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Trump Organization.

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By Molly Crane-Newman, New York Daily News (TNS)

A longtime Trump Organization senior executive painted himself Thursday as a lowly accountant who followed the boss's orders and kept his head down, unaware he was engaging in rampant tax fraud.

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McConney also admitted that top executives got away without paying New York City taxes because he left company-provided rent-free apartments in Manhattan off their returns.

The balancing act was to subtract apartment costs from their sky-high salaries. McConney said Former Trump Chief Financial Officer Allen Weisselberg once told him Trump was aware of the practice, which is illegal.

"Mr McConney, did you try to help (employees) evade their income tax?" Assistant District Attorney Joshua Steinglass asked on direct examination.

"'Evade' is a very strong word. I tried to help them in any way I could," said McConney.

The Trump Organization controller and senior vice president, who's worked at the company for 35 years, is not charged in the case. McConney testified eight times before the grand jury. Prosecutors tried in vain to declare him a hostile witness when it emerged that Trump's company was paying his legal bills, and their lawyers were coaching him.

The Trump Organization and Trump Payroll Corporation attorneys argue that Weisselberg, who's worked for the Trumps since the 1970s, worked alone and cheated on his taxes unbeknownst to anyone.

Weisselberg is expected to take the stand next week. He was charged in June 2021 alongside the two Trump entities with orchestrating a 15-year tax fraud scheme. Prosecutors said he and the companies **dodged more than \$1 million in taxes** through untaxed fringe benefits. The 75-year-old pleaded guilty to all charges in August for a reduced prison sentence.

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“Yes,” said McConney. “Nobody told me specifically that this change was because Mr. Trump became President Trump.”

The Trump companies have pleaded not guilty to all charges. Donald Trump has not been criminally charged.

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