

**THE LAW ENFORCEMENT EXPERIENCE ON  
JANUARY 6TH**

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**HEARING**

BEFORE THE

**SELECT COMMITTEE TO  
INVESTIGATE THE JANUARY 6TH  
ATTACK ON THE  
UNITED STATES CAPITOL**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**

FIRST SESSION

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THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL

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## THE LAW ENFORCEMENT EXPERIENCE ON JANUARY 6TH

Tuesday, July 27, 2021

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE JANUARY 6TH  
ATTACK ON THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL,  
*Washington, DC.*

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:31 a.m., in Room 310, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Bennie G. Thompson [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Thompson, Lofgren, Schiff, Aguilar, Cheney, Murphy, Raskin, Luria, and Kinzinger.

Chairman THOMPSON. A quorum being present, the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol will be in order.

The Select Committee is meeting today to receive testimony on “The Law Enforcement Experience on January 6th.”

Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare the Committee in recess at any time.

I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

Let me say a few words at the outset about this Committee’s work and how, as Chairman, I plan to run things. We’re going to be guided solely by the facts: the facts of what happened on January 6th, the run-up to that tragic day, and what has taken place since. That’s what we’re charged to do by House Resolution 503.

There is no place for politics or partisanship in this investigation. Our only charge is to follow the facts where they lead us. While we have a lot to uncover, there are a few things we already know.

We know that the insurrection on January 6th was a violent attack that involved vicious assaults on law enforcement. We know there is evidence of a coordinated, planned attack. We know that men and women who stormed the Capitol wanted to derail the peaceful transfer of power in this country. We know that 7 people lost their lives; that more than 140 police officers suffered injuries. We know that efforts to subvert our democracy are on-going. A major part of the Select Committee’s work will be to find ways to eliminate that threat.

We also know that the rioters came dangerously close to succeeding. If not for the heroism of the United States Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department, many more lives might have been lost and the rioters could have accomplished what they set out to do: Upend American democracy.

It’s an honor to have four of these heroes sitting before us today. We welcome them for appearing here and, more importantly, for

your heroism on January 6th. You have the gratitude of this Committee and this country.

You held the line that day. I can't overstate what was on the line: our democracy. You held the line.

We're going to revisit some of those moments today, and it won't be easy, but history will remember your names and your actions.

It's important to think about history as this Committee starts its work and as we hear from these courageous men and to get answers for the American people; because we need to understand our history if we want to understand the significance of what happened on January 6th and our role as Members of the people's House.

I'm talking about the peaceful transfer of power. Two hundred twenty years ago, in 1801, the House of Representatives did one of its jobs laid out in the Constitution. After a deadlock in the electoral college, this body cast 36 ballots and ultimately settled the contest for President of the United States. What followed was the first peaceful transfer of power in our country's history.

We know that, since then, our history has been far from perfect. We've been torn apart and brought back together. We've struggled across generations to make our country's great vision a reality for all Americans. We've won victories, and we've suffered failures, but the peaceful transfer of power has stood as the pillar of our democracy.

It's one of those things we rely on, a safeguard that we hold close, because, as heated and angry and divided as we may be, whatever victories we celebrate or upheavals we endure, we can rest easy knowing that, when the moment comes, our system guarantees that one party will hand the reins to another if that's the will of the people.

While our institution's endured and while Joe Biden is the legitimately elected President of the United States, a peaceful transfer of power didn't happen this year. It did not happen.

Let that sink in. Think about it.

A violent mob was pointed toward the Capitol and told to win a "trial by combat". Some descended on this city with clear plans to disrupt our democracy. One rioter said that they weren't there to commit violence but that—I'm quoting—"We're just there to overthrow the Government."

I want to repeat that. I urge everyone to listen to those words and think about what they mean. "We were just there to overthrow the Government."

They marched on the Capitol with the clear intentions of stopping the certification of the election. When they encountered the police sworn to keep us safe, they went on their attack with bear spray, knives, tasers, hockey sticks, even flagpoles fashioned into clubs with the American flag still attached.

Those rioters breached the Capitol. They smashed windows, scaled walls, broke down doors, and invaded the Halls of Congress. It was a scene of violence in the citadel of our democracy not seen since 1814 when British soldiers sacked the building.

They raced through the hallways chanting, "Hang Mike Pence!" "Where is Nancy?"

They stormed onto the Senate floor because they wanted to stop the Senate from certifying the election. The rioters tried to take over the House floor for the same reason.

Thankfully, some astute, young staff members had the presence of mind to grab the physical electoral ballots for safekeeping.

These rioters were organized. They were ready for a fight, and they came close to succeeding. It's frightening to think about how close we were: a few inches of wood and glass, an officer turning left instead of turning right. But just describing that attack doesn't come close to capturing what actually took place that day.

So, we're going to see some of what our witnesses saw on January 6th. Let's see the video, please, but please be advised that it contains graphic images and strong language, which many may find disturbing.

