Twitter Thread by jon negroni



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A lot of you are going to just breeze past this story without reading it, so let me just break down how absolutely deranged these actions by the president are. He's openly engaging in actual election fraud.

the big flashing red flag here is the president threatening Georgia's secretary of state if he doesn't overturn his defeat in that state.

> President Trump urged fellow Republican Brad Raffensperger, the Georgia secretary of state, to "find" enough votes to overturn his defeat in an extraordinary one-hour phone call Saturday that election experts said raised legal questions.
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> The Washington Post obtained a recording of the conversation in which Trump alternately berated Raffensperger, tried to flatter him, begged him to act and threatened him with vague criminal consequences if the secretary of state refused to pursue his false claims, at one point warning that Raffensperger was taking "a big risk."

after Raffensperger (a Republican btw) calls Trump's assertions "debunked conspiracy theories," the president urges him "find 11,780 votes" and suggests "there's nothing wrong with saying" that he's "recalculated."



President Trump walks to the Oval Office after after returning from Florida on Thursday. (Bill O'Leary/The Washington Post)

Trump dismissed their arguments.

"The people of Georgia are angry, the people in the country are angry," he said. "And there's nothing wrong with saying, you know, um, that you've recalculated."

Raffensperger responded: "Well, Mr. President, the challenge that you have is, the data you have is wrong."

At another point, Trump said: "So look. All I want to do is this. I just want to find 11,780 votes, which is one more than we have. Because we won the state."

The president genuinely sounds like he's trying to talk his way out of prison.

The rambling, at times incoherent conversation, offered a remarkable glimpse of how consumed and desperate the president remains about his loss, unwilling or unable to let the matter go and still believing he can reverse the results in enough battleground states to remain in office.

"There's no way I lost Georgia," Trump said, a phrase he repeated again and again on the call. "There's no way. We won by hundreds of thousands of votes."

Here is the president vaguely threatening Georgia officials that if they don't "find" these ballots that don't exist, they might be "subject to criminal liability." Hard to believe this isn't completely illegal.

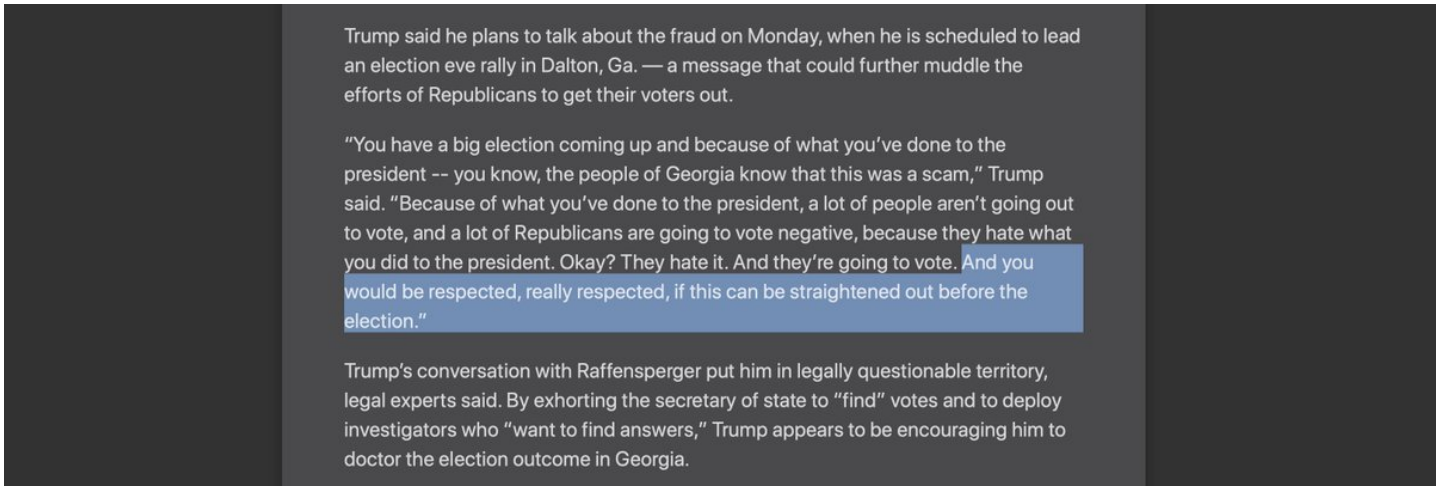
During their conversation, Trump issued a vague threat to both Raffensperger and Ryan Germany, the secretary of state's legal counsel, suggesting that if they don't find that thousands of ballots in Fulton County have been illegally destroyed to block investigators — an allegation for which there is no evidence — they would be subject to criminal liability.

