

Trump incites threats of fascist violence against grand jurors and judges

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In a clear and obvious threat of violence, supporters of ex-president Donald Trump have posted on the internet the names and addresses of every member of the Fulton County, Georgia grand jury that indicted Trump on 13 counts relating to his leadership of a conspiracy to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election in Georgia.

As this information was spread through right-wing websites, the images of the grand jurors were added as well, accompanied by death threats. “These jurors have signed their death warrant by falsely indicting President Trump,” a post on a pro-Trump forum read in response to a post listing the names of jurors.

At least one right-wing site posted pictures of gallows and nooses along with grand jurors and Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis, who brought the indictment against Trump.

These sites also cited “evidence” that many of the grand jurors were supporters of the Democratic Party or were African-American, hardly surprising in a county that is heavily African-American and voted for Democrat Joe Biden over the Republican Trump in 2020 by a margin of 73 percent to 26 percent.

The grand jurors were named in the 98-page indictment they returned on Monday night, but no contact information or other identification was included, in keeping with the security practices normal to any grand jury investigation. The jury is still sitting and considering other cases that could be brought by the office of District Attorney Fani Willis.

The Fulton County Sheriff’s Department is responsible for the security of grand jurors, but it had no immediate comment. District Attorney Willis, who is African-American, received numerous racist threats in the period leading up to the indictment, and tightened security measures have been in place for her

and her office, including allowing some staff to work remotely.

Also, on Wednesday, Abigail Jo Shry, 43, of Alvin, Texas was denied bail on charges of making violent threats against Tanya S. Chutkan, the federal judge who is in charge of Trump’s prosecution on federal charges of seeking to overturn the 2020 election.

Shry called Chutkan’s chambers on August 5, two days after Trump was arraigned before Judge Chutkan, and left a message. According to the criminal complaint, she warned: “You are in our sights, we want to kill you. If Trump doesn’t get elected in 2024, we are coming to kill you, so tread lightly, bitch.” She added, “You will be targeted personally, publicly, your family, all of it,” and then used a racial slur referring to the judge, who is black.

The complaint against Shry also alleged that she had made threats against Representative Sheila Jackson Lee of Houston, who is also black, and who has been a particular target for racially tinged political venom from Trump and other Republicans.

At the bail hearing, Shry’s father told the court that she was an alcoholic who spent her day watching television and complaining about the actions of various federal and state politicians opposed to Trump. Federal agents visited Shry on August 8, three days after she made her threats against Judge Chutkan, and she told them she had no intention of going to Washington or Houston, but “if Sheila Jackson Lee comes to Alvin, then we need to worry.”

The same week as Shry’s threats, FBI agents shot and killed a Utah man who had made death threats against President Biden and said he would act on them during Biden’s visit to Salt Lake City, which took place only a few hours later. Craig Robertson was heavily armed, refused to allow the agents to enter his

home, and pointed a weapon at them. He had also threatened to kill Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg and others involved in criminal prosecutions of Trump.

Trump has incited these and similar attacks with non-stop inflammatory postings on his social media platform, Truth Social. Most notorious was his warning, three days after his federal indictment earlier this month, that (in all caps) “IF YOU GO AFTER ME, I’M COMING AFTER YOU!” In his eight years in presidential politics, Trump has repeatedly encouraged his supporters to use violence against his opponents, while never suggesting that there were any lines that should not be crossed.

As he and the Republican Party have shifted further and further to the right, embracing fascism in all but name, Trump has become more explicit in his invocations of both anti-communism and racism. His campaign speeches invariably feature increasingly hysterical warnings that “Marxists” and “socialists” are out to put him in jail and exterminate his supporters. His most brazen appeal to race prejudice came in response to the Georgia indictment brought by District Attorney Fani Willis.

Trump tweeted that state and federal prosecutors were ignoring those who supposedly falsified the outcome of the 2020 presidential election—which he lost by seven million votes. “They never went after those that Rigged the Election. They only went after those that fought to find the RIGGERS!”

The word “riggers” was quickly picked up on ultra-right social media sites and used as a thinly disguised version of a racial slur common in that milieu.

Former Trump White House Communications Director Alyssa Farah Griffin, speaking in a discussion on CNN, said there was no doubt that Trump was deliberately appealing to racism.

“With Trump, you don’t need to look for a dog whistle—it’s a bullhorn when it comes to race,” she said. “And I do think that’s deliberate.”

The threats of violence do not emanate merely from particular fascists or disturbed individuals instigated by Trump’s suggestions. Far more dangerous is the organized violence of fascist groups that have a close relationship to Trump’s coterie and to the Republican Party leadership more generally.

These connections have been largely concealed both

in the Georgia indictment brought in Atlanta, and in the federal indictment brought in Washington D.C. by Justice Department Special Counsel Jack Smith.

Smith’s indictment targets only Trump and six unindicted co-conspirators, all of whom were involved in efforts to recruit fake electors, organize them to cast bogus votes for Trump on December 14, 2020, and then pressure either state legislatures or Vice President Mike Pence to declare them the legitimate electors, rather than the Biden electors actually chosen by the voters.

The Georgia indictment is similarly limited, although it does include actions in Georgia, such as the harassment and intimidation of two Atlanta election workers, where violence was at least implicit.

But neither indictment mentions the violent fascist groups, such as the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers, which were mobilized first for the “Stop the Steal” rallies in Washington that served as dress rehearsals for the attack on the Capitol on January 6, 2021, and then in the attack itself, the first such invasion of the halls of Congress in more than 200 years.

Neither indictment makes mention of those Trump aides and allies who were his liaison to the fascists, such as longtime political crony Roger Stone, and ultra-right congressmen like Paul Gosar and Scott Perry. Neither indictment mentions the actions on January 6 of Trump’s allies in the military-intelligence apparatus, which played a key role in allowing the Capitol to be overrun, and then delaying the dispatch of troops until after the attackers had withdrawn.



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