CROWD. [unintelligible]  
 STOP THE STEAL ZELLO CHANNEL. Hey brother, we're boots on the ground here. We're moving on the Capitol now. I'll give you a boots-on-the-ground update here in a few.  
 POLICE RADIO TRANSMISSION. Multiple Capitol injuries. Multiple Capitol injuries.  
 CROWD. [unintelligible]  
 VOICE. Take the building! Take the building!  
 VOICE. Fuck you, police!  
 POLICE RADIO TRANSMISSION. 50 to JOCC, we're still taking metal, sharpened objects, missiles, to include bottles and rocks and hand-thrown chemical-grade fireworks.  
 VOICE. There's an officer in the crowd.  
 CROWD. [unintelligible]  
 POLICE RADIO TRANSMISSION. . . . this is now effectively a riot.  
 POLICE RADIO TRANSMISSION. 1349 hours, declaring it a riot.  
 STOP THE STEAL ZELLO CHANNEL. OK, guys, apparently the tip of the spear has entered the Capitol Building.  
 CROWD. [unintelligible]  
 POLICE RADIO TRANSMISSION. [redacted], if I give this up, they're going to have direct access. At least the scaffold we can defend. We've got to hold what we have.  
 VOICE. Take your pins off.  
 VOICE. What the fuck?  
 VOICE. Take your pins off.  
 CROWD. [redacted] This is our house! [redacted]  
 VOICE. This is a corrupt government. [unintelligible]  
 VOICE. Is this the Senate? Where the fuck are they?  
 POLICE RADIO TRANSMISSION. Cruiser 50, we're flanked. 10-33. I repeat, 10-33, West Front of the Capitol. We have been flanked, and we've lost the line.  
 CROWD. [unintelligible]  
 VOICE. They're coming, baby! They're coming, baby!  
 VOICE. Motherfuckers!  
 VOICE. They're spraying gas.  
 VOICE. Lock the shields. Lock them together. Lock them together.  
 VOICE. We need fresh patriots to the front!  
 VOICE. Back up if you need a break. Come on.  
 VOICE. He needs a break.  
 VOICE. Jimmy, get them to the back. Get them to the back. Get them to the back. Let's get some fresh faces up front.  
 CROWD. [unintelligible]  
 VOICE. Push!  
 VOICE. All right. Let me out!  
 VOICE. Pull them out! Pull them out! Pull them out!  
 VOICE. Can I speak to Pelosi? Yeah? We're coming, bitch! Oh, Mike Pence? We're coming for you too, you fucking traitor!  
 CROWD. Hang Mike Pence! Hang Mike Pence! Hang Mike Pence!  
 STOP THE STEAL ZELLO CHANNEL. They've got the gallows set up outside the Capitol Building. It's time to start fucking using them.  
 VOICE. Start making a list, put all those names down, and we start hunting them down one-by-one.  
 VOICE. Traitors get guillotine!

VOICE. Mobilize in your own cities, in your own counties, storm your own capitol buildings, and take down every one of these corrupt motherfuckers!

VOICE. That's what we fucking need to have: 30,000 guns up here.

VOICE. Next trip.

Chairman THOMPSON. He'll be back, he warns us. It's just chilling.

I thank God our democracy and our Republic withstood this assault, but that man's warning reminds us that this threat hasn't gone away. It looms over our democracy like a dark cloud.

Some people are trying to deny what happened, to whitewash it, to turn the insurrectionists into martyrs. But the whole world saw the reality of what happened on January 6th: the hangman's gallows sitting out there on our Nation's Mall, the flag of that first failed and disgraced rebellion against our Union being paraded through the Capitol, the hatred, the bigotry, the violence, and all of it for a vile, vile lie.

Let's be clear. The rioters who tried to rob us of our democracy were propelled here by a lie.

As Chairman of this Committee, I will not give that lie any fertile ground. We need to understand how and why the Big Lie festered. We need to know minute-by-minute how January 6th unfolded. We need to understand how the rotten lie behind January 6th has continued to spread and feed the forces that would undermine American democracy.

We need to figure out how to fix the damage. It won't be easy, but I have tremendous confidence in the colleagues sitting to my left and right. These are men and women of courage and character.

We did not ask for this, but the House of Representatives did its job to give this country its first peaceful transfer of power, and we'll do our job now to make sure the peaceful transfer of power remains a pillar of our democracy. We cannot allow ourselves to be undone by liars and cheaters. This is the United States of America.

My distinguished colleague from Wyoming, Ms. Cheney, is not the Ranking Member of the Select Committee, but because this investigation is bipartisan, it's important that we hear Republican voices as well.

I now recognize Representative Cheney for an opening statement.

Ms. CHENEY. Thank you very much, Chairman Thompson. Thank you to all my colleagues on this Committee, and thank you to each of the witnesses appearing before us today.

It is because of you: You held the line. You defended all of us. You defended the Capitol, and you defended the Constitution and our Republic, and every American owes you our undying gratitude.

Every American, I hope, will be able to hear your testimony today and will watch the videos. The videos show the unbelievable violence and the inexcusable and intolerable cruelty that you all faced, and people need to know the truth.

