

The January 6 Committee
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It has been one year since we witnessed a horrifying attempt to reverse the Presidential election by the loser, Donald Trump, who was the first president in our history to attempt a coup to reverse a free and fair vote.

Trump not only refused to concede, which has always been done gracefully by former campaign losers, but he bellowed a "big lie" repeatedly that he should have been the winner. He even tried to intimidate the Secretary of State of Georgia to "find" thousands of votes that would nullify the Democratic win. Fortunately, that Republican Secretary of State did his duty instead, what we would expect of a patriotic American.

Vice President Pence, loyal and obsequious to Trump for four years, also couldn't be bullied into not carrying out his constitutional duty, of opening the States' ballots that would confirm the Biden win. Pence went to the Capitol where the joint Congress and Senate members were assembled to witness and confirm this exercise in democracy.

The next events were witnessed by everybody with a TV set turned on. We saw Trump and his circle (including some of his Congressional toadies) egging on a mob of Trump supporters, who apparently believed that they had been "invited" by the president to take back a stolen election. Trump then lied to the mob, telling them that he would lead them from their rally "down Pennsylvania Avenue, to Congress" to let them know that they must stop confirming the election and nullify the votes. He never led them at all. He returned to the White House and watched with glee the insurgency for many hours.

The mob obeyed, and to us watching, it appeared that a peaceful mob morphed into a rampaging horde armed with flags (many of the Confederacy), shields, bear spray, and other tools intended to overcome the Capitol police. The battled, filmed live, terrified everybody, even supporters of Trump, who pleaded with him to go on line and urge the mob to go home. Reluctantly and hours later, he gave a half-hearted talk, telling his followers that he loved them, but they should go home.

Seemingly the consequences of inadequate planning, the overwhelmed Capitol police were finally rescued by National Guard and other police, but not before many were seriously wounded and several died.

In the aftermath of this nightmare, even the cowed Republicans (such as Mitch McConnell and House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy) spoke publicly, condemning the president for his incitement and his negligence to halt the riot. It looked, for the moment, that we had finally gotten the Republicans to return to their position as loyal opposition, but unfortunately, within hours, they once more surrendered to the bully in the White House.

Mitch McConnell refused to OK a bipartisan commission to meet to explore exactly what happened, to ask who financed this, to ascertain that there was preplanning of the insurgency (directed by Trump himself), and to make public the details of the insurgency itself. The Democrats then created a fact-finding committee and two Republicans joined, making this process bipartisan.

The status at the moment is fact-finding, interviewing hundreds of witnesses, collecting documents, and moving up the chain from foot soldiers (being rounded up by the FBI and some already in jail) to the planners and conspirators themselves, right up to Trump himself.

It is unknown if the Justice Department is already running a parallel investigation, or is waiting to have the evidence sent to them at the conclusion of the Congressional Committee. But what we do know is that there will be public hearings televised for the world to see, an operation that will show that we are still a Republic, not a dictatorship.

The most important consequence of this attempted insurgency is that the sensible among us are now aware of how fragile Democracy actually is. It is only as good as our citizens. Our bad citizens are very loud and threatening, but their numbers are shrinking, and this Commission's televised hearings may well reduce their numbers even more. This was a close call for us, and we must prevent it from happening again.

687 words

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