip.

1 AUSA WULFF: Yeah. Okay. And when you -- and did
2 he ever give you a different story about how the FBI
3 meeting was to occur or his conversation with the FBI
4 over those next few weeks?

5 MR. CRANFORD: I said, "Jeremy" -- when I got
6 back --

7 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm.

8 MR. CRANFORD: -- I met him at Arthur's, and he
9 told me that -- he even said there was a grand jury
10 trying to seek -- that prosecuting attorney in Little
11 Rock -- Larry Jegley. That Larry Jegley was trying to
12 seek a -- I mean, a grand jury, and they was going to
13 -- they was investigating John Woods and three
14 lobbyists -- me, (inaudible), Bruce Hawkins.

15 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm.

16 MR. CRANFORD: I like to threw up at Arthur's when
17 he said that. Really.

18 AUSA WULFF: Yeah.

19 MR. CRANFORD: Well, come to find out they wasn't
20 -- the grand jury -- I never heard anything.

21 AUSA WULFF: Yeah.

22 MR. CRANFORD: And I said -- he said, "That's all

1 handled. It's blown over."

2 AUSA WULFF: He said it's all handled. It's all
3 blown over?

4 MR. CRANFORD: It's blown over, yes.

5 AUSA WULFF: Okay. And, I mean, did you feel like
6 he was trying to pressure you into meeting with the
7 FBI?

8 MR. CRANFORD: Yeah, absolutely.

9 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

10 MR. CRANFORD: And, I mean, I was pretty upset
11 that he would even -- out of the all the people he
12 knew, why would he bring my name up to start with?

13 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm. All right. So did you --
14 did you then upon landing have a meeting with people
15 from AO or PFH about this threat?

16 MR. CRANFORD: Yeah. Yes. Jeremy was with me in
17 the hotel room with Bontiea Goss and Marilyn Nolan.
18 And we had been traveling.

19 AUSA WULFF: Was Tom there?

20 MR. CRANFORD: No, Tom was not there at that time.

21 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

22 MR. CRANFORD: And I went to Bontiea, and I said,

1 "Hey, the FBI is wanting to meet with me," and Jeremy
2 was there. And --

3 AUSA WULFF: Why were you telling them?

4 MR. CRANFORD: Because, I mean, she's my boss.

5 Those two are my bosses. And, I mean, you know, I'm
6 sitting here thinking, okay, well, if they call her and
7 I don't tell her something, she's going to fire me
8 quick if I don't tell her, if it don't come from me,
9 you know?

10 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm.

11 MR. CRANFORD: So that's why I told her.

12 AUSA WULFF: So --

13 MR. CRANFORD: And he was there with me, and he
14 explained it. And he said, "I've talked to my" --
15 isn't it -- I think his brother's name is Josh. Not
16 Tim. I know Tim. And I think his brother out of
17 Dallas is named Josh. I've never met him.

18 AUSA WULFF: Who's in the FBI.

19 MR. CRANFORD: Yes.

20 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

21 MR. CRANFORD: He said, "I've talked -- I've
22 talked to my brother. It ain't no big deal." He said,

1 "I've talked to Josh. It ain't no big deal. The FBI
2 just wants to ask you questions. They're not even
3 looking at you. They just want to ask you questions
4 about John and what you know."

5 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm. Okay. And what did Bontiea
6 say to this?

7 MR. CRANFORD: Bontiea said, "Jeremy" -- Bontiea
8 said, "Rusty, if you know anything, you need to tell
9 them now to keep them from -- to keep -- so that they
10 don't bring us all into this."

11 AUSA WULFF: And what did Marilyn say? Do you
12 remember if she said anything?

13 MR. CRANFORD: She just pretty much agreed.

14 AUSA WULFF: All right.

15 MR. CRANFORD: And just -- and Jeremy sold them on
16 the fact that -- Jeremy actually sold them on the fact
17 that it wasn't nothing.

18 AUSA WULFF: Mm-hmm.

19 MALE SPEAKER: And at the time, did Bontiea know
20 that you had been giving cash money to Woods?

21 MR. CRANFORD: No, sir, but I told her that night.

22 MALE SPEAKER: And that was when she started

1 questioning you about it?

2 MR. CRANFORD: Yes, sir.

3 MALE SPEAKER: And how did you describe those
4 payments to Woods?

5 MR. CRANFORD: I told her that I had given John
6 Woods about \$30,000.

7 MALE SPEAKER: And how did you -- how did you
8 characterize the payments?

9 MR. CRANFORD: Loans.

10 MALE SPEAKER: And did -- and did you say whether
11 you had any expectation that he would repay you?

12 MR. CRANFORD: I said -- I said, "Hey, the guy" --
13 I did say this. "The guy would do anything for us." I
14 said, "The guy will do anything for us." I may -- it
15 may not have been those exact words, but the same
16 meaning I mean, and she knew that because the grant
17 from that, you know?

18 AUSA WULFF: When you said, "The guy will do
19 anything for us," was there any discussion amongst
20 Bontiea and Marilyn about maybe not reporting it to the
21 FBI because you've got this guy on a string? Because
22 you've got information on him and he'll do anything for

1 you about keeping him in play.

2 MR. CRANFORD: Oh no, that -- we didn't even
3 discuss that.

4 AUSA WULFF: Okay.

5 MR. CRANFORD: Jeremy tried to sell it that the
6 FBI just wanted to talk to me about John, would talk to
7 me. And Bontiea wanted to know what have you done
8 wrong. What have you done wrong? What have -- and
9 several times over the course of the period of time,
10 Bontiea would say, "If you " -- told me and Tom -- "if
11 y'all have done anything, go tell them. Otherwise,
12 they're going to drag everybody into this." And I
13 didn't even -- and at that time I had no idea about
14 this related party stuff.

15 MALE SPEAKER: If you want to take a quick break
16 because, just for the record, Mr. Cranford has a, you
17 know, a little scratch on his head, and you pulled out
18 a -- pulled out a band-aid.

19 MR. CRANFORD: I'm sorry.

20 MALE SPEAKER: And we want to get that -- nah,
21 that's okay. You know, we just want to get that
22 applied properly and, you know, Special Agent Kilcoyne,

1 if you want to, you know --

2 SA CAMPBELL: The time is 1:09 p.m.

3 MALE SPEAKER: -- see if we can get a key to the

4 bathroom or --

5 AUSA WULFF: Kathleen --

6 MALE SPEAKER: Kathleen is helping out. Okay.

7 SA CAMPBELL: The time is 1:09 p.m., and I'm

8 shutting off the recorder.

9 (Whereupon, at 1:09 p.m., the interview was
10 concluded.)

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