

Capitol Police Board issues emergency declaration as far-right ‘People’s Convoy’ camps outside Washington D.C.

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7 March 2022

On Sunday evening, House Sergeant-at-Arms William Walker, the former commander of the Washington D.C. National Guard, announced that the Capitol Police Board had issued an “emergency declaration” in response to the arrival of the anti-vaccine, pro-Trump “People’s Convoy.”

In a letter addressed to all members of Congress and their staff Walker wrote: “The Capitol Police Board has issued an emergency declaration to ensure that the US Capitol police are able to operate and respond as necessary.” According to CNN, Walker advised members and staff to “consider telework options” and use “public transportation” if they do have to come to the Capitol.

Walker was a major-general in command of the D.C. National Guard during the January 6, 2021 attack on Congress by pro-Trump elements seeking to delay the certification of Joe Biden’s victory in the 2020 presidential election. Following the attack, Walker was nominated by Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to be the new sergeant-at-arms.

In testimony before Congress, Walker has claimed that senior military leadership delayed the deployment of troops under his command, even as police and lawmakers at the Capitol were pleading for help. Walker has repeatedly insisted that urgent requests for National Guard support from then Capitol Police Chief Steven Sund were unnecessarily delayed by two senior Army generals, Walter Piatt and Charles Flynn.

In justifying their refusal to allow Walker to deploy a

“quick reaction force” of soldiers to assist the purposely undermanned Capitol Police, Walker has testified that Piatt and Flynn complained about the “optics” of sending soldiers to the Capitol as it was under attack by neo-Nazi and fascist paramilitaries, such as the Oath Keepers, 11 of whom have been charged with seditious conspiracy.

There is no question that it has been impressed upon leaders of the “People’s Convoy” that any attempt to mimic the occupation of Ottawa, Canada’s capital, in Washington D.C., will be met with a swift response from the police and military. The current deployment of National Guard soldiers has been extended through Wednesday and steel security fencing remains in place around the Capitol Complex.

For the second straight day, participants in the convoy avoided entering Washington D.C. proper and instead did another 64-mile loop of the Capital Beltway to show their opposition to any public health measures aimed at combating the spread of the coronavirus, which continues to kill an average of over 1,500 people a day in the United States.

Local WTOP Traffic reports claimed that there were not “nearly as many participants” compared to Sunday’s drive, which itself caused no significant traffic disruptions or delays. Unlike Sunday, the convoy, comprised of semi-trucks, recreational and personal vehicles adorned with American flags and pro-Trump slogans, made only one loop around D.C., not two, before returning to the Hagerstown Speedway in Maryland.

Co-organizer of the convoy and Republican operative Brian Brase expressed the concerns of many in the crowd during a mass meeting Monday morning: “I’m fearful ... of them trying to do to us what they did to those involved in January 6. It is our belief that they will try to do that.”

Some 750 low-level thugs and direct participants in the attack on the Capitol have been charged for their actions. But former president Donald Trump and other high level co-conspirators remain uncharged, some 14 months after attempting to block the certification of the election and overthrow the Constitution to keep Trump in the White House.

“So with that said we are making diplomatic moves,” Brase said. “That means that we are not, at this time, meaning today and tomorrow, we are not and will not, go into D.C. proper,” he said. As murmurs of discontent began to grow within the far-right group, Brase quickly acknowledged the divisions, adding: “Again ... I know some here really, passionately want that to happen.”

While the anti-vaccine caravan continues to remain encamped outside of D.C., at a later meeting, Brase claimed that Republican Senators Ron Johnson (Wisconsin) and Ted Cruz (Texas) would be meeting with the convoy on Tuesday.

“Just got word Ron Johnson has officially confirmed meeting with us and he’s working with Ted Cruz,” Brase tweeted. Cruz was one of seven Republican senators who voted to overturn the election of Biden following the attack on the Capitol on January 6. Both Johnson and Cruz have adopted Trump’s fascistic lie that the attempted coup was nothing more than a protest in favor of “election integrity” that simply got out of hand, due to the involvement of “deep state” *agents provocateurs* and amorphous “antifa” elements.

While the far-right network Right Side Broadcasting News reported that organizers for the People’s Convoy would be meeting with far-right Republican representatives Matt Gaetz (Florida), Thomas Massie (Kentucky) and Marjorie Taylor Greene (Georgia) on

Monday, this was apparently delayed until Tuesday.

As Republican lawmakers weigh backing the convoy in the midst of the war drive against Russia and the rapid scrapping of any remaining COVID-19 mitigation measures, the Democrats maintain their stony silence on the growth and nurturing of the far right by their “Republican colleagues” while upholding the police and military as the ultimate defenders of democratic rights.

Democratic D.C. Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton issued a press release headlined, “Norton Thanks Capitol Police Chief for Prompt and Thorough Briefing as Trucker Convoys Reach National Capitol Region.” She said that Chief J. Thomas Manger informed her that there were “two convoys in the area: one based out of Hagerstown and one parking at the Dominion Raceway.”

She said that Manger told her, “he was more worried last week, before the State of the Union, prior to making contact with the convoys, and he currently does not expect either of the groups to cause security problems in the area.”

In an interview with the *Washington Post*, Norton admitted that with the Democrats overseeing the elimination of the few extremely limited vaccine and mask mandates in the US, and the rewriting of CDC mask mandates, most of the convoy’s central pro-pandemic demands have already been met.

Referring to the ultra-right protesters, Norton observed, “It seems their cause has dissolved with masks coming down, and covid no longer quite the problem it has been nationwide.” She made no reference to the more than 1,300 people in Washington D.C. who have died from coronavirus so far.



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