

Former White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows begins “engaging” with House committee investigating January 6 coup

Jacob Crosse
1 December 2021

Mark Meadows, the former White House Chief Staff and co-conspirator in Trump’s attempted coup, has begun “engaging” with the House Select Committee investigating the January 6 attack on the US Capitol, according to a letter released Tuesday by Committee Chairman Bennie Thompson (Democrat-Mississippi).

“Mr. Meadows has been engaging with the Select Committee through his attorney,” wrote Thompson. “He has produced records to the committee and will soon appear for an initial deposition. The Select Committee expects all witnesses, including Mr. Meadows, to provide all information requested and that the Select Committee is lawfully entitled to receive. The committee will continue to assess his degree of compliance with our subpoena after the deposition.”

Speaking to CNN on Tuesday, Thompson said the committee has received “probably about 6,000 emails” from Meadows via his attorney and is “in the process of going through it.” Thompson said Meadows’ deposition is scheduled for next week.

Prior to joining the Trump administration in March 2020, the former North Carolina congressman was the leader of the far-right House Freedom Caucus. As Trump’s fourth chief of staff, Meadows was instrumental in the attempt to overthrow the election of Joe Biden. Prior to the election, Meadows regurgitated Trump’s lies regarding mail-in voting, and after Trump lost, he attempted to enlist top officials in the Department of Justice (DoJ) to support Trump’s bogus claims of a fraudulent election.

According to an interim report earlier this year by the Senate Judiciary Committee, Meadows pressured Acting Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen—who assumed the role on December 24, 2020 after former Attorney

General William Barr resigned—on four separate occasions to launch investigations into claims of election fraud. These included allegations that an Italian defense contractor, working in coordination with senior CIA officials, used military satellites to switch votes from Trump to Biden. Meadows also pressured Rosen and the DoJ to investigate “signature match anomalies” that allegedly led to incorrect vote totals in New Mexico and Georgia.

Meadows was also on the line during a January 2 phone call from Trump to Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, during which Trump threatened Raffensperger to “find 11,780 votes” or else face prosecution.

“You know what they did and you’re not reporting it,” Trump declared. “You know, that’s criminal—that’s a criminal offense. And you know, you can’t let that happen. That’s a big risk to you and to Ryan [Germany] your lawyer. That’s a big risk.”

During the same call, the *New York Times* reported that Meadows and Trump lawyer Cleta Mitchell pressured Raffensperger to reveal confidential voter data in order to back up their bogus conspiracy claims.

Recent reporting has also substantiated Meadows’ role in coordinating with the organizers of “Stop the Steal” and Women for America First, which helped organize the January 6 events. Two right-wing organizers for Women for America First, speaking to *Rolling Stone* in October, confirmed that they interacted with Meadows, “who they describe as having had an opportunity to prevent the violence.”

The pro-Trump groups, working in coordination with the White House and Republican lawmakers, organized a series of rallies following Trump’s defeat which

sought to incite and cultivate Trump supporters and fascist militia members against the election results. Using “burner phones” in an attempt to remain anonymous, the organizers claimed they coordinated the rallies with the White House. In addition to ginning up backward and reactionary elements, the rallies served as an implicit threat to Republican senators considering not joining Trump’s efforts to object to the Electoral College results on January 6.

While Meadows will likely only provide limited information about his role in Trump’s attempted fascistic coup, no doubt invoking “executive privilege” to any questions the committee has pertaining to communications he held with Trump in the days and weeks leading up to the attack, what information Meadows does provide concerning his communications with the DoJ would further reveal the scale of Trump’s conspiracies.

It is unclear how much of a role the Select Committee’s decision to seek criminal contempt charges against former White House adviser and *WarRoom* podcast host Steve Bannon played in Meadows’ decision to begin cooperating with the committee. Bannon is facing possibly a year in prison and a small fine for his noncooperation with the committee.

The still-raging conflict within the capitalist state following Trump’s coup was further illustrated with the Select Committee’s 9-0 decision on Wednesday to refer criminal contempt charges to the House of Representatives due to former acting Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Division Jeffrey Clark’s refusal to cooperate with the committee.

Clark had been tapped by Trump to replace Rosen after Rosen refused to weaponize the DoJ in furtherance of Trump’s attempts to overthrow the election. In a pivotal meeting the evening of January 3, Rosen, acting Deputy Attorney General Richard Donoghue, White House Counsel Pat Cipollone, and the heads of various divisions within the DoJ threatened to resign en masse if Trump decided to replace Rosen with the more pliant Clark.

In their report recommending contempt charges, the committee noted that Clark, after appearing briefly for deposition on November 5, refused to return after a brief recess, claiming that “executive privilege” prevented him from answering *any* of the committee’s

questions.

Unlike Meadows, who as chief of staff was in constant communication with Trump, many of the communications and documents sought by the committee regarding Clark do not have anything to do with Trump, but instead relate to an unnamed “specific Member of Congress.”

As Thompson wrote in his report: “the Select Committee seeks information from Mr. Clark about his interactions with private citizens, Members of Congress, or others outside the White House... At his deposition, Mr. Clark refused to answer questions regarding whether he used his personal phone or email for official business, when he first met a specific Member of Congress, and what statements he made to the media regarding January 6th. Mr. Clark has failed to provide a specific basis for his refusal to answer these questions—none of which involve presidential communications...”



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact