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Subject: Order of the palmetto

1) First, can you confirm that the 42 names on the initial list you sent me yesterday (Thursday) are all current or former staff members of Nikki Haley?

ON BACKGROUND: Those on the list include members of Team Haley through the years - former chiefs of staff, members of the current staff, members of the executive protection detail and others.

2) Second, can we have a comment about why Gov. Haley decided to award her staff with what is described as "the state's highest civilian honor awarded to citizens of South Carolina for extraordinary lifetime service and achievements of national or statewide significance?" I don't personally have a problem with you guys getting the honor ... but there are always critics. So, because of this, we would love a statement from the governor or someone in her office regarding the awards that were given out Jan. 11.

From the governor's State of the State address:

"There is a special group of people sitting in the balcony tonight. ... My Chiefs of Staff over the years and the rest of Team Haley are among the most talented, hard-working people I have ever met. They sacrificed and worked with servant hearts every day to lift up and improve our state. To my team, past and present, know that the impact of your work will be felt for generations. Your sacrifice will never be forgotten. Your future is bright. Thank you for your friendship and sharing the love of our state with me."

3) Third, did Gov. Haley follow a process, in general, when she awarded Order of the Palmetto awards? Was there a committee or panel that reviewed individuals who'd been nominated for the award? If so, was that process followed when the 42 staff members were given the award?

BACKGROUND on ORDERS OF THE PALMETTO IS AVAILABLE HERE: <http://governor.sc.gov/ExecutiveOffice/Pages/Awards.aspx>

4) Lastly, what does receiving the Order of the Palmetto entail? Are you give a cash prize or something? Is there an actual award? Please enlighten me.

ON BACKGROUND: The Order of the Palmetto is a certificate signed by the governor