

NBC's *Today*

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[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: New Fallout from Trump's Controversial Dinner]

HODA KOTB: We've got a lot more to get to, including the growing backlash facing Donald Trump from fellow Republicans after his dinner with a known white nationalist and the former president is now weighing in. NBC's senior Capitol Hill correspondent Garrett Haake has the latest on this. Hey, Garrett, good morning.

GARRETT HAAKE: Hey, Hoda, Good morning to you. And look, we're just two weeks into Donald Trump's third presidential campaign and he's already once again feuding with top elected officials in his party. It's all part of the growing fallout from that dinner you mentioned, which now has the GOP in damage control mode and the former President fuming. Former President Trump now facing the harvest criticism from the top two Republicans in Congress, Kevin McCarthy and Mitch McConnell over Mr. Trump's pre-thanksgiving dinner at his Mar-a-Lago club with prominent white supremacist Nick Fuentes.

HOUSE MINORITY LEADER KEVIN MCCARTHY (R-CA): I don't think anybody should associate or be a part of Nick Fuentes.

HAAKE: McConnell saying there is no room in the party for anti-Semitism or white supremacy.

SENATE MINORITY LEADER MITCH MCCONNELL (R-KY): And anyone meeting with people advocating that point of view in my judgment are highly unlikely to be elected president of the United States.

HAAKE: Even as the GOP leaders distance themselves from Mr. Trump, nearly a week after the dinner, neither condemned him by name. McCarthy, who Mr. Trump has supported in his effort to become House Speaker next year, falsely claiming Mr. Trump condemned Fuentes multiple times and McConnell dodging the question if he would support Mr. Trump should he win the GOP nomination in 2024.

MCCONNELL: That would apply to all of the leaders in the party who will be seeking offices.

HAAKE: The former President, in an interview with FoxNews.com, attacking McConnell as a "loser" and insisting he did not know Fuentes saying, "I never heard of the man, I had no idea what his views were and they weren't expressed at the table in our quick dinner, or it wouldn't have been accepted." Fuentes, an outspoken anti-Semite and Holocaust denier, arrived at Mar-a-Lago last Tuesday as a guest of the rapper Ye, formerly known as Kanye West, who's also embroiled in controversy for recent anti-Semitic remarks. The Republican backlash against Mr. Trump still growing, led by former Trump Vice President Mike Pence.

MIKE PENCE [on NewsNation's *On Balance With Leland Vittert*, 11/29/22]: President Trump was wrong to give a white nationalist, an anti-Semite, and Holocaust denier a seat at the table and I think he should apologize for it.

HAAKE: And on the campaign part of Mr. Trump's presidential campaign, he is scheduled to give a speech tomorrow night from Mar-a-Lago for a ticket-buying audience. But two weeks after the launch of his campaign, he is yet to hold an event outside his private residence. Sources tell NBC News he's not expected to campaign in Georgia before that big Senate runoff there either. Hoda.

KOTB: Alright, Garrett Haake for us there at Capitol Hill. Garrett, thank you.