

Prior to January 6 coup

Secret Service warned by Pence's chief of staff that Trump attack would incite violence against VP

Jacob Crosse

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In a stunning report this past Friday, *New York Times* reporter Maggie Haberman revealed that on January 5, 2021, the day before the fascist attack on Capitol Hill, Vice President Mike Pence's chief of staff, Marc Short, contacted the lead Secret Service agent in charge of Pence's security to warn him that President Donald Trump was "going to turn publicly against the vice president."

This "turn," Short warned lead Secret Service agent Tim Giebels, could constitute a "security risk" to Pence. The *Times* wrote that this was the only time during his tenure as vice president that Pence's chief of staff warned the Secret Service of a potential threat against his boss.

In other words, for failing to go along with Trump's dictatorial scheme, Short was worried that Pence would be attacked by Trump, with the potential threat of violence against his boss. Short's fears were obviously valid and well-founded.

Less than a day after Short warned Giebels, hundreds of pro-Trump militia elements, Republican activists, white supremacists and other reactionaries stormed the Capitol in an attempt to kidnap and kill politicians, including Pence, for refusing to unconstitutionally overturn the election of Joe Biden and install Trump as president-dictator.

That Trump was painting a target on Pence for his militia supporters was evident from the speech he gave

the day of the attack. Speaking from the Ellipse outside the White House, Trump issued a call to action to his militia supporters, some of whom, like the Oath Keepers, had heavily armed "quick reaction forces" stationed outside Washington D.C. He said, "Mike Pence is going to have to come through for us, and if he doesn't, that will be a sad day for our country. Because you're sworn to uphold our Constitution."

Following Trump's speech and after Pence refused to reject the electors from the state of Arizona, Trump tweeted out that Pence did not have the "courage to do what should have been done." This message spread like wildfire among the pro-Trump elements, who at the time were overrunning the deliberately undermanned and under-equipped police lines outside the Capitol. As Proud Boy, Oath Keeper and III Percenter fascists broke into the building seeking out targets, hundreds more chanted, "Hang Mike Pence!" while a gallows was erected on the Capitol grounds.

The fact that Short warned the Secret Service of potential violence against Pence because of Trump further demolishes any claims that the attack on the Capitol was unforeseen or not the result of a deliberate conspiracy organized from the White House itself. The January 6 attack on the Capitol was not a "spontaneous riot" that "got out of hand." It was the culmination of multifaceted effort by Trump and his Republican allies, including in the police, military and intelligence apparatus, to overthrow constitutional democracy in the United States.

While the role of the vice president during the Electoral College certification process is purely ceremonial, Trump and his allies, such as coup lawyer John Eastman, argued in the months following Trump's defeat on November 3 that Pence had the power to reject electors who had previously been certified by the states.

While Pence did not go along with Trump's plan, this was not because he objected to Trump's efforts to remain in power. Following Trump's electoral defeat, Pence instructed his general counsel, Greg Jacob, to write a memorandum explaining what his powers were during the certification process. This memo did not explicitly state that Pence had no role in certifying electors, even though that is the case.

That Trump was eager for violence to be visited upon Pence for his "disloyalty" to the would-be Fuhrer was made clear in a separate *Times* report released the week prior. In that report, the *Times* revealed that as the Capitol was under siege and Pence was being evacuated by Secret Service agents, Trump, watching his fascist foot soldiers storm the Capitol in his name, complained that Pence was being taken to safety by Secret Service agents.

The *Times* wrote that White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, according to an account given to the January 6 Select Committee, heard Trump say "something to the effect of, maybe Mr. Pence should be hanged."

The account was confirmed by an aide of Meadows, Cassidy Hutchinson, who testified before the committee three times after receiving a subpoena.

Haberman's report is part of a new book she wrote, *Confidence Man: The Making of Donald Trump and the Breaking of America*, which is slated to come out in October, likely after the January 6 Select Committee has issued its preliminary report on the failed coup. For the first time since last July, the congressional body charged with "investigating" Trump's coup will be holding public hearings to report on their findings, beginning this week on June 9.

Short, who has already testified before the committee, will likely serve as one of the witnesses during one of the six scheduled televised hearings. While the Select Committee has refused to name all the witnesses that will be appearing, the committee has already called over 1,000 people for depositions and interviews, some of which will be publicly revealed for the first time this month.

Someone who will not be appearing during the public hearings will be high-level Trump co-conspirator, former Trump trade adviser and co-author of a plan for state legislatures to overturn the election results in key battleground states, dubbed the "Green Bay Sweep"—Peter Navarro. Navarro was indicted last Friday by a federal grand jury for refusing to comply with a subpoena from the Select Committee.

Navarro is only the second high-level Trump co-conspirator, following fascist former White House counselor Steve Bannon, to be indicted by the Department of Justice for refusing to comply with the committee's request. Navarro and Bannon have both cited "executive privilege" to justify their refusal to cooperate with what they claim is an "illegitimate" committee. Both men have publicly boasted of their plan to keep Trump in office by using Republicans in Congress, aided by Trump's mob, to delay the certification.

While announcing charges against Navarro, the Justice Department revealed it would not be pursuing similar charges against Meadows and Trump Deputy Chief of Staff Dan Scavino, despite the fact that both of them have also refused to cooperate with the committee.



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