"That's a criminal offense," he said. "And you can't let that happen. That's a big risk to you and to Ryan, your lawyer."

Trump also told Raffensperger that failure to act by Tuesday would jeopardize the political fortunes of David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler, Georgia's two Republican senators whose fate in that day's runoff elections will determine control of the U.S. Senate.

Trump said he plans to talk about the fraud on Monday, when he is scheduled to lead an election eve rally in Dalton, Ga. — a message that could further muddle the efforts of Republicans to get their voters out.

"you would be respected, really respected, if this (election fraud and trampling of our democracy) can be straightened out before the election." I added the part in parentheses.

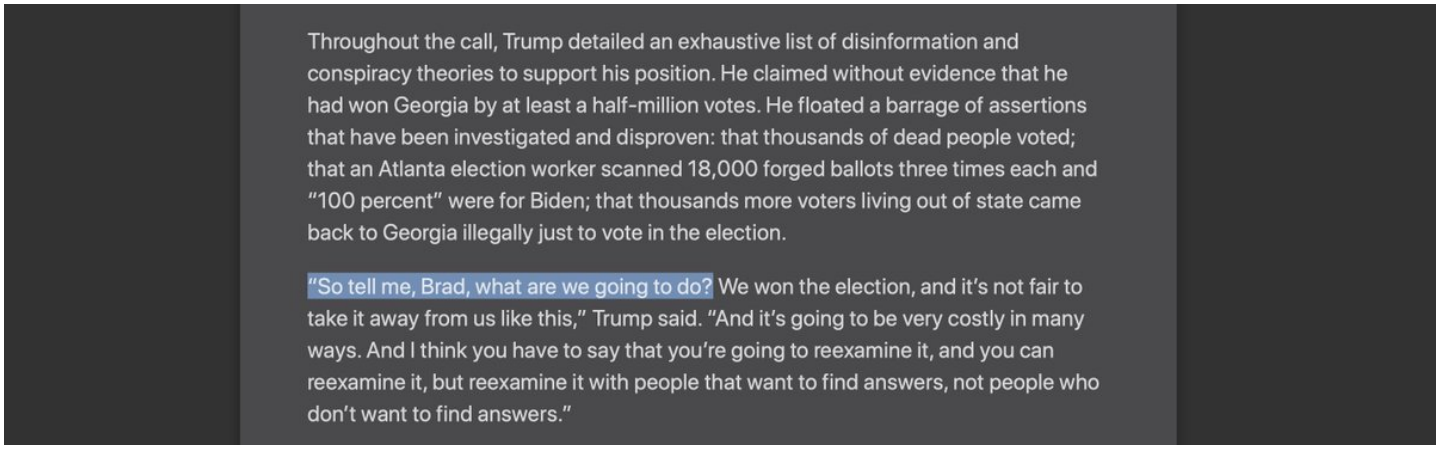


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"You have a big election coming up and because of what you've done to the president -- you know, the people of Georgia know that this was a scam," Trump said. "Because of what you've done to the president, a lot of people aren't going out to vote, and a lot of Republicans are going to vote negative, because they hate what you did to the president. Okay? They hate it. And they're going to vote. And you would be respected, really respected, if this can be straightened out before the election."

Trump's conversation with Raffensperger put him in legally questionable territory, legal experts said. By exhorting the secretary of state to "find" votes and to deploy investigators who "want to find answers," Trump appears to be encouraging him to doctor the election outcome in Georgia.

