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1 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

2 -----x

3 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

4 v.

19 Cr. 765 (JSR)

5 BRUCE BAGLEY,

6 Defendant.

Telephone Conference

7 -----x

8 New York, N.Y.

9 June 1, 2020

1:10 p.m.

10 Before:

11 HON. JED S. RAKOFF,

12 District Judge

13 APPEARANCES

14 GEOFFREY S. BERMAN

15 United States Attorney for the
Southern District of New York

16 NATHAN REHN

SEBASTIAN SWETT

17 Assistant United States Attorneys

18 PETER E. QUIJANO

ANNA SIDERIS

19 Attorneys for Defendant

20
21 ALSO PRESENT: RYAN CASSIDY, Special Agent, FBI
LAURA RODIA, Special Agent, FBI
22 CHRISTOPHER DELZOTTO, Special Agent, FBI
23
24
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1 (The Court and all parties appearing telephonically
2 and videoconference)

3 THE COURT: This is Judge Rakoff. This is United
4 States vs. Bruce Bagley.

5 Would counsel please identify themselves.

6 MR. REHN: Good afternoon, your Honor. This is Thane
7 Rehn appearing for the United States. I am appearing by video.
8 Also on the call is AUSA Sheb Swett for the United States. And
9 we have three special agents from the FBI on the call, Special
10 Agent Ryan Cassidy, Laura Rodia, and Special Agent Christopher
11 Delzotto.

12 MR. QUIJANO: Good afternoon. For the defendant,
13 Bruce Bagley, Peter E. Quijano and Anna Sideris. I failed to
14 get on Skype. We are appearing telephonically and Mr. Bagley
15 is present. I believe he is appearing on Skype and he is ready
16 to proceed.

17 THE COURT: I can see Mr. Bagley.

18 Let me confirm both with you, Mr. Quijano, and also
19 with Mr. Bagley that you and he have discussed having this
20 proceeding by Skype and he has consented to that occurring.

21 MR. QUIJANO: We have discussed it, your Honor. Mr.
22 Bagley does consent to proceed by Skype.

23 THE COURT: Mr. Bagley, is that true?

24 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, it is true.

25 THE COURT: Thank you.

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1 I will note for the record that Chief Judge McMahon of
2 this court some weeks ago made a finding that felony pleas
3 cannot be conducted in person in this courtroom without
4 seriously jeopardizing public health and safety. And, in
5 addition, I find that in this particular case, going forward
6 with this plea cannot be further delayed without serious harm
7 to the interests of justice, since we have an already once
8 adjourned trial date, now scheduled for June 29, and, indeed,
9 the staff of the courthouse were in my courtroom this morning
10 configuring the court so that we could accommodate a jury trial
11 if this matter went forward, but I am delighted that it appears
12 to be resolved.

13 So it's my understanding that the defendant wishes to
14 enter a plea of guilty to Counts Two and Three of the
15 indictment in satisfaction of the indictment.

16 Mr. Quijano, is that correct?

17 MR. QUIJANO: That is correct, your Honor.

18 THE COURT: So I will place the defendant under oath.

19 Mr. Bagley, please raise your right hand.

20 (Defendant sworn)

21 THE COURT: For the record, let me advise you that
22 because you are under oath, anything you say that is knowingly
23 false could subject you to punishment for perjury or
24 obstruction of justice. You understand that?

25 THE DEFENDANT: I do understand, your Honor.

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1 THE COURT: Very good.

2 Do you read, write, speak and understand English?

3 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I do.

4 THE COURT: How far did you go in school?

5 THE DEFENDANT: I have a Ph.D. in political science
6 from UCLA.

7 THE COURT: Do you prefer to be addressed as Mr.
8 Bagley or Dr. Bagley?

9 THE DEFENDANT: Either way. I am often here referred
10 to as Dr. Bagley.

11 THE COURT: We will make it Dr. Bagley.

12 Where are you from originally?

13 THE DEFENDANT: I was born and raised in California,
14 Santa Barbara, California.

15 THE COURT: How old are you now?

16 THE DEFENDANT: I am now 74 years old, your Honor.

17 THE COURT: Not quite what I would consider maturity
18 but getting close.

19 THE DEFENDANT: I have been working on it.

20 THE COURT: Are you single or married?

21 THE DEFENDANT: I am married.

22 THE COURT: Do you have any children?

23 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. I have been married for 52 years
24 and I have two children.

