

Republicans name Trump defenders to House committee on January 6 coup

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On Monday, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy named five Republicans who voted against the impeachment of Donald Trump one week after the attempted coup of January 6 to join eight members chosen by the Democrats for a select committee charged with investigating the storming of the US Capitol.

The Democratic-controlled committee is scheduled to hold its first hearing on July 27. In line with the Democrats' efforts to attack the Republicans as "anti-police," they have selected as the first witnesses four police officers who were attacked by the pro-Trump mob that invaded the Capitol.

Three of the five lawmakers named by McCarthy were among the 139 Republican House members who voted in the early morning hours of January 7, following the violent assault on Congress by a fascistic mob incited by the then-president, to reject the electoral vote results for the swing states Arizona and Pennsylvania. They include two of Trump's most vociferous defenders and co-conspirators: Ohio's Jim Jordan, the ranking Republican on the House Judiciary Committee, and Jim Banks of Indiana, a Naval Reserve officer and chairman of the right-wing Republican Study Committee.

Jordan has made a name for himself by denouncing any investigation of the attempted coup as a partisan Democratic witch hunt and cover-up of supposed left-wing and Antifa terrorism, exemplified, in his telling, by the mass protests last spring and summer against police violence. He joined Trump on the platform of the ex-president's first post-January 6 public rally, held last month in Ohio, at which he seconded Trump's claims of a stolen election.

In an interview with Newsmax on Monday, Jordan said he wanted to serve on the committee because "we know what this is. This is impeachment round three... This is to go after President Trump."

Jim Banks, named by McCarthy to lead the Republican faction on the select committee, was, along with Jordan, part of a group of Republicans who signed onto a December 2020 lawsuit which sought to invalidate the ballots of millions of voters in four battleground states that went for

Biden. The suit was tossed out by the US Supreme Court.

In May, Banks told Fox News' Chris Wallace, "I stand by my vote to object on January 6 and stand by the Texas lawsuit. I have serious concerns about how the election in November was carried out."

Banks issued a statement following McCarthy's Monday announcement in which he declared: "I will do everything possible to give the American people the facts about the lead-up to January 6, the riot that day, and the responses from Capitol leadership and the Biden administration. I will not allow this committee to be turned into a forum for condemning millions of Americans because of their political beliefs... Make no mistake, Nancy Pelosi created this committee solely to malign conservatives and to justify the Left's authoritarian agenda."

Banks recently joined Trump in a visit to the US-Mexico border and met with the former president at the latter's New Jersey golf resort.

McCarthy also made the pilgrimage to Trump's New Jersey golf resort last week, no doubt to obtain the latter's approval regarding the House select committee. The visit came amid stunning revelations from a newly published book on Trump's efforts to overturn the election, including statements by Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, calling Trump's plot a "Reichstag moment, the gospel of the Führer."

Troy Nehls of Texas is the third Republican named by McCarthy to the select committee who voted against certification of the election results following the attempted coup. He is a former cop who joined the Army Reserve and was deployed to Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Kelly Armstrong of North Dakota and Rodney Davis of Illinois are the ostensibly "moderate" Republicans named to the committee. Armstrong is one of seven Republicans who signed a letter opposing efforts by House Republicans to challenge the results of the presidential election when Congress met in a joint session to certify the results on January 6. He gave credence to the baseless claims of widespread voting fraud, but rejected the notion that

Congress had the authority to overturn the results as certified by the states.

Davis is the ranking Republican on the House Administration Committee, which is chaired by Zoe Lofgren of California, one of the eight members of the select committee named earlier this month by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Davis is the only one of the five Republicans named to the committee who voted in May for a Democratic bill to establish an independent, bipartisan 9/11-style commission to investigate the January 6 coup attempt. That proposal was killed at the end of the month by Senate Republicans, who blocked it from coming to a floor vote.

Davis' appointment highlights the critical role of the Biden administration and the Democrats in the cover-up of the coup and the role of virtually the entire Republican Party and high-level officials in the military, the intelligence agencies and the police in the conspiracy. He is held up by the Democrats as an example of bipartisan cooperation with their Republican "colleagues." This mantra has been used to conceal from the American people the fascistic character of the Republican Party, its allegiance to the would-be Führer Trump, and their continuing efforts to build a far-right paramilitary wing to throw against the rising struggles of the working class.

The House Administration Committee has held a series of hearings on the failure of the US Capitol Police to take any serious measures to protect Congress from Trump's far-right insurrectionists, which were led by militia forces cultivated by Trump such as the Proud Boys, the Oath Keepers and the Three Percenters. It has taken reports and heard testimony from the Capitol Police inspector general, which have provided sweeping evidence of a deliberate stand down.

The most recent hearing, held last month, produced the revelation that the US Capitol Police paid Northern Red, a private paramilitary contractor run by neo-Nazis, tens of thousands of dollars to train its quick response unit, the Containment Emergency Response Team (CERT). On January 6, CERT refused to deploy and failed to respond to urgent requests that it come to the aid of besieged elected officials in the Capitol.

Neither Lofgren, nor Davis, nor any other Democratic official has made an issue of this damning and highly disturbing information, all the more ominous given the large number of current and former police and military personnel among those indicted in connection with the attack on the Capitol.

Two other Democrats on the House Administration Committee, Jamie Raskin of Maryland and Pete Aguilar of California, have been named by Pelosi to sit on the select committee. Their collective silence typifies the response of the Democratic Party to what even the country's top military

officer has characterized as an attempt to install a fascist dictatorship in the US.

Raskin headed up the House impeachment managers' half-hearted and truncated prosecution of Trump in the Senate impeachment trial in February. Under pressure from the Biden White House, Raskin ignored a vote by a majority of the senators to call witnesses and ended the trial without calling a single witness.

Another Democrat on the select committee is Adam Schiff of California, who headed up the first impeachment drive in 2019-2020, which was based entirely on Trump's alleged softness toward Russia and failure to prosecute the war against pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine with sufficient vigor.

The remaining four House members named to the committee by Pelosi include Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, designated to chair the committee; Elaine Luria of Virginia, a former Navy commander who declared her support for Trump's border wall with Mexico; Stephanie Murphy of Florida, a former Defense Department analyst and leading figure in the right-wing Democratic Blue Dog Coalition; and Liz Cheney of Wyoming, the Republican warhawk and vocal critic of Trump's coup attempt and "stolen election" lie.

Under the terms of the House resolution that established the select committee, Pelosi has the power to veto any of the five members proposed by the minority leader. However, the unofficial indications are that she will not exercise that power and instead accept McCarthy's slate.

Thompson told CNN after McCarthy's announcement that it was up to Pelosi, but "as far as I'm concerned, I'll go with it." He merely lamented the failure of McCarthy to name any women to the Republican contingent.

Asked whether he thought Pelosi should veto the most rabid Trump defenders such as Jordan and Banks, Raskin gave the anodyne reply that "all of us are going to have to struggle hard to stay above the normal level of partisan polemics that have come to define some of the work on Capitol Hill."

Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez told CNN she thought the slate named by McCarthy was "shameful," but demurred from calling on Pelosi to veto any of his appointees, saying only she "was well within her rights" to do so.



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