

Growing questions about police stand-down in January 6 coup attempt

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The day after President Donald Trump mounted a fascist insurrection at the US Capitol in an attempt to subvert the Constitution and install himself as dictator, more details are emerging regarding the coconspirators within the police, military and far-right who took part in the insurrection.

Despite weeks of advance notice that thousands of people would be descending on DC and Congress on the orders of Trump, Capitol police made little effort to prevent their entry. Video has already emerged of police opening gates to protesters, while another shows an officer taking a selfie with the rioters. **In the most incriminating video yet, an officer is seen goading rioters toward the Capitol building.**

In an interview on CNN, one protester characterized the police as “very cool” and polite, telling the rioters to “have a good night” after storming the Capitol. “You can see that some of them are on our side,” he said.

Politico reported that a current Metro DC officer in a public Facebook post claimed that off-duty police officers and military members were among the rioters and that they used their badges and ID cards to help compromise security. “If these people can storm the Capitol building with no regard to punishment, you have to wonder how much they abuse their powers when they put on their uniforms,” the cop wrote.

In an interview in *New York* magazine, 49-year-old Trump supporter Darinna Thompson from Pennsylvania noted the congenial attitude police took towards fascist insurrectionists inside the Capitol, telling her interviewer, “... you should go in there, it’s beautiful. I thanked them for their hospitality; most of them are on our side, the Capitol Police.”

A reporter for the *New York Times* who was inside the Capitol at the time it was breached questioned a cop as to why the police weren’t attempting to expel the protesters. The officer replied, “We’ve just got to let them do their thing now.”

The Capitol Police force is under the control of the Congress. After the events of September 11, 2001, the size of the police force was more than doubled, from 800 to

about 2,000 officers, or roughly four cops for every one member of Congress. The department’s annual budget is about \$460 million. However, last month Congress appropriated an additional \$51 million to the department, bringing the budget above half a billion dollars.

On Thursday morning, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called on Capitol Police Chief Steven Sund to resign. This followed the Wednesday evening resignation of House Sergeant-at-Arms Paul Irving. Current Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell also requested the resignation of Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Michael Stenger, which he gave Thursday.

By Thursday evening, a union of Capitol Police officers issued a public statement demanding Sund’s resignation as well, which Sund agreed he would do, after initially refusing, effective January 16.

In her remarks Thursday, Pelosi stated that “there was a failure of leadership at the top of the Capitol Police. And I think Mr. Sund, he hasn’t even called us... so I had made him aware that I would be saying that we’re calling for his resignation now.”

In the aftermath of the coup, police uncovered two pipe bombs as well as materials to make “several” Molotov cocktails.

In an extraordinary Thursday morning press conference featuring DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, Metro Police Chief Robert Contee and Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy, McCarthy claimed that they didn’t “anticipate” the crowd would be that large, and that “no intelligence” suggested that a breach of the Capitol was possible.

This is nonsense. Not only had similar attempts to attack state legislatures been mounted in states leading up to and after the election, including the foiled assassination plot of Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, insurrectionists had been planning their assault in plain sight for weeks.

An article by *ProPublica* reports that leaders of the Stop the Steal movement advised visitors to the website WildProtest.com (which has since been taken offline) on December 23, “we came up with the idea to occupy just

outside the CAPITOL on Jan 6th." Photos taken the day of the rally show Trump supporters carrying walkie-talkies with branded shirts that read, "MAGA Civil War," complete with a date of January 6, 2021.

Joining Trump supporters in breaching the Capitol were an assortment of prominent fascists, white supremacists and Nazi filth. Tim Gionet, also known as "Baked Alaska," streamed himself inside a senate office shouting "America First." According to *Business Insider*, Gionet attempted to call Trump from inside the Capitol.

Neo-Nazi Matthew W. Heimbach, the "outreach director" for the National Socialist Movement, was also photographed inside the Capitol. Meanwhile, members of the New England-based neo-Nazi group known as NSC 131 were also spotted outside the Capitol. As of this writing, none of them has been arrested or charged.

Pete Harding, formerly of the New York Watchmen, a far-right militia, also hosted an online stream from the Capitol grounds in which he threatened "leftist terrorist communists." Harding alleged he saw Alex Jones of InfoWars marching to the Capitol as well.

Frequent guest of Jones and head of the Oath Keepers militia, Stewart Rhodes, in an interview with the *Los Angeles Times*, said that he and members of his group were on the Capitol grounds, but never entered the building. "We were in the streets and we were talking to the cops, telling them they should stand down and refuse to follow orders of the illegitimate legislators," Rhodes told the *Times*.

Meanwhile, at least six Republican legislators have been confirmed to have marched on the Capitol.

West Virginia Delegate Derrick Evans posted a video of himself entering the building before later deleting it. Tennessee lawmaker Terry Lynn Weaver told the *Tennessean* that she was "in the thick of it," and later tweeted a photo from the base of the Capitol.

State Senator Amanda Chase, who last month called on Trump to declare martial law in order to stay in power, denied that "rioters" stormed the Capitol, claiming in a Facebook post that it was "Patriots who love their country and do not want to see our great republic turn into a socialist country." She added, "I was there with the people; I know. Don't believe the fake media narrative."

The *Hill* reported that Michigan state representative Matt Maddock and Pennsylvania state senator Doug Mastriano also took part in the march on the Capitol. Missouri State Representative Justin Hill skipped his swearing-in ceremony to be in DC, where he marched among fascists and neo-Nazis, but allegedly did not enter, according to comments he made to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

In her opening remarks, Mayor Bowser emphasized that an "investigation" was needed to determine "why the federal

law enforcement response was much stronger at the protests over the summer than during yesterday's attack on Congress." Bowser called upon the Joint Terrorism Task Force to "investigate, arrest, and prosecute any individual who entered the Capitol, destroyed property, or incited the acts of domestic terrorism observed yesterday."

Bowser was unable to answer why it appeared that police let people in and proceeded to take selfies with them, remarking that "we not only need people, we need effective people."

It has not gone unnoticed by millions of people that the police response to the pro-Trump insurrectionists stood in stark contrast to the treatment victims of police violence and their families have faced throughout the summer and fall protests. Whereas thousands of peaceful multiracial protesters against police violence in DC on June 1 were met with military helicopters, National Guard soldiers, police on horseback and copious amounts of tear gas, flash bangs and less lethal ammunition, the few hundred police stationed outside the Capitol on Wednesday to greet the fascist mob appeared to be armed only with batons and soft language.

The breach of the Capitol, one of the most secure buildings on the planet, was the result of coordination between fascist insurrectionists, the White House and police forces, which allowed them to pass through, virtually unmolested, save for the killing of Air Force veteran Ashli Babbitt.

Babbitt, who is quickly turning into a martyr of the far-right, was shot by a Capitol Police officer as she was attempting to climb through a broken window to get deeper into the Capitol. On her Twitter account, Babbitt expressed fervent support for Trump, retweeting several of his claims regarding election fraud as well as tweets from Trump's inner circle of conspirators, namely attorneys L. Lin Wood, Sidney Powell and retired General Michael Flynn.

Three other deaths among the protesters were reported as "medical emergencies." Chief Contee identified them as Kevin Greeson, 55, of Alabama; Benjamin Phillips, 50, of Pennsylvania; and 34-year-old Georgia resident Rosanne Boyland. One Capitol Police officer is on life support after being struck in the head by a fire extinguisher.

Despite the insurrection being televised and live streamed around the world, on Thursday morning, DC police announced they had made only 68 arrests, a majority of which were for curfew and unlawful entry violations, with many of the arrested already released from jail.



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