25 THE COURT: Have you ever been treated by a

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1 psychiatrist or psychologist?

2 THE DEFENDANT: No, your Honor.

3 THE COURT: Have you ever been hospitalized for any
4 mental illness?

5 THE DEFENDANT: No, sir.

6 THE COURT: Have you ever been treated or hospitalized
7 for alcoholism?

8 THE DEFENDANT: No, sir.

9 THE COURT: Have you ever been treated or hospitalized
10 for drug addiction?

11 THE DEFENDANT: No, your Honor.

12 THE COURT: Are you currently under the care of a
13 physician for any physical reason?

14 THE DEFENDANT: Well, I have regular medical checkups
15 with my doctor, and I take medicine for high blood pressure,
16 diabetes and cholesterol.

17 THE COURT: Do either of those medications in any way
18 affect your ability to understand these proceedings?

19 THE DEFENDANT: No, your Honor.

20 THE COURT: Is your mind clear today?

21 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, it is.

22 THE COURT: Do you understand these proceedings?

23 THE DEFENDANT: I do understand the proceedings, your
24 Honor.

25 THE COURT: On the basis of the defendant's responses

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1 to my questions and my observations of his demeanor, I find he
2 is fully competent to enter an informed plea at this time.

3 Now, Dr. Bagley, you have a right to be represented by
4 counsel at every stage of these proceedings.

5 Do you understand that?

6 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I do.

7 THE COURT: If at any time you cannot afford counsel,
8 one will be appointed to represent you without charge
9 throughout these proceedings.

10 Do you understand that?

11 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I do, your Honor.

12 THE COURT: Mr. Quijano, are you retained or
13 appointed?

14 MR. QUIJANO: We are retained, your Honor.

15 THE COURT: Dr. Bagley, have you had a full
16 opportunity to discuss this case with your attorney?

17 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I have.

18 THE COURT: Have you told him everything you know
19 about this matter?

20 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I have told him everything.

21 THE COURT: Now, you have been charged in indictment
22 19 Cr. 765 with various charges relating to money laundering
23 and the like, and my understanding is that you wish to plead
24 guilty to Counts Two and Three of that indictment in
25 satisfaction of the entire indictment. Is that correct?

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1 THE DEFENDANT: That is correct, your Honor.

2 THE COURT: Before I can accept a plea of guilty, I
3 need to make certain that you understand the rights you will be
4 giving up if you plead guilty. So I want to go over with you
5 now the rights that you will be giving up. You understand,
6 yes?

7 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir.

8 THE COURT: First, you have a right to a speedy and a
9 public trial by a jury on the charges against you.

10 Do you understand that?

11 THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

12 THE COURT: Second, if there were a trial, you would
13 be presumed innocent and the government would be required to
14 prove your guilt beyond a reasonable doubt before you could be
15 convicted of any charge.

16 Do you understand that?

17 THE DEFENDANT: I understand it.

18 THE COURT: Third, at the trial, you would have the
19 right to be represented by counsel, and once again, if you
20 could not afford counsel at any time, the Court would appoint
21 one to represent you free of charge at the trial and all other
22 proceedings.

23 Do you understand that?

24 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I do.

25 THE COURT: Fourth, at the trial, you would have the

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1 right to see and hear all of the witnesses and other evidence
2 against you and your attorney could question and cross-examine
3 the government's witnesses, object to the government's
4 evidence, and offer evidence on your own behalf if you so
5 desired, and could have subpoenas issued to compel the
6 attendance of witnesses and other evidence on your behalf.

7 Do you understand all that?

8 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

9 THE COURT: Fifth, at the trial, you would have the
10 right to testify if you wanted to, but no one could force you
11 to testify if you did not want to, and no suggestion of guilt
12 could be drawn against you simply because you chose not to
13 testify.

