

*ABC's World News Tonight with David Muir*

01/22/26

6:31:15 p.m. [TEASE]

25 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Jack Smith Defends Trump Charges]

DAVID MUIR: Tonight, a heated hearing on Capitol Hill. For the first time in public, former special counsel Jack Smith pressed on his decision to indict President Trump for January 6 and for classified documents at Mar-a-Lago. What Jack Smith said today, Republicans taking aim. Democrats reminding lawmakers what Republican leaders and what Republicans on that committee said about President Trump's responsibility in the hours after January 6.

(...)

6:40:06 p.m.

2 minutes and 27 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Fmr. Special Counsel Defends Trump Charges]

MUIR: To the heated hearing on Capitol Hill, for the first time in public, former special counsel Jack Smith pressed on his decision to indict President Trump. Republicans taking aim today, how Jack Smith responded. And Democrats reading quotes from Republican leaders and what they said about President Trump in the hours after January 6. Here's Pierre Thomas.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking News; Fmr. Special Counsel Defends Trump Charges; Smith Says He Has No Regrets Indicting President]

PIERRE THOMAS: Tonight, in a hotly contested congressional hearing, former special counsel Jack Smith speaking in public at length for the very first time saying he was right to indict President Trump.

JACK SMITH: Our investigation revealed that Donald Trump is the person who caused January 6, that it was foreseeable to him, and that he sought to exploit the violence.

THOMAS: — and he said he would do it again.

SMITH: [B]ased on the same facts today. I would do so regardless of whether that president was a Democrat or a Republican.

THOMAS: Smith testifying he has no regrets despite receiving death threats and having been personally attacked by President Trump, charging him with illegally retaining classified documents, obstruction of justice, and engaging in a conspiracy to overturn the 2020 election, charges Trump flatly denies, that were later dropped.

SMITH: President Trump was charged because the evidence established that he willfully broke the law.

THOMAS: But Republicans attacked Smith from the moment he was sworn in, accusing him of being a politically motivated prosecutor trying to stop Trump from being re-elected.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JIM JORDAN (R-OH): It was always about politics, and to get President Trump, they were willing to do just about anything.

THOMAS: Democratic Congressman Jared Moskowitz, among those defending Smith, claiming hypocrisy by many Republicans who he claimed changed their view of January 6.

CONGRESSMAN JARED MOSKOWITZ (D-FL): Steve Scalise: "United States Capitol Police saved my life." Lindsey Graham: "When it comes to accountability, the President needs to understand his actions were the problem."

THOMAS: The hearing caught the attention of President Trump, who was thousands of miles away overseas, posting on social media, "based on his testimony today, there is no question that Deranged Jack Smith should be prosecuted for his actions." Smith saying he expects no less.

CONGRESSWOMAN BECCA BALINT (D-VT) [TO SMITH]: [D]o you believe that President Trump's Department of Justice will find some way to indict you?

SMITH: I believe they will do everything in their power to do that because they've been ordered to by the President.

THOMAS: David, DOJ is reviewing how Smith handled his cases against President Trump. We await those findings. But today, Smith was defiant, saying I will not be intimidated. David.

MUIR: Pierre Thomas tonight. Pierre, thank you.