

# THE TRUMP EFFECT: ATTEMPTED COUP EDITION

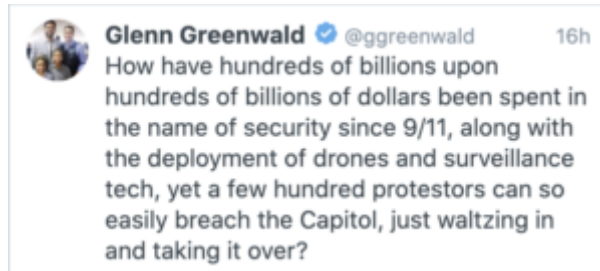
I have long talked about “The Trump Effect,” by which Trump, in pushing existing policies an order of magnitude further, makes those toxic policies visible to people who otherwise have not seen them.

Yesterday’s coup attempt was not the implementation of any existing policy. What happened yesterday was unprecedented in the history of this nation.

That said, it did make certain things visible.

The DOD refusal to honor a request from Mayor Muriel Bowser, made before the coup attempt started, to deploy the National Guard to DC to help makes it clear (as did Trump and Bill Barr’s deployment of DOD troops over the summer) that DC cannot be left anymore without its own defense. As many people have noted, this provides a clear reason, independent of the number of Senators or the existence of a largely-Black city without full franchise, that DC should become a state.

Similarly, the refusal of DC cops, including Capitol Police, to treat these terrorists as terrorists demonstrates why people have called to “defund” the police. It’s not denial that we need police. It’s a recognition that, right now, police forces are often filled with extremists who sympathize with people like the terrorists who stormed the Capitol. There needs to be a priority on cleansing police forces of such extremists, or they will become an armed force working against democracy again.



Finally (in what appears to be a surprise to a guy who wrote a book on the topic and who has been dismissing the threat of a coup for months), what we saw yesterday was what happens when a man who puts self-interest over the good of the country happens to wield the power of the unitary executive. While some people appointed by Donald Trump took the appropriate approach in responding to the coup attempt – citing their oath to the Constitution – others dawdled until Mike Pence took action. It will take some time until we understand their excuse for protecting a man rather than the Constitution. But decades of claims that all authority emanates from the President certainly made it more likely. Last night made it clear that such unchecked authority is incompatible with the Constitution.

We are not yet out of the woods. Trump, even while stating he will leave office, nevertheless has promised to sustain his insurgency. On top of everything else President-Elect Biden has to deal with, he now has to think of ways to coup-proof the US government.

Update: Mayor Bowser has called for Congress to push statehood through in the first 100 days of the Biden Administration.

