

In criminal scheme to prove non-existent voter fraud

High-level Trump lawyers personally directed efforts to break into voting machines

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Reports in the *Washington Post* have shed light on extensive penetration of voting machines and software in Michigan, Georgia and Nevada, by pro-Trump lawyers following the November 2020 election. Biden narrowly won all three swing states.

Citing court documents and emails, the *Post* has confirmed that Sidney Powell, a high-level coup lawyer for President Donald Trump, personally directed a private company to copy sensitive election data obtained by tampering with voting machines.

Powell was joined in this effort by the current Republican nominee for Michigan attorney general, Matthew DePerno, who is under criminal investigation for allegedly engaging in a conspiracy to illegally acquire and tamper with voting machines in Michigan.

On August 15, the *Post* reported that Powell hired an Atlanta-based computer forensics team known as SullivanStrickler to copy data from voting machines to which Trump lawyers had gained access in Michigan and Georgia in order to further Trump's lying claims that the election was stolen.

According to the *Post*, records it viewed show that Powell ordered the computer team to copy data from voting machines in Antrim County, Michigan, beginning in November 2020. Trump campaign lawyer Jesse Binnall likewise ordered a team to copy data from voting machines in Clark County, Nevada, at the end of November 2020.

On January 7, 2021, less than 18 hours after the US Capitol was cleared of Trump's mob, a different forensics team, on the orders of lawyers affiliated with Trump, was copying election data from a voting machine in SullivanStrickler.

After the computer forensics teams obtained the election data, they uploaded it onto private servers, which were then accessed by Trump operatives, right-wing elements and Republican politicians prior to and after January 6, 2021.

Some of this data, which confirms that there was no outside interference in the 2020 election—either from the Chinese Communist Party, Italian military spy satellites, or any other

agency cited in the deranged theories offered by QAnon fascists and Republican lawmakers—has found its way into the hands of Trump allies.

My Pillow CEO Mike Lindell, a leading fascist propagandist and election denier, featured some of the files copied from Dominion Voting Systems hard drives located in Antrim County, Michigan, at his “Cyber Symposium” event last year.

Another notable right-wing zealot who gained access to the copied data, according to the *Post*, is podcaster Joe Oltmann. On the “Conservative Daily” podcast, the show he hosts, the Denver, Colorado-based businessman has called for Democratic politicians and Trump's political enemies to be executed.

Oltmann gained a base of followers by railing against limited COVID-19 lockdowns beginning in the spring of 2020. However, he and his political action committee, FEC (Faith, Education and Commerce) United became well known among Republicans six days after the 2020 election when he claimed on his show, without evidence, that he had heard a “Dominion guy” promise to “Antifa journalists” that Trump was not going to win the 2020 election.

“Trump is not going to win. I made f***ing sure of that,” Oltmann claimed he heard “the Dominion guy” say. This “Dominion guy,” Oltmann later claimed, was Eric Coomer, former director of product strategy and security for Dominion Voting Systems.

In a defamation lawsuit filed in December 2020, plaintiff Coomer alleged that he lost his job and reputation due to lies spread by defendants, who included Oltmann, FEC United, One America News Network, The Gateway Pundit and attorneys for Trump's reelection campaign, Sidney Powell and Rudy Giuliani.

This past May, Colorado Judge Marie Avery Moses rejected requests from the defendants to dismiss Coomer's lawsuit, writing: “There is *prima facie* evidence rising to the standard of clear and convincing evidence that all Defendants published false and defamatory statements about Coomer with actual malice.”

Despite having no evidence to back up his ridiculous claims, Oltmann continued to assert in the days leading up to the attack on

the Capitol that Coomer and Dominion Voting Systems manipulated the election in order to cheat Trump.

Oltmann was in Washington D.C. on January 5 and 6, 2021. On January 5, he spoke at a far-right pro-Trump rally, repeating his lies that the election was stolen. On January 6, as the Capitol was under siege, Oltmann and Matthew DePerno were meeting at the State Department with Robert Destro, who at the time was an assistant secretary of state.

Destro has not publicly stated why he was meeting with the election deniers. Oltmann has claimed on his podcasts that he was at the State Department on January 6 to meet with “leadership” and “the right people” to discuss the “coup” against Trump.

In its reports on the copied election data, the *Post* notes that the computer firm was paid each time it copied the data by lawyers associated with Powell or the Trump campaign. According to documents viewed by the *Post*, SullivanStrickler was asked by Trump-aligned lawyers to copy data in Nevada, Georgia and Michigan.

The emails showing communications between Trump-aligned lawyers and SullivanStrickler were obtained through a subpoena issued as part of a lawsuit that was filed in Georgia earlier this year. While SullivanStrickler’s examinations of voting machines were permitted in two counties following court orders, none of the courts allowed for the data on the machines to be copied and spread freely among Trump allies.

Speaking to the *Post* regarding the copying of election data, including tabulation data, Republican Gabriel Sterling, Georgia’s interim deputy secretary of state, said: “Rogue election officials will not be tolerated in Georgia. Prior to this latest disclosure, the Georgia Secretary of State’s office and the State Election Board had already looped in appropriate authorities, including criminal law enforcement agencies, to assist in the investigation into the alleged unlawful access in Coffee County. That investigation continues and any wrongdoers should be prosecuted.”

In an interview with CNN earlier this month, the Democratic Secretary of State of Michigan Jocelyn Benson warned that the “breaches” are “going to continue ... not just in Michigan, but elsewhere until we see real consequences for the perpetrators.” Benson said it was “possible” that machines that had been previously tampered with by Trump elements could be manipulated to alter vote totals. She said that because of this, several machines in Michigan are still decommissioned.

The multi-state effort to access voting machine data by Republican-aligned lawyers underscores that Trump’s attempted coup was broader than the violent attack on the Capitol. It was a wide-ranging plan involving several different paths, all aimed at overthrowing the 2020 election.

It is notable that QAnon adherent Sidney Powell oversaw the

effort to break into voting machines and copy data. During a contentious December 18, 2020 White House meeting, Trump considered and, according to some accounts, briefly appointed Powell as “special counsel” to lead an executive investigation into the “stolen election.” Aiding Powell in this effort would have been another of her clients and a fellow QAnon fascist, Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn. At the time, Flynn was advocating publicly on Newsmax for the military to be deployed and for the 2020 election to be “rerun” at gunpoint.

The January 6 House Select Committee has tried to paint Trump’s coup as the work of the ex-president and a few “crazies” within the Republican Party. Powell, when she is referenced by the committee, is usually included in this “crazy” category.

However, Powell would not have been granted an audience with Trump to begin with if she did not have powerful supporters within the Republican Party, such as Virginia “Ginni” Thomas, the wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas.

In material turned over to the Select Committee by former White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, it was revealed that Thomas sent at least 29 messages directly to Meadows following the November 2020 election. In addition to repeating far-right QAnon and apocalyptic conspiracy theories in her messages to Meadows, Thomas called on him to make Sidney Powell “the lead and the face” of Trump’s legal team.

On November 13, 2020, Thomas texted Meadows that “Sidney Powell ... will help the cavalry come and Fraud exposed and America saved.” Six days later, Thomas texted Meadows, “Sounds like Sidney and her team are getting inundated with evidence of fraud. Make a plan. Release the Kraken and save us from the left taking America down.”



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