# Donald Trump Hush Money Trial Nears Conclusion Amidst Michael Cohen Cross-Examination



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In New York, Donald Trump’s hush money trial is entering its final stretch with a pivotal day in court as his defense team continues its cross-examination of key prosecution witness Michael Cohen on Monday. The trial, which centers on allegations that Trump falsified financial records to cover up a $130,000 hush money payment to adult film actress Stormy Daniels, is the first criminal trial of a former U.S. president.

The trial resumed with Trump’s defense focusing on undermining Cohen’s credibility, questioning his past criminal record, and previous lies. Cohen had previously testified that Trump directed the payment to Daniels to avoid potential damage to his 2016 presidential campaign. Trump has denied the affair and pleaded not guilty to the charges.

Under cross-examination, Cohen was questioned about inconsistencies in his statements, particularly a call to Trump’s bodyguard that Cohen said was related to the hush money payment. Defense attorney Todd Blanche argued that the call pertained to a different matter, suggesting Cohen lied about the call's content.

With Cohen’s credibility under attack, the prosecution faces the challenge of addressing doubts raised by the defense. They aim to restore confidence in Cohen’s testimony during their re-examination.

The defense has indicated the potential to call Bradley Smith, a former Federal Election Commission official, to testify. However, Judge Juan Merchan has restricted the scope of Smith's testimony, limiting him to provide context on campaign finance laws without interpreting their specific application to this case.

Uncertainty remains over whether Trump will testify, a move that could add complexity to the trial. Closing arguments could start as early as Tuesday, and a verdict may be reached shortly thereafter. The outcome will determine whether Trump, the presumptive Republican nominee for the 2024 presidential election, will be convicted of falsifying business records.