14 Do you understand that?

15 THE DEFENDANT: I do.

16 THE COURT: Finally, even if you were convicted of one
17 or more of these charges, you would have the right to appeal
18 your conviction.

19 Do you understand that?

20 THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

21 THE COURT: Do you understand that if you plead guilty
22 today, you will be giving up each and every one of the rights
23 we just discussed?

24 Do you understand that?

25 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I do, your Honor.

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1 THE COURT: Very good.

2 Now, I have received today a signed letter agreement
3 dated April 6, 2020, taking the form of a letter from
4 government counsel to defense counsel.

5 It appears, Mr. Bagley, you have now signed it as
6 well, is that correct?

7 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, it is, your Honor.

8 THE COURT: Before signing it, did you read it?

9 THE DEFENDANT: I read it and I went over it with my
10 lawyers.

11 THE COURT: Did you sign it in order to indicate your
12 agreement to its terms?

13 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I did.

14 THE COURT: Now, this letter agreement is binding
15 between you and the government, but it is not binding on me, on
16 the Court.

17 Do you understand that?

18 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I do.

19 THE COURT: So with respect to Count Two and with
20 respect to Count Three, each count carries a maximum term of
21 imprisonment of 20 years, a maximum term of supervised release
22 of three years to follow any imprisonment, a maximum fine of
23 whichever is greatest, either \$250,000 or twice the amount of
24 money derived from the crime or twice the loss to any victims
25 of the crime, plus a mandatory \$100 special assessment.

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1 Do you understand those are the maximum punishments on
2 each of Counts Two and Three?

3 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

4 THE COURT: And if you plead guilty to both, then the
5 total maximum term that you would face would be the two
6 combined, so that it would be, for example, a total of 40
7 years' imprisonment.

8 Do you understand that?

9 THE DEFENDANT: I do understand it, your Honor.

10 THE COURT: Also, if you do plead guilty, the Court
11 must order restitution, and in that connection, I have already
12 received a signed forfeiture order and you have consented to
13 that as well. Is that correct?

14 THE DEFENDANT: That is correct.

15 THE COURT: Now, of course, at this time, I have no
16 idea what actual sentence I will impose if you plead guilty,
17 but one of the things I will look at are the sentencing
18 guidelines. And those are certain laws that are not binding on
19 the Court, but which the Court may consider in determining
20 sentence. You understand that and have gone over that with
21 your lawyer, yes?

22 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I do understand it, and I have
23 gone over it with my lawyers.

24 THE COURT: So under the letter agreement that you
25 have signed, you and the government have agreed that the

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1 guideline range is 46 to 57 months in prison. However, I may
2 agree with that calculation or I may disagree with that
3 calculation. And even if I agree with that calculation, I may
4 sentence you to more or less or anywhere in between, and
5 nonetheless, if you plead guilty, you will still be bound by my
6 sentence.

7 Do you understand that?

8 THE DEFENDANT: I do, your Honor.

9 THE COURT: More generally, do you understand that if
10 anyone has made any kind of estimate or representation or
11 prediction to you of what your sentence will be in this case,
12 that person could be completely wrong, and nevertheless, if you
13 plead guilty, you will be still be bound by my sentence.

14 Do you understand that?

15 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

16 THE COURT: Does the government represent that this
17 letter agreement is the entirety of any and all agreements
18 between the government and Mr. Bagley in connection with this
19 plea?

20 MR. REHN: Yes, it is, your Honor, along with the
21 forfeiture order which is an exhibit to the agreement.

22 THE COURT: Thank you very much.

23 Does defense counsel agree that is correct?

24 MR. QUIJANO: We agree, your Honor.

25 THE COURT: Dr. Bagley, do you agree it is correct?

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1 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I do, your Honor.

2 THE COURT: Dr. Bagley, other than the government, has
3 anyone else made any kind of promise to you or offered you any
4 inducement to get you to plead guilty in this case?

5 THE DEFENDANT: No, sir.

6 THE COURT: Has anyone threatened you or coerced you
7 in any way to get you to plead guilty in this case?

8 THE DEFENDANT: Not at all, no, sir.

9 THE COURT: Does the government represent that if this
10 case were to go to trial, it could through competent evidence
11 prove every essential element of each of these two charges
12 beyond a reasonable doubt?