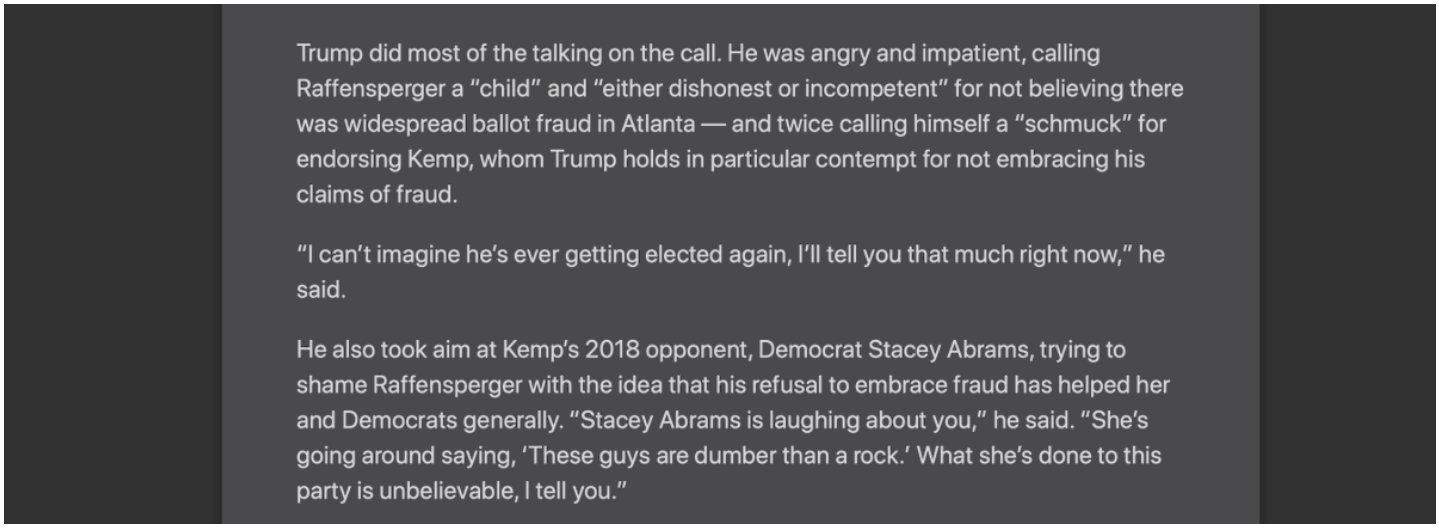
When we say the president comes off like a mob boss, we're not joking.



Throughout the call, Trump detailed an exhaustive list of disinformation and conspiracy theories to support his position. He claimed without evidence that he had won Georgia by at least a half-million votes. He floated a barrage of assertions that have been investigated and disproven: that thousands of dead people voted; that an Atlanta election worker scanned 18,000 forged ballots three times each and "100 percent" were for Biden; that thousands more voters living out of state came back to Georgia illegally just to vote in the election.

"So tell me, Brad, what are we going to do? We won the election, and it's not fair to take it away from us like this," Trump said. "And it's going to be very costly in many ways. And I think you have to say that you're going to reexamine it, and you can reexamine it, but reexamine it with people that want to find answers, not people who don't want to find answers."

He personally insults this official repeatedly, calls him a "child," "schmuck", and "either dishonest or incompetent" for not believing there was widespread fraud in Atlanta. Do Republicans seriously have no problem with this? My guess is yes.



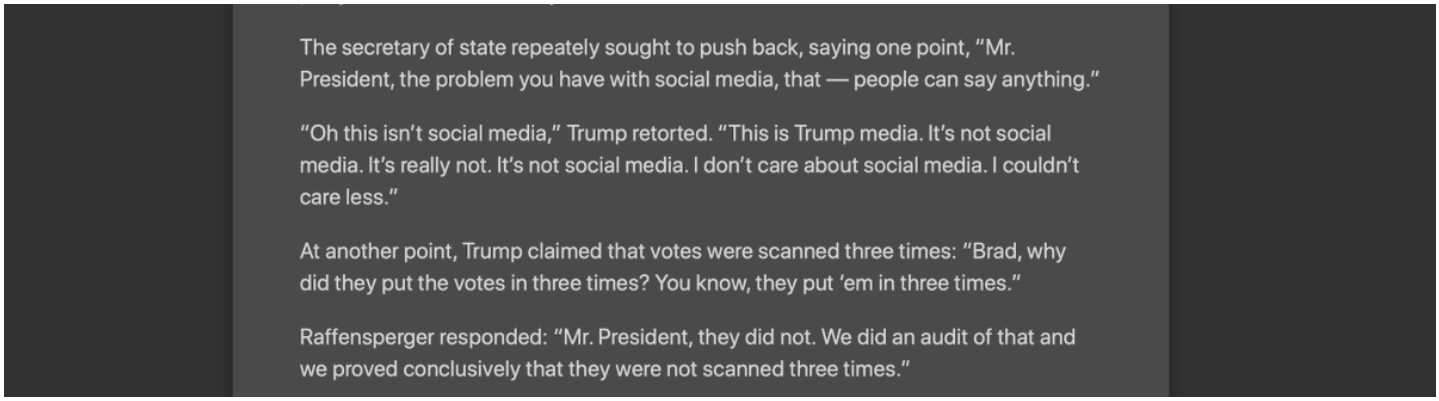
Trump did most of the talking on the call. He was angry and impatient, calling Raffensperger a "child" and "either dishonest or incompetent" for not believing there was widespread ballot fraud in Atlanta — and twice calling himself a "schmuck" for endorsing Kemp, whom Trump holds in particular contempt for not embracing his claims of fraud.

