

In *60 Minutes* interview

Former January 6 investigator details Trump White House, Supreme Court connections to January 6 fascist attack

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In a revealing interview that aired Sunday night on the CBS News *60 Minutes* program, former January 6 House Select Committee investigator Denver Riggleman revealed the leading role Trump, his family and the wider Republican Party played in facilitating the attack on the Capitol with on-the ground fascist paramilitary elements.

In a widely circulated clip used to promote the interview, Riggleman, the first former committee investigator to go public with an insider's account, recounted a "real 'A-ha' moment when you see that the White House Switchboard had connected to a rioter's phone while it's happening. That's a big, pretty big 'A-ha' moment."

Riggleman said he did not know exactly who inside the White House placed the call, but that he did know who was on the receiving end. CBS interviewer Bill Whitaker failed to ask the obvious follow-up questions: Who was the rioter who received the call? And was he/she summoned by the House Select Committee to identify the White House caller?

Riggleman gave the interview to coincide with the release of his new book this Tuesday titled *The Breach*. In a report on the book, the *Guardian*'s Hugo Lowell, who obtained an advance copy, revealed that the January 6 call from the White House to the on-the-ground foot-soldier occurred at 4:34 p.m. Lowell writes that the call was answered by someone who "has since been charged by the Justice Department with a role in the storming of the Capitol."

In the book, Riggleman reports that while he was working for the January 6 committee, his team was able to analyze the call records of leading Trump co-conspirators, such as fascists Roger Stone, Alex Jones and Bianca Gracia.

Gracia is the president of Latinos for Trump, which is closely connected to the former Proud Boys chairman Henry "Enrique" Tarrio. In his book, Riggleman claims that there were at least five calls placed between the White House switchboard and Gracia in the lead-up to January 6.

On January 5, 2021, Gracia was videotaped meeting with

Tarrio and Oath Keeper founder Stewart Rhodes in a Washington D.C. parking garage.

Riggleman also writes in the book that after the committee confirmed Roger Stone's phone number, his team was able to determine that Stone was in contact with Tarrio before and after January 6. Stone also placed a phone call to Rhodes nine days after the failed coup. Both Rhodes and Tarrio are facing seditious conspiracy charges along with over a dozen members of the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers.

Lowell writes: "The number for Stone also connected to a number of prominent Republicans who each played different roles in Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election results, including the Texas attorney general, Ken Paxton, and Arthur Schwartz, an aide to Donald Trump Jr., Trump's eldest son."

A former one-term Republican congressman from Virginia, defeated for renomination in 2020 by a Christian fundamentalist, Riggleman was recommended as an advisor to the House Select Committee by Vice Chair Liz Cheney, the senior Republican on the panel, because of his expertise in data analysis. He is a 20-year veteran of the Air Force where he was an intelligence officer. After leaving the military he founded his own data company and now works as a contractor for the National Security Agency.

Using his background in counterterrorism and data analysis, Riggleman was able to take, per the CBS report, "20 million lines of data: emails, social media posts, phone records, texts," and create a visual graph showing the lines of communication between "six centers of gravity" that were involved in the coup.

Riggleman identified these six major groups as:

• Trump Team

• Trump Family

• Rally goers

• Unaffiliated Department of Justice (DoJ) charged defendants

• Proud Boys and Oath Keepers

• State Legislators and Alternate (Fraudulent) Electors/Others

Once Riggleman's team mapped the connections between the

groups he was able to create a graphic which he called “The Monster.” Rigglesman explained: “We don’t have text content. What we do have is how long they talked, when they talked. That is very important. And really does suggest that there was much more coordination than the American public can even imagine when it came to January 6th.”

Without naming any names, the graph shows the direct links between the six major groups, revealing the leadership structure and the fact that the coup was a vast conspiracy hatched from the White House itself by the “Trump Team” and “Trump Family” delivering orders to state legislators, alternate electors and others, who relayed the messages to rally goers, unaffiliated DoJ charged defendants and fascist militia groups.