13 MR. REHN: Yes, your Honor.

14 THE COURT: Does defense counsel know of any reason
15 why Dr. Bagley should not plead guilty at this time?

16 MR. QUIJANO: No, your Honor.

17 THE COURT: Dr. Bagley, please tell me in your own
18 words what it is that you did that makes you guilty of these
19 crimes.

20 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I will.

21 As to Count Two, your Honor, in January 2019, I
22 accepted a money transfer into my bank account from an overseas
23 bank account owned by Alex Saab. I then transferred most of
24 that money from Alex Saab to Jorge Luis Hernandez, pursuant to
25 their request, in order to disguise a transfer directly from

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1 Alex Saab to Jorge Luis Hernandez. I should have understood
2 that the money involved the proceeds of unlawful activity
3 because Jorge Luis Hernandez told me that the money from Alex
4 Saab was from corruption.

5 As to Count Three, your Honor, in February 2019, I
6 accepted a money transfer into my bank account from an overseas
7 bank account owned by Alex Saab. I then transferred most of
8 that money from Alex Saab to Jorge Luis Hernandez, pursuant to
9 their request, in order to disguise a transfer directly from
10 Alex Saab to Jorge Luis Hernandez. I should have understood
11 that the money involved the proceeds of unlawful activity
12 because Jorge Luis Hernandez told me that the money from Alex
13 Saab was from corruption.

14 That is my statement, your Honor.

15 THE COURT: Thank you very much.

16 So when you say you should have understood, you knew
17 that you were being asked to disguise this transfer from what
18 it really was, yes?

19 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

20 THE COURT: While you may not have known the specific
21 impropriety or criminal conduct --

22 MR. QUIJANO: I am sorry.

23 THE COURT: Excuse me?

24 MR. QUIJANO: Can you repeat your second question?

25 THE COURT: My question was, you understood that in

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1 each of these cases you were being asked to disguise the true
2 nature of these transactions, the underlying nature of the
3 transactions, yes?

4 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

5 THE COURT: And you knew that it therefore involved
6 criminal activity, even if you didn't know what specific
7 criminal activity was involved?

8 THE DEFENDANT: I think we should confer with Peter on
9 this point.

10 THE COURT: Of course. The reason I am raising this,
11 as I am sure, Mr. Quijano, you appreciate, was the ambiguity in
12 the word "should" in the allocution.

13 MR. QUIJANO: If your Honor pleases, Mr. Bagley admits
14 that he learned the proceeds transferred were from an illegal
15 source, and he learned this information from a third party that
16 he has named, who we believe is also a confidential informant.
17 Second, we believe he is acknowledging that he should have
18 known his conduct was illegal, which I think does satisfy the
19 element.

20 THE COURT: I think in the law of the Anglo-American
21 legal system since approximately 1215, that unless Congress
22 otherwise indicates, one has to know that one is engaging in
23 the various elements of a crime in order to be guilty of that
24 crime. Negligence, gross negligence will not do. And for
25 example, the Supreme Court just a few weeks ago in the *Rehaif*

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1 case held that someone who has a particular alleged status,
2 such as a prior felon or alien, who then possesses a gun
3 illegally, not only has to know that they are possessing the
4 gun, but also has to know that they have the specific status
5 that makes them guilty of the crime.

6 So here, it may be that Mr. Bagley willfully
7 disregarded finding out more details of the underlying
8 illegality, and that would be a way to satisfy knowledge, but I
9 am not sure it satisfies the statute.

10 MR. REHN: Your Honor, if I may, may I just jump in
11 and go through the elements which may help sort of focus this
12 conversation.

13 THE COURT: Sure. I am very much influenced by that
14 recent Supreme Court case which overruled 12 circuits, the 11
15 circuits and the federal circuit. And the government in every
16 Court of Appeals had maintained that the only element that
17 there had to be knowledge of was the knowing you have a gun,
18 and the Supreme Court, in language that sweeps very broadly,
19 said that's not enough under historic Anglo-American
20 jurisprudence. So if you're talking about a Supreme Court case
21 that you want to recite the elements from, that would be
22 helpful.