"I can't imagine he's ever getting elected again, I'll tell you that much right now," he said.

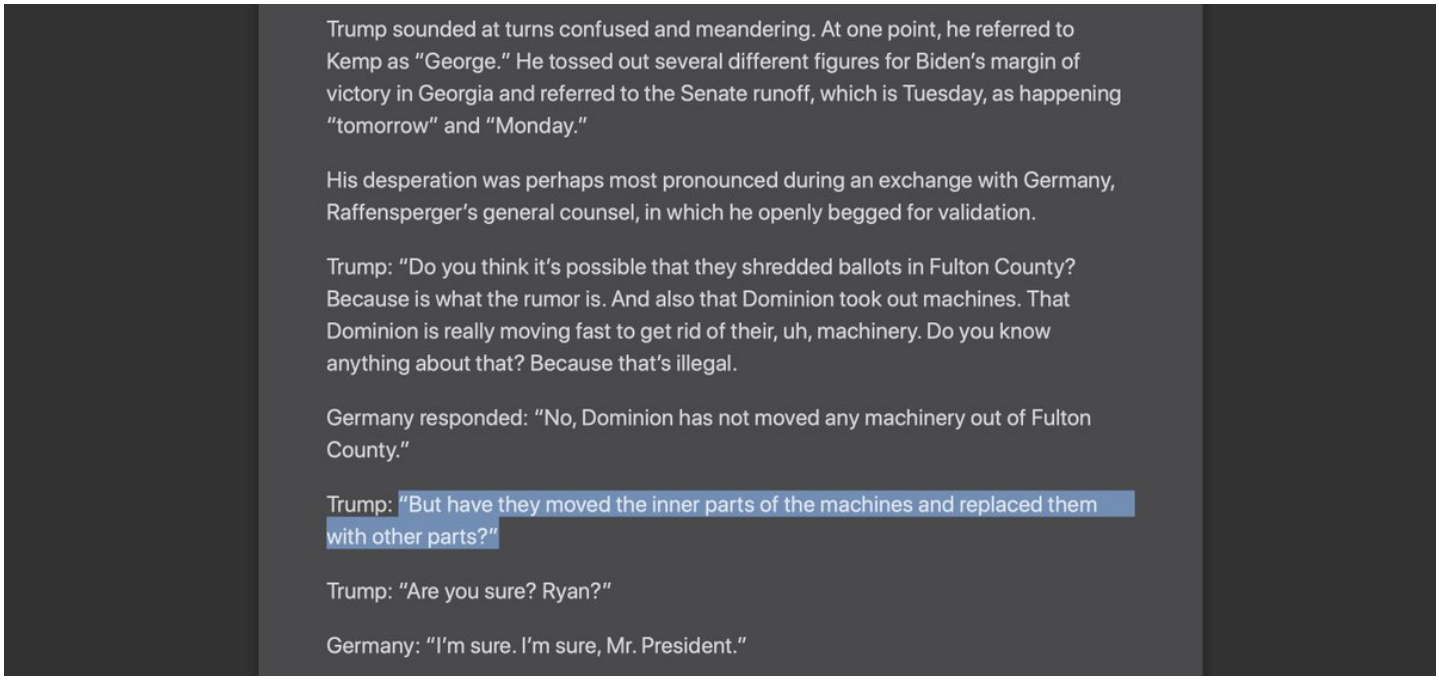
He also took aim at Kemp's 2018 opponent, Democrat Stacey Abrams, trying to shame Raffensperger with the idea that his refusal to embrace fraud has helped her and Democrats generally. "Stacey Abrams is laughing about you," he said. "She's going around saying, 'These guys are dumber than a rock.' What she's done to this party is unbelievable, I tell you."

Raffensberger: "Mr. President, the problem you have with social media, that — people can say anything."

