

# Retiring Senator Romney confirms Pentagon, Congress knew Trump planned violent coup days before January 6

Jacob Crosse  
15 September 2023

On Wednesday, 76-year-old US senator, multi-millionaire venture capitalist, and 2012 Republican nominee for president Mitt Romney announced he would not seek re-election in 2024.

Coinciding with his announcement, the *Atlantic* published select excerpts from a soon-to-be released biography of the senator, revealing that Romney and several of his colleagues, Pentagon officials and police agents knew that then-President Donald Trump would be leading a violent coup on January 6, 2021, yet said nothing publicly.

Romney's statements that it was well known among members of Congress and those charged with protecting it that Trump was instigating an attack on the Capitol were made in hours of interviews, emails and journal entries shared by the senator with *Atlantic* reporter McKay Coppins, author of *Romney: A Reckoning*.

In his interviews with Coppins, the senator said that on January 2, 2021, four days before the attack on the Capitol, he received a distressing text from Senator Angus King of Maine, an independent who caucuses with the Democrats, requesting that Romney urgently call him. January 2 was the same day that Trump and top coup lawyers, including Cleta Mitchell, called Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger and demanded that he "find" the 11,780 votes Trump needed to overtake Biden.

Speaking with Romney, King relayed that an unnamed "high-ranking Pentagon official" confirmed to him that police agencies had been tracking, online, Trump

paramilitaries who were planning on attacking Congress on January 6. Coppins wrote that King told Romney: "There's talk of gun smuggling, of bombs and arson, of targeting the traitors in Congress who are responsible for this travesty," by which King was referring to Trump's lie that the 2020 election was stolen.

King told Romney his high-level Pentagon source had informed him that Romney's name was circulating in right-wing circles on the internet and that he was not sure if "Romney will be safe."

Coppins wrote that after the call with King, Romney immediately sent a text to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

"In case you have not heard this," Romney wrote to McConnell, "I just got a call from Angus King, who said that he had spoken with a senior official at the Pentagon who reports that they are seeing very disturbing social media traffic regarding the protests planned on the 6th. There are calls to burn down your home, Mitch; to smuggle guns into DC, and to storm the Capitol. I hope that sufficient security plans are in place, but I am concerned that the instigator—the President—is the one who commands the reinforcements the DC and Capitol police might require."

According to Romney, McConnell never replied to his text.

None of the official investigations into the January 6 coup, including the multiple hearings held by the now defunct House January 6 Select Committee, made any mention of the fact that some 96 hours before the siege,

leading members of the Senate, high-ranking Pentagon officials and police agents knew that Trump and his allies in the Pentagon would be blocking the dispatch of military reinforcements to defend Congress in the face of a fascist attack.

Instead, both Democrats and Republicans have claimed that so-called “intelligence failures” led to the Capitol being overrun. In its final report, the bipartisan Select Committee sought to exonerate the Pentagon for refusing to authorize the deployment of the D.C. National Guard by ludicrously claiming “miscommunication” issues prevented D.C. troops from arriving at the Capitol for 199 minutes. The House committee was led by Democratic Rep. Bennie Thompson of Mississippi and then-Wyoming Rep. Liz Cheney, the Republican daughter of Dick Cheney, vice president under George W. Bush and leading war criminal in the 2003 US invasion of Iraq.

The Democratic Party and the Biden administration have sought throughout to present the attack on the US Capitol as the work solely of Donald Trump and a narrow circle of co-conspirators—downplaying or concealing the complicity of the Republican Party, the Pentagon, the FBI and at least two Supreme Court justices (Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas). This systematic coverup is designed to protect the institutions of the capitalist state as US imperialism wages war against Russia, prepares for war with China and confronts a growing insurgency by the working class, which is being made to bear the costs of wars and bailouts of the corporate elite.

Romney’s revelations underscore the deadly seriousness of Trump’s failed coup, which the Republicans, the pseudo-left and right-wing libertarian journalists such as Glenn Greenwald have sought to downplay as simply a “riot” that got out of hand.

Trump’s coup nearly succeeded due to the deliberate stand-down of security forces and the refusal of the Democrats, desperate to protect the state apparatus from an aroused working class, to call for popular resistance.

In his interviews with Coppins, which serve as a parting shot before he exits public life, Romney admits

that “A very large portion of my party really doesn’t believe in the Constitution.”

As the Republicans transform into a fascist party, the Democrats continue to do everything in their power to uphold its legitimacy. In an interview on MSNBC’s *Morning Joe* following Romney’s revelations, former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, who announced earlier this month she would be seeking re-election in 2024, characterized Romney’s pending retirement as “bad news.”

“He is such an example of courage in the United States Senate and the Congress,” Pelosi gushed. “The country needs a strong Republican Party. I say that all the time.”



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**