23 MR. REHN: Your Honor, with respect to Counts Two and
24 Three, they both charge a violation of Title 18, United States
25 Code, Section 1956(a)(3)(B), which is sometimes referred to as

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1 the money laundering sting provision of the money laundering
2 statute. And specifically --

3 THE COURT: Am I supposed to go ouch when you tell me
4 that?

5 MR. REHN: It's a reference to the requirement in the
6 statute that a defendant conduct a transaction after it's been
7 represented to the defendant that it constitutes illegal
8 proceeds. I think because of that, this allocution likely
9 meets the elements, but let me just go through them.

10 THE COURT: All right.

11 MR. REHN: There are three elements that have been
12 recognized.

13 First, that the defendant must knowingly conduct or
14 attempt to conduct a financial transaction.

15 THE COURT: That's clearly satisfied.

16 MR. REHN: Second, that the defendant must engage in
17 the financial transaction with the intent to conceal or
18 disguise the nature, location, source, ownership, or control of
19 property believed to be the proceeds of specified unlawful
20 activity.

21 THE COURT: He has allocuted to that.

22 MR. REHN: Then, third, that the financial transaction
23 must involve property that has been represented by a law
24 enforcement officer, or a person acting at the direction of a
25 law enforcement officer, to be the proceeds of specified

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1 unlawful activity, or property used to conduct or facilitate
2 specified unlawful activity. And the specified unlawful
3 activity here would be bribery of a foreign official.

4 THE COURT: So if an undercover agent says to the
5 person who is about to effectuate the money laundering, this is
6 proceeds of a drug transaction, and in my hypothetical the
7 defendant says, Oh, come on, I don't believe that for one
8 second, I have known the guy who is asking me to transfer and
9 he would never do anything like that, does that in your view
10 satisfy the statute?

11 MR. REHN: No, your Honor, I don't know that that
12 necessarily would. But I do believe that if the defendant,
13 having notice of the nature of the transaction, proceeds with
14 it, with no reason to disbelieve that, and I think the
15 defendant has allocuted to it or will allocute that he had
16 every reason to believe that, I think that does satisfy the
17 element.

18 THE COURT: That's not what he said in his allocution.
19 What he said in his allocution is he should have known.

20 Maybe we should go back to Dr. Bagley, and Mr.
21 Quijano, if you want to consult with Dr. Bagley at any point
22 just let me know.

23 MR. QUIJANO: Let me briefly do that, if I could.

24 THE COURT: Sure. Go ahead.

25 MR. QUIJANO: I have to call him.

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1 THE COURT: Yes, I understand.

2 MR. QUIJANO: Can we shut the video down?

3 THE COURT: I am hesitant to do that. Everyone will
4 be muted.

5 (Defense counsel confers with defendant)

6 THE COURT: I think everyone can unmute at this point.

7 MR. QUIJANO: We are back, your Honor.

8 THE COURT: Very good.

9 MR. QUIJANO: Your Honor, I think if you want to
10 inquire on the third element.

11 THE COURT: Yes.

12 So you were told that these proceeds were actually the
13 proceeds of what?

14 THE DEFENDANT: Corruption, your Honor. That's what
15 was said to me.

16 THE COURT: Did you have any more specific
17 understanding of what kind of corruption?

18 THE DEFENDANT: No, your Honor, I did not.

19 THE COURT: And you had no reason to disbelieve the
20 accuracy of what you were being told, is that right?

21 THE DEFENDANT: No, I did not have any reason to
22 disbelieve.

23 THE COURT: And you, in fact, accepted that, yes?

24 THE DEFENDANT: In effect, yes, I did. I did accept
25 it, yes.

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1 THE COURT: All right. If the government is willing
2 to accept that as sufficient for their purposes,
3 notwithstanding some of the issues that I have raised, I am
4 willing to accept it as well. Is that acceptable to the
5 government?

