

Trump campaign threatens Republican officials certifying election results

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In the face of legal setbacks and state election certifications showing that President-elect Joe Biden clearly won the 2020 election, President Donald Trump is still refusing to concede. Instead he continues to stoke his fascistic supporters by issuing threats against election officials who certify the results, with one his lawyers openly threatening to kill a former Department of Homeland Security secretary on Monday.

During an appearance on “The Howie Carr Show” on Monday, Trump attorney Joe diGenova, a long time Fox News contributor and former federal attorney, suggested that former director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Chris Krebs, be shot for suggesting that the election was free of manipulation.

Appearing on the Newsmax podcast, diGenova called Krebs a “class A moron,” adding: “He should be drawn and quartered, taken out at dawn and shot.” On Tuesday, Krebs responded to the violent comments in an NBC interview, calling diGenova’s language “dangerous” and that he would be pursuing legal action against diGenova, who has since attempted to frame his threats as “sarcastic and made in jest.”

The unprecedented threats against the former government official—two weeks ago Krebs was the head of CISA before Trump fired him for fact-checking his baseless election-fraud claims—come even as Trump loyalists within the administration are starting to push back on some of his more outlandish and farcical fraud claims. In an interview with the Associated Press on Tuesday, Attorney General William Barr rejected Trump’s assertions of widespread voter fraud, stating: “To date, we have not seen fraud on a scale that could have effected a different outcome in the election.”

Barr represents the highest ranking administration official to publicly dispute Trump’s claims of election

fraud. Up until this point Barr has remained a steadfast supporter of Trump, even agreeing with Trump prior to the election that mail-in voter fraud was a serious issue, stating in September that “elections that have been held with mail have found substantial fraud and coercion.”

However, during Tuesday’s interview Barr neglected to name any instances of mail-in voter fraud and he pushed back on claims by Trump campaign attorneys, such as QAnon supporter and Kyle Rittenhouse attorney L. Lin Wood, that computerized voting systems were responsible for changing votes, a linchpin of far-right conspiracy theories. Barr stated: “There’s been one assertion that would be systemic fraud, and that would be the claim that machines were programmed essentially to skew the election results. And the DHS and DOJ have looked into that, and so far, we haven’t seen anything to substantiate that.”

In response to Barr’s comments, Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani issued a statement rebutting Barr, saying that there “hasn’t been any semblance of a Department of Justice investigation,” and that Barr’s opinion “appears to be without any knowledge or investigation of the substantial irregularities and evidence of systemic fraud.”

Barr’s refutations of fraud come after a flurry of threats from Trump against Republican officials, including the governors of Arizona and Georgia, for certifying their state’s election results. On Monday, Arizona Governor Doug Ducey certified the state’s election which confirmed that both Democratic Senator-elect Mark Kelly and Biden won their respective contests, with Biden eclipsing Trump’s vote total by more than 10,000. After Ducey signed the results, Trump angrily questioned what he was doing, writing on Twitter: “Why is he rushing to put a Democrat in office, especially when so many horrible things

concerning voter fraud are being revealed at the hearing going on right now.” Trump threateningly added, “Republicans will long remember!”

Prior to Trump’s attempted interventions in the Arizona election, he had previously called on Republican Georgia Governor Brian Kemp to “overrule” his Republican secretary of state, Brad Raffensberger, and put a stop to the election certification. “Why won’t ... the hapless Governor of Georgia, use his emergency powers ... to overrule his obstinate Secretary of State ... it will be a ‘goldmine’ of fraud and we will easily WIN the state...” Trump wrote on Twitter on Monday.

Raffensberger and Kemp have both certified the election, which after a recount found Trump had lost by more than 12,000 votes. During a televised Fox News propaganda segment on Sunday following the certification of the results, Trump said that he was “ashamed” for having endorsed Kemp in his 2018 gubernatorial race against Stacey Abrams, stating that Kemp has “done absolutely nothing” to question the state results.

While Trump’s prospects for overturning the 2020 election have seemingly hit a snag, this hasn’t dissuaded the campaign from filing lawsuits in closely contested states while Trump continues to lay the groundwork for his fascistic “stab in the back” narrative, in which widespread corruption and disloyalty by his “enemies” cost him the election.

In Wisconsin, Republicans on the state election commissions called for the resignation of the chair, Democrat Ann Jacobs, after she finalized the election results showing that Biden had won. The Trump campaign had previously spent \$3 million on a recount in the state which was completed this past weekend and showed that Biden had actually increased his vote tally by a little less than 100 votes to over 20,600 more than Trump, confirming his victory. However, because the Trump campaign has multiple ongoing lawsuits, Republican former state lawmaker and Elections Commissioner Dean Knudson argued that the results should not be certified pending their results.

One of the lawsuits is seeking to disqualify more than 221,000 ballots in Democratic-leaning Dane and Milwaukee counties while two other lawsuits are requesting to have the Republican-controlled legislature usurp the voters’ choice and decide Wisconsin’s

electoral votes. As of this writing neither lawsuit has made it to the Republican-controlled Wisconsin Supreme Court.

Ignoring Knudson’s request, Jacobs certified the results on Monday, saying that she was following the law and commission precedent, which prompted a call from the Republican commissioners to have Jacobs removed. Voting to remove Jacobs, Republican Commissioner Bob Spindell said Jacob’s decision to certify the vote was part of a “long-range Democratic planning solely to mess up the Trump campaign.” Tuesday’s vote deadlocked along party lines, 3–3, leaving Jacobs as chair for now.

Given Trump’s ongoing unprecedented refusal to concede the election and continued threats against government and election officials, one would think the incoming president-elect, whose fellow party members have been the targets of far-right assassination plots within the last year, would strongly condemn Trump’s dangerous threats. Instead in his only public comments on Tuesday, Biden announced his incoming economic team, composed of former BlackRock investment executives and millionaires, while refusing to comment on Trump’s threats or answer questions after the press conference, demonstrating the Democratic Party’s commitment to democratic rights and the safety of election officials.



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