

Interim Senate Judiciary Report confirms Trump's repeated attempts to enlist Department of Justice into January 6 coup attempt

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On Thursday, the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator Dick Durbin (Illinois) released an interim report on the repeated, criminal, attempts by former President Donald Trump, along with his allies within the White House and Republican Party, following his electoral defeat, to coerce top officials within the Department of Justice (DoJ) to support his bogus claims of a fraudulent election in order to carry out a fascist coup.

The explosive report, titled “Subverting Justice: How the Former President and His Allies Pressured DOJ to Overturn the 2020 Election” confirms several episodes detailed over the last year on the *World Socialist Web Site* concerning Trump’s scheming leading up to the January 6 attack on the Capitol. These include repeated attempts by Trump and White House allies to have the DoJ officials publicize non-existent investigations into alleged fraudulent activity concerning illegal voting by minors in Georgia, as well as Italian spy satellites and Dominion Voting Systems machines being enlisted in efforts to miscount or alter vote totals in support of Biden. The report covers the crucial period between Trump’s November electoral defeat to Joe Biden through a pivotal “2–3 hour” January 3 meeting in the Oval Office at the White House during which top officials throughout the DoJ threatened a mass resignation in response to Trump’s attempt to oust acting Attorney General Jeffery Rosen.

In December, Rosen replaced the recently resigned Bill Barr and after resisting efforts from Trump to “investigate” Trump’s election lies, Trump sought to replace Rosen with acting Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Division Jeffrey Clark.

White House counsel Pat Cipollone, who also threatened to resign, told Trump that his efforts to fire Rosen and install Clark amounted to a “murder-suicide pact,” former acting Deputy Attorney General Richard Donoghue told the Committee.

Clark, as the report details, completely backed Trump’s lies and, unlike Rosen, was willing to sign onto a letter (which he drafted) that was to be sent out to key battleground states in order to pressure state legislatures into electing a new slate of electors to overturn the Electoral College vote. Underscoring how deadly close the United States came to a fascist coup and possibly civil war, Durbin, in comments made to the media and from the Senate

floor, claimed, “We were a half-step from a full-blown constitutional crisis.”

Speaking to CNN, Durbin said that this crisis would have erupted “had it not been for Jeffrey Rosen, Richard Donoghue and eight members of the Department of Justice who stood up and said, ‘We’ll resign if you take Rosen out of the picture and put Jeffrey Clark in.’”

He continued, “If those efforts weren’t made, we could have seen a collapse of that Department of Justice into a political entity. They [Trump and his allies] already had their handpicked successor, a man named Jeffrey Clark ready to take over, and he was involved in areas he should not have touched as leader of the Civil Division.”

The report details nine specific instances in which Trump pressured DoJ leadership to back his fraudulent claims of a stolen election, beginning on December 15, 2020, and continuing through January 3, 2021. The report noted that Trump’s repeated efforts to enlist DoJ attorneys in perpetuating his election lies “arguably violated the criminal provisions of the Hatch Act, which prevent any person—including the President—from commanding federal government employees to engage in political activity.”

The nine instances in less than three weeks included White House meetings and phone calls during which Trump badgered either Rosen and Donoghue separately or together, to initiate investigations and file lawsuits on Trump’s behalf. While speaking with the DoJ attorneys, Trump generally lamented the fact that the Department was not doing enough to address “election fraud,” the report noted.

The report drew attention to the key role played by former Republican congressman and Trump’s White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows in pressuring the DoJ. The report claimed that Meadows’s conduct violated “longstanding restrictions on White House–DoJ communications about specific law enforcement matters.” The report noted four different times Meadows reached out to Rosen to suggest he investigate bogus claims of election fraud in Georgia, Italy and New Mexico.

The report notes that after meeting with Trump to discuss the overturning of the election, Jeffrey Clark told Rosen that Trump

was looking to replace him since he would not go along with Trump's plans. However, if Rosen agreed to hold a press conference in which he would announce he was investigating Trump's bogus election fraud claims *and* send out a letter to state legislatures previously drafted by Clark, suggesting that certain states reappoint new electors in favor of Trump, he would decline Trump's offer to replace Rosen.

