

Virginia Thomas, wife of Supreme Court justice, pressured Arizona state legislators to overturn 2020 popular vote

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Within 48 hours of Joe Biden being declared the winner of the 2020 presidential election, life-long Republican operative Virginia Thomas, the wife of arch-reactionary Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, emailed two Arizona state lawmakers demanding they reject the popular vote and instead choose a new pro-Trump “clean slate of Electors,” according to emails obtained by the *Washington Post*.

The emails, obtained through a public records request, revealed that on November 9, 2020, Thomas sent messages to Arizona House Speaker Rusty Bowers (Republican-Mesa) and state Representative Shawna Bolick, (Republican-Phoenix) imploring them to “do your Constitutional duty!” and “stand strong in the face of political and media pressure.”

In both emails, Thomas, who it was previously revealed exchanged at least 29 text messages with Trump White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows in the days prior to and after the failed coup, urged the two lawmakers to “take action to ensure that clean slate of Electors is chosen for our state.”

“Article II of the United States Constitution gives you an awesome responsibility to choose our state’s electors,” Thomas, who is not a resident of Arizona, wrote. “This means you have the power to fight back against fraud and ensure our elections are free, fair and honest.”

The emails essentially argue what would become one of the core strategies Trump and his Republican co-conspirators implemented following his electoral defeat. Knowing full well that Trump legitimately lost the election, the leaders of the Republican Party, from Trump himself to his allies in Congress, the media and militia elements, spread the fascistic lie that the election was “stolen” due to prevalence of mail-in ballots and dropboxes.

These right-wing elements were activated to badger election officials and Republican legislators into overturning the democratic vote in states Trump lost, and adopt the position that the population has no constitutional right to elect a president if that is not a Republican.

A spokesman for Bowers, Andrew Wilder, told the *Post*, that Bowers “did not see, much less read ... the form email sent by Mrs. Thomas.”

The same can not be said for Bolick, who the *Post* reports sent a reply to Thomas the following day, November 10, 2020, telling Virginia, “I hope you and Clarence are doing great!”

Post wrote, also gave Bolick guidance on how to respond to complaints” regarding “voter fraud.” Bolick, who is currently running to be Arizona’s next secretary of state, has continually repeated Trump’s lies that the election was stolen and the subject of massive voter “fraud.”

Two months after Virginia Thomas emailed Bolick—before Biden was inaugurated as president—the Arizona lawmaker sponsored Arizona House Bill 2720, which included a provision that would have allowed the legislature to reject the voters’ choice for president. Instead, the bill, which did not make it through committee, would have given state legislators the authority to “revoke the secretary of state’s issuance or certification of a presidential elector’s certificate of election,” by a majority vote, any time before the president is inaugurated.

Notably, Shawna Bolick is married to Clint Bolick, who is currently an associate justice of the Arizona Supreme Court and research fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution. The Bolicks enjoy close relations with the Thomases. Clint has described the Supreme Court justice in previous interviews as his “mentor.” Justice Thomas also serves as godfather to Clint’s second son.

Clarence Thomas refused to recuse himself from a case earlier this year concerning Trump’s White House records which the House January 6 Committee were attempting to access. While the other eight justices disagreed with Trump that the documents were subject to “executive privilege,” Thomas, the lone dissenter, agreed with Trump’s right to shield the documents, which included messages between Virginia Thomas and Meadows about overturning the election.

In December 2020, Virginia Thomas continued to try to pressure Arizona lawmakers into rejecting the popular vote. In a December 13, 2020, email to Bowers, one day before the presidential electors met in various state capitals to cast their votes as part of the Electoral College, Thomas wrote, “As state lawmakers, you have the Constitutional power and authority to protect the integrity of our elections—and we need you to exercise that power now!”

Thomas continued, “Never before in our nation’s history have our elections been so threatened by fraud and unconstitutional procedures.”

While Virginia Thomas was emailing Arizona lawmakers demanding they reject the popular vote, the 11th richest person on

the planet, Larry Ellison, the billionaire co-founder and chairman of the software company Oracle, was coordinating with Trump allies in the White House, Congress and Fox News to further Trump's bogus claims of a "fraudulent" election.