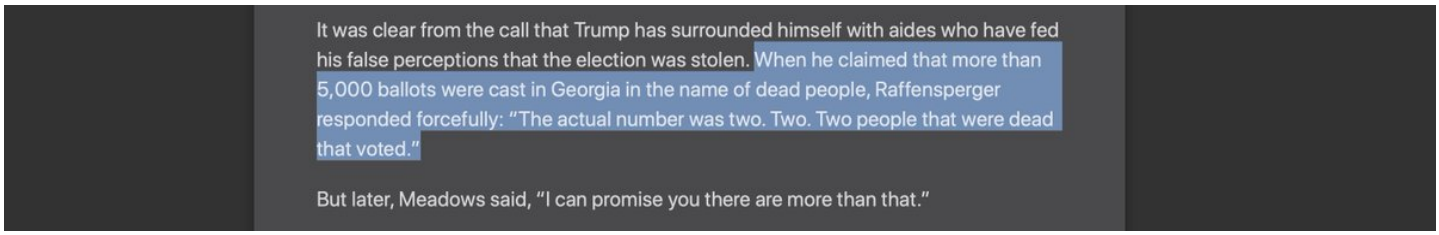
Trump: "Oh this isn't social media. This is Trump media. It's not social media. It's really not. It's not social media. I don't care about social media. I couldn't care less."



"But have they moved the inner parts of the machines and replaced them with other parts?" This is actually coming out of the mouth of the POTUS.

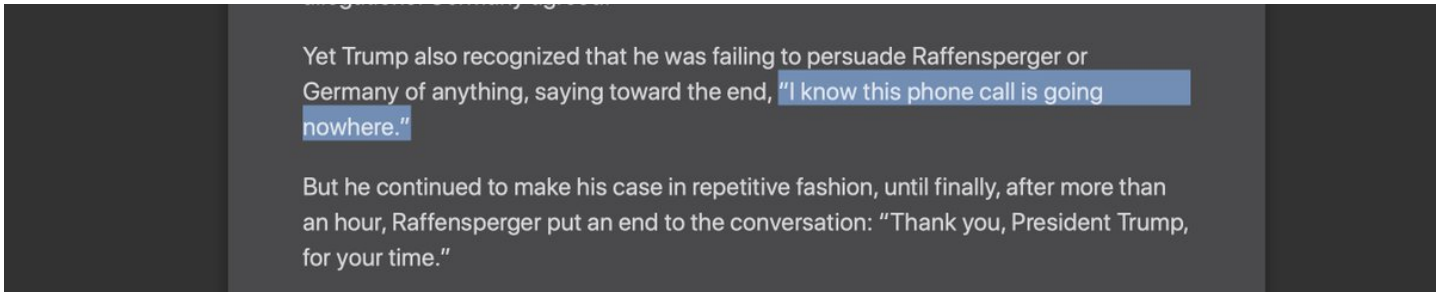


Mark Meadows can't lose his job fast enough.



"I know this phone call is going nowhere."

Worth remembering that Georgia's secretary of state is not only a Republican, but also someone who has been complicit in widespread voter suppression in that state for years. And he's not even close to touching this attempted coup.



I genuinely don't believe it's solely out of some moral obligation on their part. I just think they recognize it will fail and they could face actual legal consequences and prison time if they try to help the president defraud the election. Plain and simple.

I hope this has been a helpful overview, but there's a lot more I didn't highlight. Full article is right here: https://t.co/NduB9ZVrrf

And yes, there's a tape. Lordy, there's a tape.

So, what do we do about this? In a world where consequences matter, the president would be impeached for this and unanimously condemned by both parties. That way, he wouldn't be able to run for office again.

Also, and I don't say this lightly, but if you actually listen to the audio, he seriously sounds like he's on some kind of drug.

Completely mind-melting that he's been accusing Democrats for months that they "found boxes of ballots" and now he's telling Georgia's secretary of state to find boxes of ballots for him or else.

https://t.co/mahnz6h7Io

> Forgot to mention that two weeks ago, Trump retweeted a call to jail Raffensberg with doctored photos of him wearing a mask with China's flag on it https://t.co/I2NX6Va1Fh
>
> — jon negroni (@JonNegroni) January 3, 2021

https://t.co/LCETESdTdj

> If he can get one state to overturn, it creates a narrative that will help him subvert other states. And we know he's trying to do this in more than one state right now. He apparently thinks Georgia is his best bet because it's the reddest. https://t.co/hhVpgbYLRV
>
> — jon negroni (@JonNegroni) January 3, 2021