

Top Trump aide and coup plotter, Peter Navarro, begins four-month sentence

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19 March 2024

On Tuesday, Peter Navarro, one of the architects of ex-president Donald Trump's failed plot to stay in power following his 2020 electoral defeat, reported to a minimum security federal prison in Miami, Florida. He is set to serve a four-month prison sentence after refusing to comply with a subpoena issued by the now-defunct January 6 House Select Committee in February 2022.

Navarro was subpoenaed by the Select Committee in February 2022. In its subpoena, the Committee wrote, "You, then a White House trade advisor, reportedly worked with Steve Bannon and others to develop and implement a plan to delay Congress' certification of, and ultimately change the outcome of, the November 2020 election."

On Tuesday, CBS News, citing "a source familiar with the matter," reported that Navarro will be housed in an 80-person dormitory "reserved for older inmates."

Navarro is the first senior White House official to serve any time in prison related to efforts to overturn the 2020 election. Over 1,000 low-level far-right thugs and militia members have faced mostly lenient sentences related to their actions on January 6.

After being found in guilty in September 2023 of two misdemeanor counts of criminal contempt of Congress, Navarro, 74, was sentenced to four months in prison this past January by federal Judge Amit P. Mehta.

Navarro sought to remain free pending an appeal to the Supreme Court. On Monday, Chief Justice John Roberts, without referring the matter to the full court, rejected the appeal, writing, "This application concerns only the question of whether the applicant, Peter Navarro, has met his burden to establish his entitlement to relief under the Bail Reform Act. I see no basis to disagree with the determination that Navarro forfeited those arguments in the release proceeding, which is distinct from his pending

appeal on the merits."

In his appeal to Roberts, and in his federal trial, Navarro claimed he could not testify before the Select Committee because of "executive privilege" allegedly invoked by Trump. Unfortunately for Navarro, he could not present any evidence that Trump had actually invoked such privilege, and even if he did, Mehta, in his January sentencing hearing, observed, "The words 'executive privilege' are not magical incantations... It's not a get-out-of-jail-free card."

Contradicting his claims of "executive privilege," Navarro also publicly, repeatedly discussed and wrote about his conversations with Trump, and other advisers, regarding their efforts to overturn the election.

In his 2021 book *In Trump Time: A Journal of America's Plague Year*, and in many interviews, Navarro explained that the purpose of the plan, dubbed the "Green Bay Sweep," was to use Republican members of Congress to delay certifying the presidential election results on January 6. The plan called on Trump sycophants to object to Electoral College votes in several "battleground" states lost by Trump, but with Republican-controlled state legislatures, including Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

After Senator Ted Cruz (Texas) and Rep. Paul Gosar (Arizona) objected to the electoral college votes of Arizona, the "play" called for Vice President Mike Pence to also reject the vote from Arizona and send it back to the Republican-controlled legislature in Arizona. This blatantly unconstitutional maneuver had previously been outlined in a memorandum drafted by John Eastman, a former law clerk of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas.

In line with the Eastman memo, in the months leading up to January 6, Ginni Thomas, wife of the justice, had sent emails to Republicans in the state legislatures, including Arizona, lobbying them to reject the electors selected by the voters, and instead select their own pro-Trump electors.

In furtherance of delaying the certification in Congress on January 6, Trump's allies in the Pentagon, beginning with acting Secretary of Defense Christopher Miller and Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy, purposely delayed sending National Guard troops to Congress while it was under siege by Proud Boy, Oath Keeper, III Percenter militia elements, along with thousands of pro-Trump fanatics. These had been summoned to Washington D.C. by Trump, Roger Stone, retired General Michael Flynn, Alex Jones and other fascists, as part of the "Stop the Steal" campaign.

In furtherance of "Stop the Steal," Navarro spread Trump's lies that mail-in ballots were inherently corrupt and that the only way that Joe Biden could win was through massive voter fraud.

While not outlined in his book, the "Green Bay Sweep" also called on Trump to issue an executive order commanding the Pentagon to seize voting machines throughout the country and re-run the election under military supervision, ensuring a Trump victory.

Prior to serving his role as top Trump co-conspirator, Navarro, beginning in April 2017, was a trade advisor in the Trump administration, where he spearheaded protectionist measures against China. Following the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, Navarro privately drafted a memorandum in February 2020 warning Trump that the virus could kill 2 million people in the United States.

Publicly, as the virus began to spread in the states, the Harvard-educated economist touted quack "cures" such as hydroxychloroquine and downplayed the threat posed by the virus. After vaccines were developed, and Trump left office, Navarro argued against their use.

Navarro, next to Bannon, is one of the main propagators of the "Wuhan Lab Lie," which falsely asserts that "gain of function" research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology in China, sponsored by Dr. Anthony Fauci, created COVID-19. The "bioweapon" was then purposely

"leaked" in Wuhan and spread around the world, as part of a Chinese Communist plot against the United States. More antisemitic versions of the Wuhan Lab Lie, advanced by presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr., posit that the COVID-19 "bioweapon" was purposely engineered to avoid Chinese and Jews while killing white Americans.

In a press conference Tuesday before turning himself in, Navarro railed against "Trump-haters" and, as Trump does on the campaign trail, bemoaned the "weaponization of the justice system."

Far from falling victim to a politically motivated hit job, Navarro has remained free for years despite his central role in Trump's failed coup. His fellow political gangster, the fascist Bannon, still walks free despite an even more prominent role in organizing the January 6 coup.

Their quasi-immunity is a testament to the real "two-tier justice system" that exists in America. It is not rooted in political bias favoring Democrats against Republicans, but instead, on a class basis, with the wealthy, including Navarro, afforded special privileges and treatment.

The fact that Navarro, more than three years after January 6, is the first high-level Trump advisor to serve any time behind bars, is also a testament to the duplicitous role of President Joe Biden, Attorney General Merrick Garland, and the rest of the Democratic Party.

Far from "defending democracy" and holding Trump and his accomplices accountable for trying to overthrow the election and install a presidential dictatorship, Biden and the Democrats have done everything they can to build a "strong Republican Party."

This includes whitewashing the scale of the coup, including the involvement of the Pentagon, while appealing to Trump and the Republicans to join them, in bipartisan fashion, in passing multi-billion military packages for Ukraine, Israel, Taiwan, coupled with anti-immigrant legislation.



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