

Ex-D.C. Guard officer accuses Army generals of lying to Congress about Pentagon actions during January 6 coup

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In an explosive December 1 memorandum that was first reported by *Politico* and has been shared with the House Select Committee investigating Trump's January 6 coup, Army Reserve Colonel Earl Matthews, a Trump political appointee to the Pentagon and former top lawyer to former Washington D.C. National Guard commander, Major General William Walker, accused two senior Army generals, Walter Piatt and Charles Flynn, of committing perjury before Congress.

"Piatt and Flynn consistently and repeatedly misrepresented, understated, or misled the House Oversight Committee and the [Department of Defense Inspector General] regarding the capability, readiness and motivation of the D.C. [National Guard] to respond on the afternoon of 6 January. They falsely claimed that the DCNG did not have the training and resources to move quickly, to pivot from traffic control to civil disturbance operations. This was untrue," wrote Matthews.

In a document venting extraordinary bitterness, Matthews characterizes the testimony provided by Charles Flynn, the brother of former Trump National Security Adviser General Michael Flynn, and Walter Piatt before Congress as that of "absolute and unmitigated liars."

Expressing the razor-sharp tensions and ongoing internecine conflict within the ruling class and within the highest levels of the Department of Defense itself, Matthews directly accuses General Flynn, who is currently serving as the commanding general of the United States Army Pacific, and General Piatt of perjury before Congress, a federal crime. His memo also raises several questions on the role of former Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy, who Matthews writes was "incommunicado or unreachable for most of the afternoon" of January 6.

The 36-page memorandum, written by Matthews with input from Walker, rebuts several assertions in the recently released Department of Defense Inspector General report on the January 6 attack. As the WSWWS wrote last month, the IG report "completely whitewashes the role of senior Pentagon leaders before and during the attack on Congress by Trump supporters, including the pivotal role of civilian and senior military officials at the Pentagon in delaying the dispatch of National Guard troops."

Matthews' memo, if accurate, further substantiates this reporting, confirming that the only reason Trump's supporters were able to breach the Capitol and remain in occupation for several hours was that senior military and civilian leadership at the Pentagon sabotaged the Capitol's defenses, prior to and on January 6. The memo's public release, 11 months after the coup, points to the ongoing cover-up,

orchestrated by the Democrats and Republicans of the Pentagon's central role in facilitating Trump's coup.

To briefly recapitulate the events of January 6 and the established timeline: Former D.C. Commander William Walker, who is now the House Sergeant-at-Arms, testified before Congress in March that after receiving "frantic" requests, beginning at 1:49 p.m. on January 6 from then Capitol Police Chief Steven Sund for National Guard support to protect the Capitol, he reached out to the senior Pentagon leadership for permission to deploy a "Quick Reaction Force" of "about 155" soldiers.

Normally, Walker would have been able to deploy his troops once requested by a civilian authority without permission from recently installed Acting Secretary of Defense Christopher Miller. However, an "unusual," in Walker's words, January 4 memo from the Pentagon restricted his ability to deploy soldiers without prior approval.

Walker, Sund and D.C. Metropolitan Police Chief Robert Contee have said in congressional testimony that during a 2:30 p.m. phone conference with the Pentagon, their requests for the D.C. Guard to be deployed were opposed by generals Piatt and Flynn, both of whom cited the negative "optics" of deploying uniformed soldiers to the Capitol.

This delay continued for some 3 hours and 19 minutes (199 minutes), allowing ample time for Trump's fascistic elements to seek out and take politicians hostage or worse. This delay, Walker testified, left him "stunned and frustrated."

As Matthews pointed out in his report, during the sole appearance of Piatt and Flynn before Congress, Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), chair of the House Oversight Committee, asked both generals if they personally used or recalled hearing the term "optics" raised during their discussions with Walker, Sund and Contee about deploying troops on January 6. Piatt did not "recall" using that term, while Flynn claimed that he did not "observe" Piatt express "concern about the visuals, image, or public perception of sending the D.C. National Guard to the U.S. Capitol at any point on January 6, 2021..."

In response, Matthews wrote, "Four other DCNG [D.C. National Guard] soldiers heard Piatt say optics were an important consideration. ... Piatt evidently forgot about the Army [note-taker] present in McCarthy's office with him who recorded his statements. [Note-takers] on two different sides of the river heard Piatt say the optics matter. At least 9 people then who were in the meeting heard Piatt mention optics. Only Piatt and Flynn are adamant that he did not."

Walker's, Sund's and Contee's testimonies discredited the

narrative that the military moved at “sprint speed,” as Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley claimed, to assist the besieged Congress on January 6. Matthews wrote that the “cumulative impact” of Walker’s, Sund’s and Contee’s testimonies before Congress “coupled with the revelation that Army leaders had for a time falsely denied that LTG Flynn was even on the 2:30PM call worked to create a narrative which made Army Senior Leadership look bad. In March 2021, MG Walker was told by a friend that LTG Piatt was so upset with MG Walker that he directed the development of an Army ‘White Paper’ to retell events of 6 January in a light more favorable to LTGs Flynn, Piatt, Secretary McCarthy and the Army Staff.”

