A falling-out among fascists: Trump rescinds endorsement of Alabama co-conspirator Mo Brooks

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Former President Donald Trump rescinded his endorsement of Alabama Rep. Mo Brooks, one of six Republicans running to replace retiring Alabama Sen. Richard Shelby, after Brooks urged him to move on from the 2020 election.

Brooks is one of the leading far-right Republican lawmakers who endorsed, organized and participated in Trump's efforts to overturn the election of Joe Biden. But no service, no matter how debased, ensures Trump's loyalty.

Republican operative Ali Alexander, who has been subpoenaed by the January 6 select committee investigating Trump's failed coup, admitted in a public video that he, along with Republican Reps. Andy Biggs (Arizona), Paul Gosar (Arizona) and Brooks organized the "Stop the Steal" rally outside of Congress on January 6 in order to put "maximum pressure on Congress while they were voting."

Speaking outside the White House on January 6, 2021, in furtherance of Trump's coup, Brooks urged "American patriots" to start "taking down names and kicking ass." Brooks told the assembled crowd of militia elements, current and former police/military members and Republican operatives that "our ancestors sacrificed their blood, their sweat, their tears, their fortunes and sometimes their lives … Are you willing to do the same? My answer is yes. Louder! Are you willing to do what it takes to fight for America?"

In a testament to the transformation of the Republican Party into a fascist party under the personalist leadership of Trump, the ex-president accused Brooks of being "woke" for suggesting that Trump not focus his as-of-yet unannounced 2024 presidential campaign on the claim that the 2020 presidential election was stolen and that Biden is an illegitimate usurper.

Rejecting Brooks' advice, Trump put out a statement Wednesday confirming that the centerpiece of his 2024 campaign will be the "stolen election." Trump wrote that if "we forget, the Radical Left Democrats will continue to Cheat and Steal Elections … The 2020 Election was rigged, and we can't let them get away with it."

In addition to accusing Brooks of not sufficiently backing his conspiracy theories, Trump also pointed to recent polling showing Brooks in a distant third in the GOP primary to justify his endorsement withdrawal.

"When I endorsed Mo Brooks, he took a 44-point lead and was unstoppable. He then hired a new campaign staff who 'brilliantly' convinced him to 'stop talking about the 2020 Election.' He listened to them," said Trump.

A poll released Tuesday by Gray TV/Alabama Daily News showed multimillionaire and US Army veteran Mike Durant was the top choice of Republican primary voters, garnering 34.6 percent support.

Durant has parlayed his capture during the 1993 Battle of Mogadishu in Somalia into two books and multiple speaking engagements, which he charged the US military $17,375 for in 2020–2021, according to disclosures reported by *Alabama Political Reporter*. The publication notes that that over that same time period Durant "gave additional paid speeches to the likes of Goldman Sachs, Capital One and Sigma Financial."

Closely following Durant in the latest polling is Katie Britt, former chief of staff for the retiring Sen. Shelby, with 28.4 percent. Meanwhile, the previously Trump-endorsed Brooks only garnered 16.1 percent, barely

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edging out “undecided” at 14.4 percent. While polls are often imprecise, these latest figures track with an earlier poll conducted in March which had Durant leading at 33.8 percent followed by Britt at 32.0 percent and Brooks at 17.6 percent.

The Alabama Republican primary will take place on May 24, and if no candidate achieves 50 percent of the vote the top two vote-getters will advance to a run-off election. Durant and Britt are considered to be candidates acceptable to the Republican “establishment,” although both are seeking Trump’s endorsement and have met privately with him in the last month.

In an interview with *Politico*, the number two Republican in the Senate, John Cornyn of Texas, admitted that if Brooks were to lose, leaving the Republican nomination to Durant or Britt, that would be an example of a “no-lose” proposition for Republicans.

“People know what [Brooks] was like in the House. And I think there’s a general desire to have people that will be constructive and that we can work with. So that’s my view, and that’s probably the view of most of the conference,” Cornyn said.

Following the release of Trump’s statement and his withdrawal of the endorsement, Brooks released his own statement, accusing Trump of being manipulated by Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell. “I wish President Trump wouldn’t fall for McConnell’s ploys, but, once again, he has,” wrote Brooks. He also claimed that he had not changed and that he was “the only proven America First candidate in this Senate race.”

“I repeat what has prompted President Trump’s ire,” wrote Brooks. “The only legal way America can prevent 2020’s election debacle is for patriotic Americans to focus on and win the 2022 and 2024 elections so that we have the power to enact laws that give us honest and accurate elections.”

In a startling admission, however, which confirms that Trump’s coup plotting was well known in Washington D.C. prior to January 6 and that it continues to this day, Brooks said that Trump had asked him to “remove Joe Biden from the White House.”

“President Trump asked me to rescind the 2020 elections, immediately remove Joe Biden from the White House, immediately put President Trump back in the White House, and hold a new special election for the presidency. As a lawyer, I’ve repeatedly advised President Trump that January 6 was the final election contest verdict and neither the U.S. Constitution nor the U.S. Code permit what President Trump asks. Period.”

Essentially, Brooks is claiming that Trump demanded that in order to keep his endorsement and loyalty, Brooks would have to back a blatantly unconstitutional effort to have Congress invalidate the 2020 election and install Trump as dictator.

In a follow-up phone interview with NBC reporter Vaughn Hillyard, Brooks confirmed that Trump asked him to “rescind” the election and thereby “render it null and void.” Brooks told Hillyard that Congress did not have that power, yet Trump still advocated for a new “subsequent election for the presidency … after September 1, 2021.”

Revealing the fecklessness of the Democratic-controlled January 6 select committee, which has held one public hearing since its inception last year, Brooks told Hillyard that nearly 15 months after the attack on the Capitol, he had not spoken with anyone from the select committee, nor, Brooks claimed, had they ever “asked me for anything, so that’s where we are.”

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