Long-time readers of the *World Socialist Web Site* are well aware that the coup on January 6 was not a spontaneous riot, but a pre-planned attack on Congress which had the support of virtually the entire Republican Party, including elements of the police-military-intelligence apparatus and the Supreme Court. But Rigglesman’s declaration and graphic demonstrate the false character of the narrative by the House Select Committee that Trump and few “crazies” perpetrated the attack through speeches on January 6 that drove their crowd of supporters into a frenzy.

This narrative is meant to preserve the Republican Party as an instrument of class rule and chloroform the working class as to the true extent of the fascist danger which has deepened during the more than 20 months since Trump’s coup. The election of Biden and the Democrats to Congress has not stopped this process. Biden, by his endless pleas for bipartisan unity with a Republican Party that is increasingly dominated by fascist elements, only further fuels the rise of the ultra-right.

The Democratic Party cannot put an end to the fascist threat, because, like the Republicans, it is an instrument of the financial oligarchy and the capitalist system, which is the source of fascism.

Rigglesman explained the intense support for the coup within the Republican Party and the Trump inner circle, and the leading role played by Meadows and Virginia Thomas, wife of Justice Clarence Thomas, came into focus for his team after Meadows gave the committee over 2,000 of his text messages which he had sent between November 2020 and January 2021.

He described these texts as a “roadmap” that showed “the evolution of the beginning arguments from alternate electors all the way through rally planning, all the way to day of. It showed conspiracy theories. It showed the saturation of QAnon.”

In his book and in his *60 Minutes* appearance, Rigglesman said the Meadows texts “provide irrefutable, time-stamped proof of a comprehensive plot at all levels of government to overturn the election,” and that there were text messages discussing the alternate elector scheme as early as “November 5th or November 6th,” that is, even before the election was publicly called for Biden, but after Trump’s inner circle knew that he had been soundly defeated.

While he never said the word fascism, the texts show that large, leading sections of the Republican Party are completely detached from reality and have embraced Christian fascism in its peculiar QAnon form. Rigglesman said that the texts showed the Trump administration was “completely eaten up with a digital virus called QAnon.”

In North Carolina, as he did in Youngstown, Ohio, this past Friday, Trump ended his fascist rally by playing a QAnon song to which some in the crowd responded with a one-finger fascist salute.

As his team combed through the Meadows texts, Rigglesman was able to identify Virginia “Ginni” Thomas’ phone number. In one of her first texts to Meadows after Biden’s election victory was announced by the television and cable networks, Thomas sent Meadows a QAnon meme which called for the “Biden crime family” to be “arrested & detained” and sent to live on “barges off Guantanamo bay to face military tribunals for sedition.” Thomas added, “I hope this is true.”

Rigglesman said Thomas’ texts to Meadows were “hellaciously insightful” in showing that the fascist QAnon “infection” had “really metastasized in the GOP.” Rigglesman said that the fact that Thomas, “who has that type of access to the president and married to a Supreme Court justice,” was advancing QAnon conspiracy theories “should be an eye opener for everybody.”

Rigglesman told CBS he left the committee this past April because members of the committee refused to subpoena Thomas. Last week, lawyers for Thomas said she had agreed to speak to the committee, which is set to hold its final public hearing on Wednesday.

On Monday, the *Washington Post* reported that the committee plans to air footage of Stone gloating about Trump’s dictatorial scheme. In one clip, taken the day before the 2020 election, Stone is filmed telling Trump ally and Georgia Rep. Douglas Collins, “F*ck the voting, let’s get right to the violence. Shoot to kill, see an antifa, shoot to kill. F*ck ’em. Done with this bullsh*t.” The *Post* notes Stone quickly followed up with: “I am of course only kidding [wink-wink]. We renounce violence completely. We totally renounce violence. The left is the only ones who engage in violence.”

Neither Stone, Thomas or Trump have been charged for their role in fomenting a fascist coup more than 20 months after the fact.



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