As has been known since at least last November, the report confirmed that Trump worked in concert with the "Stop the Steal" movement to pressure the DoJ into helping Trump overturn the results. Trump was aided in these efforts by Republican lawmakers including Representative Scott Perry (Pennsylvania, 10th District) and Doug Mastriano, a Republican state senator, also from Pennsylvania.

The report confirmed that Perry introduced Clark to Trump and that Perry directly communicated with Donoghue on bogus election fraud claims. Mastriano, like Perry, also talked to Donoghue regarding alleged election fraud. Mastriano also paid thousands of dollars to bus in Trump supporters for the January 6 attack on the Capitol, which Mastriano participated in.

The report also made special note of Trump campaign legal adviser Cleta Mitchell. Mitchell supported Trump's stolen election claims and participated in the January 2, 2021, call Trump made to Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger in which he implored Raffensperger to "find 11,780 votes."

"These ties warrant further investigation to better place Trump's efforts to enlist DoJ in his efforts to overturn the presidential election in context with the January 6 insurrection," the report states.

For the report, several leading officials under Trump within the DoJ were interviewed, including Rosen, his deputy Donoghue and former US Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia Byung Jin "Bjay" Pak, who was forced to resign by Trump after failing to substantiate Trump's claims that fraudulent ballots were being tabulated at the State Farm Arena in Atlanta. Trump circumvented the line of succession after Pak's resignation and tapped Bobby Christine, who was already serving as US Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, to take Pak's place. Donoghue testified to the committee that Trump told him he did this because he liked Christine and thought he would "do something" about Trump's claims.

While several high-ranking officials within the DoJ made themselves available for the Committee's report, Jeffrey Clark, Trump's agent within the DoJ, has refused repeated voluntary requests to be interviewed by the Committee. In a testament to the raging internecine conflict taking place within the capitalist state, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), charged with preserving White House records, has yet to comply with a May 20 request from the Committee for Trump's White House records. The report noted that "the delay in transitioning electronic Trump records from the White House to NARA may prevent the Committee from obtaining a response for several more months."

In response to the report, Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee Republican Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa released his own report, which claimed Trump did nothing wrong.

"The available evidence shows that President Trump did what we'd expect a president to do on an issue of this importance: he listened to his senior advisors and followed their advice and recommendations," Grassley said in a statement.

The report is a confirmation of the Marxist analysis presented on the *World Socialist Web Site*. In contrast to the pseudo-left, including the Democratic Socialists of America and other "socialists," who sought to downplay the first fascist coup attempt in US history, claiming it was just an isolated right-wing demonstration that got out of hand, the report confirms that the attack on the Capitol was the culmination of a definite political strategy, orchestrated by Trump and carried out by his loyalists within the Republican Party and capitalist state, including the police, military and intelligence agencies. Working in concert, these elements carried out a legal and political strategy along with facilitating the security stand-down of the Capitol, which allowed fascist militias hours to search out and kidnap lawmakers as part of Trump's effort to delay the certification of the election.

The stunning confirmation of Trump's attempts to overthrow the election have been met with a stony silence by the so-called "progressive" caucus and the left face of the Democratic Party. As of this writing, a review of the social media accounts of Senator Bernie Sanders, Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Cori Bush, Pramila Jayapal and Katie Porter shows no mention of the damning Senate report. Instead of warning their followers and the working class of the imminent and ongoing fascist threat, the capitalist politicians are focusing all their efforts on promoting illusions in the Biden administration and the wholly inadequate and rapidly dwindling "Build Back Better" plan.

The meager social spending package has been whittled down from \$6 trillion to somewhere between "\$2.3–\$1.9 trillion" in order to appease the most right-wing members of the Democratic Party and their "Republican colleagues" who continue to defend the fascist Trump.



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