In a separate article on Friday, the *Washington Post* reported that Ellison participated in a November 14 phone conference with Trump allies which was "focused on strategies for contesting the legitimacy of the vote."

The November 14 phone call, citing court documents and a "participant," the *Post* wrote, included South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham (Republican), Fox News host Sean Hannity, Trump attorney Jay Sekulow and James Bopp Jr., an attorney for the right-wing anti-voter organization "True the Vote."

The billionaire backed-group was founded by elements affiliated with the Tea Party in 2009. Following Trump's defeat, the group played a prominent role in amplifying Trump's claims that the 2020 election was rigged.

Ellison, the *Post* wrote, "became a major political power broker during the Trump administration, hosting the president in 2020 for a fundraiser at his estate in California's Coachella Valley and contributing millions to Republican candidates and committees, including to Graham."

The call between Ellison and Trump's Republican allies was revealed as part of ongoing litigation between True the Vote and Fair Fight, a political action committee founded by Georgia Democratic gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams.

An anonymous source told the *Post* that Ellison might have participated in the call in order "to assess claims about voting machines made by Sidney Powell."

Powell's fascistic claims that Dominion Voting machines were manipulated in service of an international communist conspiracy between Venezuela and China aimed at undermining Trump were repeated in text messages exchanged between Meadows and Virginia Thomas. Those texts were revealed earlier this year, following an admission from Virginia Thomas that she was in Washington D.C. at the Ellipse on January 6, 2021.

As large sections of the ruling class were working to overturn bourgeois democracy through semi-legal and extra-parliamentary measures, "on-the-ground" Republican operatives sought to enlist the support of far-right militias to occupy the Capitol and capture/kill lawmakers if the Republican efforts to overturn the election through state legislatures, lawsuits and the Supreme Court failed.

On Friday, the *New York Times* revealed the existence of an encrypted Signal message chat group dubbed "Friends of Roger Stone." Stone, like Virginia Thomas, has been a Republican operative for virtually his entire life. In furtherance of Trump's coup, Stone served as a nexus between the right-wing militia groups, such as the Oath Keepers and Proud Boys who spearheaded the attack on the Capitol, and the Trump White House itself.

The text group, which the *Times* writes has existed "since at least 2019," included multiple members who have since been arrested for their role in Trump's failed coup.

While the *Times* did not list all 47 members of the group, among those that were identified include Oath Keepers founder Stewart

Rhodes; former Proud Boys chairman Henry "Enrique" Tarrio; Infowars founder and fascist Alex Jones; Republican operative and lead "Stop the Steal" organizer Ali Alexander; Oath Keepers lead counsel Kellye SoRelle; and Ivan Raiklin, an Army Reserve lieutenant colonel who advanced a plan dubbed the "Pence Card" which said that Vice President Mike Pence could reject state electors on January 6.

One member of the group told the *Times* that the "primary reason" for the group was just to "have a place for supporters to share stuff," but after Trump lost, the group's efforts were centered on preventing the certification of Biden through any means necessary.

At the same time Stone's group was discussing their strategies, militia leader Rhodes, according to court documents, was already texting Oath Keepers in a separate Oath Keepers "Leadership Intel Chat" on November 5, 2020, to prepare "your mind, body, spirit" for "civil war."

Some two months later, in the early evening of January 6, 2021, after the initial attack on the Capitol failed to achieve its objectives, Rhodes, according to prosecutors, was on the phone with a high-level Trump intermediary demanding that Trump invoke the Insurrection Act and have Rhodes' heavily armed "Quick Reaction Force" teams, stationed outside of Washington D.C., lay siege to the Capitol.

"I just want to fight," Rhodes said after the call.

That Trump's coup failed is not due to any action taken on the part of the Democratic Party, a party of Wall Street and the CIA, that has proven itself incapable of defending democratic rights from the increasingly fascistic Republicans and their billionaire backers.

Following Trump's failed coup, the Democrats sought to suppress tensions between themselves and their ruling class partners-in-crime, hurriedly rushing through the second impeachment trial without calling any witnesses, leading to Trump's acquittal in less than three days.

Instead of holding Trump and his Republican co-conspirators in Congress and on the Supreme Court accountable, nearly every week Biden and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi pledge their desire to see a "strong Republican Party."



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