Matthews claims that this retelling of events is documented in the Army’s Report of the United States Army Operations on January 6, 2021. “The judgment of history is (sic) depends on who writes it. With respect to the Army on January 6, Piatt was determined to be that author.”

He continues, “Piatt and [Brigadier General Chris] LaNeve literally changed facts and recollection overnight. The end product, a revisionist tract worthy of the best Stalinist of North Korea propagandist, was close hold [i.e., kept secret by the Pentagon].”

In addition to the “optics” discussion, Matthews pointed to several instances in which “facts” reported in the inspector general’s report were blatantly untrue. In the same pivotal 2:30 p.m. phone conference during which Flynn and Piatt bemoaned the “optics” of sending soldiers trained in riot control to put down the riot at the Capitol, the inspector general’s report claimed that McCarthy heard “urgent requests” from “Sund and Mayor [Muriel] Bowser.” Matthews pointed out in his memo that not only was Bowser never on the phone call, but neither was McCarthy, who was instead meeting with acting Secretary of Defense Miller at that time.

“The only active participants in the call from Army headquarters were LTG Piatt, LTG Flynn and COL [John] Lubas. COL Lubas only spoke to announce that McCarthy could not participate and to introduce Piatt and Flynn. The DoDIG report, however quotes several unnamed ‘Army witnesses’ who consistently observed things that did not actually occur during the 2:30 p.m. call ...”

In addition to the DoD IG report misreporting who was on which phone calls, the report also invented phone calls that never occurred. As the WSWS pointed out last month, a new phone call between McCarthy and Walker appeared on the IG report at 4:35 p.m., during which McCarthy allegedly gave Walker the authorization to deploy, which he for reasons unexplained apparently did not comply with, forcing McCarthy to call him again at 5:02 p.m. to reissue the order.

Matthews wrote that the 4:35 p.m. phone call never happened: “MG Walker does not question the integrity and honest of any of these officers, except to the extent that they say that they have personal knowledge that Secretary McCarthy called MG Walker at 16:35 on 6 January and directed him to immediately deploy the D.C. National Guard to the Capitol. No such call took place, if an individual alleges such a call took place, then they are lying.”

Underscoring the role of the Inspector General’s office in facilitating the cover-up, Matthews alleged that none of Walker’s aides were interviewed for the report. “The DoDIG apparently interviewed most, if not all of Secretary McCarthy’s entourage, but did not interview any key personnel who were with MG Walker when events unfolded on 6 January, to include his aide-de-camp ILT Timothy Nick, a sworn federal law enforcement officer, and the Staff Judge Advocate, COL Earl Matthews, who were constantly by MG Walker’s side during the events in question, not the Command

Sergeant Major of the D.C. National Guard, CSM Michael Brooks who was also with MG Walker throughout the day.

Further refuting assertions by Piatt and Flynn that they did not impede the deployment of the Guard on January 6, coinciding with Matthews’ memorandum, *Politico* also obtained an official D.C. National Guard memorandum dated January 7, 2021. The memorandum included the DCNG timeline of the events of January 6, 2021.

The timeline noted that at 2:13 p.m. Sund contacted Walker by phone requesting 200 DCNG members to support Capitol Police. CG Walker advised the Quick Reaction Force could deploy to assist. A minute later at 2:14 p.m., Walker was told to “standby” from the Secretary of the Army McCarthy.

At 2:36 p.m. the timeline noted, “Sund requests National Guard support again by verbal request.” At 2:37 p.m. “Gen Flynn and Gen [Piatt] recommended for DC Guard to standby and start drafting a plan for courses of action. Recommended plan that DC Guard can take over more points and help relieve Law Enforcement Officers to go to the Capitol to assist Capitol Police.” This would have put the Guard on traffic patrol duties, not expelling the rioters from the Capitol.

At 2:40 p.m. Sund again requested National Guard support, a minute later, Flynn, who was not in the chain of command on January 6, advised that DCNG “standby until the request has been routed to the (sic) McCarthy and Acting Secretary of Defense, Mr. Christopher C. Miller.”

At 2:42 p.m. the timeline indicated that Contee advised “that it sounded like the Department of Defense was denying the request to assist Sund’s request for assistance,” which Flynn rebutted a minute later.

In summary, as the Capitol was being overrun, between 2:13 p.m. and 2:41 p.m., McCarthy was unavailable and two generals, one of whom is the brother of a top supporter of Trump, resisted three pleas by police chiefs Sund and Contee and General Walker to deploy troops.

In concluding his memorandum, Matthews wrote, “Given the glaring deficiencies with respect to the DoDIG investigation, and given that his name was unfairly besmirched, MG Walker requests an independent review of the investigative findings of the DoDIG report and most importantly, the Army Report that was created at LTG Piatt’s direction should be publicly released, independently reviewed and substantiated. The timeline the Army produced should be carefully scrubbed for accuracy.”

The *World Socialist Web Site* will continue to report on these startling revelations which underscore not only the advanced decay of bourgeois democracy in the United States, but the urgent need for workers and youth who wish to defend democratic rights to break from the two parties responsible for facilitating and covering up Trump’s attempted coup.



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