

Trump's former White House Counsel Pat Cipollone to give closed-door testimony to House January 6 Committee

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Pat Cipollone, who was White House counsel for Donald Trump over the critical period before, during and after the failed coup of January 6, 2021, has agreed to give testimony under oath at a closed-door session of the House Select Committee investigating the conspiracy to overthrow the 2020 election.

Cipollone will sit for a transcribed, video-taped deposition on Friday, July 8. He had resisted requests from the Committee to give sworn testimony voluntarily, and was rebuked by Committee Vice-Chair Liz Cheney at the conclusion of last week's televised hearing for failing to come forward.

At that hearing, Cassidy Hutchinson, a former top aide to Trump Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, cited discussions with Cipollone and Meadows establishing that Trump planned to march on the US Capitol along with his "Stop the Steal" followers, knowing that a section of the crowd was armed.

She said there was talk of Trump entering the House chamber, uninvited, making a speech, and demanding that the congressmen, senators and Vice President Mike Pence stop the certification of Joe Biden's victory in the Electoral College—in other words, delivering an ultimatum that they either allow Trump to remain in power or face death at the hands of his fascist mob, led by neo-Nazi paramilitaries such as the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers.

As the *World Socialist Web Site* wrote after last week's hearing:

There is little doubt what the congressional Democrats would have done. They would have capitulated, seeking some face-saving operation

like a referral of the "disputed" election to a vote by the House of Representatives, conducted according to the procedure of one vote for each entire state delegation, thereby guaranteeing Trump's victory.

Afterwards, the Democrats and the corporate media would have portrayed the outcome as being in accordance with the Constitution, and any legal challenge would have been rejected by Trump's stooges on the Supreme Court.

That the coup failed owes not at all to opposition from the Democratic Party, and certainly not to Democratic President-elect Joe Biden, who was appealing for the would-be dictator to go on national television and call off his own coup.

Hutchinson testified that Cipollone had opposed Trump's plan to personally lead the mob to the Capitol, telling her, "We're going to get charged with every crime imaginable." Following the hearing, the Committee subpoenaed Cipollone.

It is believed that Cipollone and the Committee will agree to limits on his testimony, likely excluding questions about his direct discussions with Trump. But he could nevertheless confirm key aspects of the testimony from Hutchinson and previous witnesses about the illegal and unconstitutional conspiracy to overthrow the election on the basis of the fiction that Trump had really won, but the election had been "stolen."

It is possible that the Committee will show clips from Cipollone's deposition at upcoming televised hearings.

The Committee also announced that its next televised hearing, the seventh in the current series, will take place on Tuesday, July 12, and will focus on the role of far-right militias such as the Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers in the coup, and their ties to the Trump White House and Republican officials involved in the plot.

Sarah Matthews, who served as deputy press secretary in the Trump White House, will appear as an in-person witness. Matthews resigned in protest shortly after the January 6 attack.

Following last week's hearing, she tweeted that "anyone downplaying Cassidy Hutchinson's role or her access in the West Wing either doesn't understand how the Trump [White House] worked or is attempting to discredit her because they're scared of how damning this testimony is."

In a related development, a special grand jury in Fulton County, Georgia (Atlanta), convened in May to investigate Trump's efforts to overturn Biden's victory in Georgia, issued subpoenas Tuesday to seven advisers and allies of the ex-president. They include Trump's former personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani and other lawyers involved in efforts to get Georgia's Republican-controlled state legislature, as well as those of other battleground states that went to Biden, to appoint fake pro-Trump electors and reject the Biden electors who had been certified by election officials.

Those subpoenaed include John Eastman, Jenna Ellis, Cleta Mitchell, Jacki Pick Deason and Kenneth Chesebro. Also subpoenaed was Republican Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina.

In the period following the November 2020 election, Graham made at least two phone calls to Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger and his staff, according to court documents submitted Tuesday. Raffensperger alleged that Graham suggested he throw out certain absentee ballots.

Raffensperger testified before the January 6 Committee last month about the multiple attempts by Giuliani, Eastman and Trump himself to pressure him to throw out Biden votes in order to swing the state's electoral votes to Trump. This includes the infamous 67-minute phone call by Trump on January 2, 2021, which was tape recorded, in which Trump said, "I just want to find 11,780 votes." In the call, Trump threatened Raffensperger with criminal prosecution and warned that if he continued to defy the White House, it

would be "dangerous" for him.

Biden's victory in Georgia was confirmed by two statewide recounts. No evidence of widespread fraud was found in those recounts or by any court.

Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis, who impaneled the grand jury, is considering a range of charges, including criminal solicitation to commit election fraud, conspiracy to commit election fraud, intentional interference with performance of election duties and racketeering.

It took Biden and the Democrats 18 months to hold public hearings that began to reveal aspects of the massive conspiracy to overthrow the Constitution and establish a dictatorship under Trump. They have sought to cover up the role of substantial sections of the military, the intelligence apparatus, the police and the judiciary, including Trump's allies on the Supreme Court, in the plot. Biden continues to call the Republican Party, dominated by Trump's fascist acolytes, his "friends" and "colleagues."

Even now, they and the Democratic-aligned media are seeking to narrow the investigation to the role of Trump as an individual, locating the cause of the coup in Trump's psyche, rather than in the devastating and unprecedented crisis—economic, political, social—of American capitalism.

Trump and his fascist allies are allowed to go free and continue their conspiracy to impose a brutal dictatorship on the working class, while Biden and the Democrats seek to prop up the rotting two-party system in order to prosecute the war against Russia and the mounting confrontation with China—both nuclear-armed powers.

The defense of democratic rights depends entirely on the independent mobilization of the working class in opposition to the entire capitalist setup.



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