

NBC's *Today*

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7:01:51 a.m. [TEASE]

37 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Fiery Hearing]

SAVANNAH GUTHRIE: Fiery hearing. Former Special Counsel Jack Smith called to Congress to defend his investigations of President Trump, and Republican lawmakers pile on, including one senator's attempt at a gotcha moment.

SENATOR ERIC SCHMITT (R-MO) [TO SMITH]: Did you go to an NBA game between the Golden State Warriors and Atlanta Hawks on February 3, 2024?

JACK SMITH: What city would that be in?

SCHMITT [TO SMITH]: Atlanta.

SMITH: No.

GUTHRIE: But it appeared to fall flat when more facts came out and the Democrats pounced.

KLOBUCHAR: I think that people should have their facts straight —

SCHMITT: Didn't know we had bonus time around here.

KLOBUCHAR: — before they accuse someone of being a dirtbag and not get the teams wrong.

SCHMITT: I stand by that statement.

GUTHRIE: We will have the very latest.

(...)

7:14:57 a.m.

3 minutes and 6 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Smith Hearing Gets Heated on Capitol Hill]

GUTHRIE: Now to that contention hearing on Capitol Hill. Republican lawmakers grilling the former special counsel who charged President Trump in connection with separate federal criminal investigations. NBC's Kelly O'Donnell watching that hearing yesterday. Kelly, good morning.

KELLY O'DONNELL: Good morning, Savannah. President Trump has long criticized and

called for action against former Special Counsel Jack Smith. Senate Republicans argued that Smith's investigation of President Trump that led to felony charges was politically motivated, allegations Smith denied. That divide turned personal. Weeks before the coming midterms, Senate Republicans turned up the heat, unloading their anger on a frequent target of President Trump's fury: former Special Counsel Jack Smith.

SCHMITT: You will go down as a total dirtbag.

SENATOR JOHN KENNEDY (R-LA): You make me want to throw up in my mouth.

O'DONNELL: The President and some Republicans say the former prosecutor should be prosecuted himself, arguing Smith abused his power and sought to hurt Mr. Trump politically. Smith standing his ground.

SMITH: And I will not be silenced by continued threats of prosecution from the President or others.

O'DONNELL: Smith also defended his investigation that led to two felony indictments against Trump back in 2023, related to retaining classified documents and attempting to overturn the 2020 election.

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

O'DONNELL: Republicans tried to demonstrate Smith's investigation was political. In an exchange that went viral, Missouri Republican Eric Schmidt attempting to show that Smith was in Atlanta on a certain date, apparently trying to link him to a Democratic prosecutor there who had charged Mr. Trump.

SCHMITT [TO SMITH]: Did you go to an NBA game between the Golden State Warriors and Atlanta Hawks on February 3, 2024?

JACK SMITH: What city would that be in?

SCHMITT [TO SMITH]: Atlanta.

SMITH: No.

O'DONNELL: Schmidt pushing the former special counsel.

SCHMITT: I don't think you know that we have this stuff, so I will give you a second to process it, so you don't perjure yourself.

O'DONNELL: But a puzzled Smith said he attended a different game.

SMITH: I recall going to a University of Maryland basketball game where Caitlin Clark was playing. [SCREEN WIPE] It was Maryland playing Iowa.

SENATOR AMY KLOBUCHAR (D-MN): Could it then be that the University of Iowa is the Hawkeyes? [SCREEN WIPE] [P]eople should have their facts straight —

SCHMITT: Didn't know we had bonus time around here.

KLOBUCHAR: — before they accuse someone of being a dirtbag and not get the teams wrong.

SCHMITT: I stand by that statement.

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY (R-IA): Klobuchar —

KLOBUCHAR: You have the teams wrong, sir.

GRASSLEY: — Senator!

O'DONNELL: Well, that line of questioning got a lot of attention. Republicans also argued that it was improper that Smith's investigation subpoenaed phone log records for a number of Republican lawmakers. Smith said those records were obtained to corroborate what witnesses had told them about phone calls made between lawmakers and President Trump on January 6, and he had not called Democrats, Savannah.

GUTHRIE: Kelly O'Donnell in Washington, thank you.