

NBC's *Today*

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7:01:03 a.m. [TEASE]

21 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Mr. Smith Goes to Washington]

CRAIG MELVIN: Mr. Smith goes to Washington. Former special counsel Jack Smith, defending his investigation against President Trump, during a combative hearing on Capitol Hill.

JACK SMITH: I will not be intimidated.

MELVIN: Just ahead, what he's revealing about those now-dropped cases, as the President calls for Smith's prosecution. We're live in Washington.

(...)

7:12:05 a.m.

3 minutes and 3 seconds

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

SHEINELLE JONES: To a tense hearing on Capitol Hill that had the full attention of the White House. Former Special Counsel Jack Smith testifying publicly for the first time about his investigations into the President. The hearing before the House Judiciary Committee lasting more than five hours. NBC's chief Justice and national affairs correspondent Kelly O'Donnell has the details. Kelly, good morning.

KELLY O'DONNELL: Good morning, Sheinelle. This was Jack Smith's day in the court of public opinion, where the former special counsel defended the two criminal cases he had brought against President Trump, but the hearing also exposed Smith to the risk of potential legal trouble if he made any missteps under oath, all while President Trump ramped up pressure on the Justice Department to find a way to charge Smith.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JIM JORDAN (R-OH): Would you please rise and raise your right-hand?

O'DONNELL: This morning, a renewed threat of retribution hangs over former Special Counsel Jack Smith.

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

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

O'DONNELL: President Trump making his desire plain on social media: "Deranged Jack Smith should be prosecuted for his actions" In his first public testimony Thursday —

REPORTERS: Mr. Smith —

O'DONNELL: — Smith made his case and defended his work to bring two criminal cases on classified documents and the January 6 riot, prosecution scrapped after the President won re-election.

SMITH: Our investigation developed proof beyond a reasonable doubt that President Trump engaged in criminal activity.

O'DONNELL: Officers injured in the January 6 attack reacted when a lawmaker said "Mr. Trump was not to blame."

CONGRESSMAN TROY NEHLS (R-TX): Have the intelligence —

MICHAEL FANONE [COUGHS]: [EXPLETIVE] yourself!

O'DONNELL: Smith also condemning President Trump's pardoning of January 6 defendants after his investigation.

SMITH: I do not understand why you would mass pardon people who assaulted police officers. I don't get it. I never will.

O'DONNELL: Republicans repeatedly clashed, claiming Smith's investigation was politically motivated.

JORDAN: It was always about politics and, to get President Trump, they were willing to do just about anything.

CONGRESSMAN HANK JOHNSON (D-GA) [TO SMITH]: Mr. Smith, were you a Biden prosecutor who weaponized the Department of Justice against Donald Trump?

SMITH: Absolutely not.

O'DONNELL: Another tense issue? The special counsel had obtained phone records, not content of calls, for several Republican lawmakers, around the January 6 election certification.

CONGRESSMAN BARRY MOORE (R-AL): Kevin McCarthy, one of the highest-ranking Republicans in the country, had his phone records subpoenaed, all for political gain.

O'DONNELL: Smith defended the records review.

SMITH: My office didn't spy on anyone.

O'DONNELL: Smith made a larger point, too, saying he believed his investigation was necessary for the sake of the rule of law. If the most powerful are not held to account, that sends a message to others, and he says puts our democracy at risk, Sheinelle.

JONES: Alright, Kelly, thank you.