6 MR. REHN: Just a moment, your Honor.

7 THE COURT: Hello?

8 MR. REHN: Yes. We would not ask for more questions
9 to be asked at this time. I can make a proffer with respect to
10 venue and with respect to the --

11 THE COURT: I was going to ask you about those things.
12 Just on the issue we have been discussing, you are satisfied
13 that it meets the elements of the statute?

14 MR. REHN: Yes, your Honor.

15 THE COURT: As far as I am concerned, the risk that I
16 was raising was an extension on the Supreme Court case in
17 another context. The government is happy to assume the risk.
18 It's fine with me.

19 Tell me about venue.

20 MR. REHN: Your Honor, the financial transactions in
21 this case involved wire transfers from outside the United
22 States into the United States that passed through banks located
23 in the Southern District of New York.

24 THE COURT: Was there anything else you wanted to
25 either make a representation about or have me inquire further

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1 about?

2 MR. REHN: Simply that the person who made the
3 representation regarding the source of the property involved in
4 the transaction was, in fact, acting at the direction of a law
5 enforcement officer.

6 THE COURT: I assumed that was the case.

7 Anything else from the defense?

8 MR. QUIJANO: No. Thank you, your Honor.

9 THE COURT: So in light of everything we have now
10 discussed, Dr. Bagley, how do you plead first to Count Two,
11 guilty or not guilty?

12 THE DEFENDANT: Guilty, your Honor.

13 THE COURT: And to Count Three, guilty or not guilty?

14 THE DEFENDANT: Guilty, your Honor.

15 THE COURT: Because the defendant has acknowledged his
16 guilt as charged, because he has shown he understands his
17 rights, because his plea is entered knowingly and voluntarily
18 and is supported by an independent basis in fact containing
19 each of the essential elements of the offense, I accept his
20 plea and adjudge him guilty of Counts Two and Three of
21 indictment 19 Cr. 765.

22 Now, Dr. Bagley, the next stage in this process is
23 that the probation office will prepare what is called a
24 presentence report to assist me in determining sentence. As
25 part of that you will be interviewed by them, probably

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1 electronically, and you can have your counsel with you or
2 plugged in at that conference, but under my practices you
3 personally need to answer the questions put to you by the
4 probation officer.

5 Do you understand that?

6 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I do, your Honor.

7 THE COURT: After that report is in draft form, but
8 not yet in final form, you and your counsel, also government
9 counsel, will have a chance to review it, offer suggestions,
10 corrections or additions directly to the probation officer, who
11 will then prepare the report in final to come to me.

12 Independent of that, counsel for both sides are hereby given
13 leave to submit directly to the Court in writing any and all
14 materials bearing on any aspect of sentence, provided those
15 materials are submitted no later than one week before sentence.

16 We will set the sentence down for -- Linda, are you
17 on?

18 THE DEPUTY CLERK: Yes, I am. Thursday, October 1,
19 any time you choose.

20 THE COURT: Thursday, October 1, at 4 p.m.

21 All right. Anything else we need to take up today?

22 MR. QUIJANO: Your Honor, if I may, I just want to
23 note, hopefully, by October 1 there is some semblance of
24 normalcy again. However, I do believe, in fact I know, we are
25 going to want to proceed in person for sentencing.

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1 THE COURT: Yes. From everything I have seen, that
2 will not be a problem. What they are doing is, as I said, they
3 are even doing it today in my court, configuring the courtrooms
4 so that there will be complete safe distancing. And in terms
5 of consulting with your client, you may have to do as you did
6 today, talk to him by a separate phone or go outside the
7 courtroom and talk with him outside or something like that.
8 But in all other respects, it will be a totally public hearing,
9 and of course your conversations with your client are never
10 part of the public record, so we will proceed in court without
11 any difficulty.

12 MR. QUIJANO: Thank you, your Honor.

13 THE COURT: All right. Anything else from the
14 government?

15 MR. REHN: Nothing further, your Honor. Thank you.

16 THE COURT: I will sign the forfeiture order that has
17 been signed by the parties and file that later.

18 Very good. This matter is concluded, and I look
19 forward to seeing you all in October. Thanks a lot.

20 (Adjourned)