I want to begin by reflecting briefly on the investigation that we're launching today. Every one of us here on the dais voted for and would have preferred that these matters be investigated by an independent, nonpartisan commission composed of 5 prominent Americans selected by each party and modeled on the 9/11 Commission.



Although such a commission was opposed by my own leadership in the House, it overwhelmingly passed with the support of 35 Republican Members. It was defeated by Republicans in the Senate. That leaves us where we are today.

We cannot leave the violence of January 6th and its causes uninvestigated. The American people deserve the full and open testimony of every person with knowledge of the planning and preparation for January 6th. We must know what happened here at the Capitol.

We must also know what happened every minute of that day in the White House: every phone call, every conversation, every meeting leading up to, during, and after the attack. Honorable men and women have an obligation to step forward.

If those responsible are not held accountable, and if Congress does not act responsibly, this will remain a cancer on our Constitutional Republic, undermining the peaceful transfer of power at the heart of our democratic system. We will face the threat of more violence in the months to come and another January 6th every 4 years.

I have been a conservative Republican since 1984 when I first voted for Ronald Reagan. I have disagreed sharply on policy and politics with almost every Democratic Member of this Committee. But, in the end, we are one Nation under God.

The Framers of our Constitution recognized the danger of the vicious factionalism of partisan politics, and they knew that our daily arguments could become so fierce that we might lose track of our most important obligation: to defend the rule of law and the freedom of all Americans.

That is why our Framers compelled each of us to swear a solemn oath to preserve and protect the Constitution. When a threat to our Constitutional order arises, as it has here, we are obligated to rise above politics. This investigation must be nonpartisan.

While we begin today by taking the public testimony of these four heroic men, we must also realize that the task of this Committee will require persistence. We must issue and enforce subpoenas promptly. We must get to objective truth. We must overcome the many efforts we are already seeing to cover up and obscure the facts.

On January 6th and in the days thereafter, almost all Members of my party recognized the events of that day for what they actually were. One Republican, for example, said, "What is happening at the U.S. Capitol right now is unacceptable and un-American. Those participating in lawlessness and violence must be arrested and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."

No Member of Congress should now attempt to defend the indefensible, obstruct this investigation, or whitewash what happened that day. We must act with honor and duty and in the interest of our Nation.

America is great because we preserve our democratic institutions at all costs. Until January 6th, we were proof positive for the world that a Nation conceived in liberty could long endure. But now January 6th threatens our most sacred legacy.

The question for every one of us who serves in Congress, for every elected official across this great Nation, indeed for every

American, is this: Will we adhere to the rule of law? Will we respect the rulings of our courts? Will we preserve the peaceful transition of power? Or will we be so blinded by partisanship that we throw away the miracle of America? Do we hate our political adversaries more than we love our country and revere our Constitution?

I pray that that is not the case. I pray that we all remember our children are watching. As we carry out this solemn and sacred duty entrusted to us, our children will know who stood for truth, and they will inherit the Nation we hand to them—a republic, if we can keep it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you, Representative Cheney.

I will now introduce our witnesses.

We're joined today by Sergeant Aquilino Gonell of the United States Capitol Police. He's a 15-year veteran of the Capitol Police. He's assigned to a First Responder Unit in the United States Capitol Police's Uniformed Services Bureau.

Before joining the Capitol Police, Sergeant Gonell served 8 years in the United States Army and spent 545 days in Iraq, where his base was under constant mortar, rocket, and indirect fire by insurgents. He has received multiple awards and commendations for his military service.

We're also joined by Officer Michael Fanone of the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, DC. Officer Fanone began his law enforcement career with the United States Capitol Police shortly after the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

For nearly 20 years, Officer Fanone has served the citizens of the District of Columbia in special units focusing on narcotics investigations and violent criminals.

Officer Daniel Hodges is a member of Civil Disturbance Unit 42 in the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, where his responsibilities include riot response.

Prior to his service on the Metropolitan Police Department, he served 6 years in the 116th Infantry Regiment, 3d Battalion, as an indirect fire infantryman.

U.S. Capitol Police Officer Harry Dunn is a 13-year veteran of the United States Capitol Police and a member of its First Responder Unit. His responsibilities include ensuring the integrity of the perimeter around the Capitol Building. Officer Dunn has been among the first Capitol Police Officers to describe what happened to law enforcement on January 6th.

I will now swear in our witnesses. The witnesses will please rise and raise their right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you. You may be seated.

Let the record reflect the witnesses answered in the affirmative.

Without objection, the witnesses' full statements will be included in the record.

I now recognize Sergeant Gonell to summarize his testimony.

Sergeant GONELL.<sup>1</sup> Good morning, everybody.

Chairman THOMPSON. Good morning.

<sup>1</sup>Sergeant Gonell's prepared statement is included in the Appendix beginning on p. 55.

Sergeant GONELL. Chairman Thompson, Members of the Select Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021.

It is with honor and heavy heart that I come before you to tell you my story, from a painful, first-hand experience what happened that terrible day at the Capitol.

I'm providing this testimony solely in my personal capacity and not as a representative of the U.S. Capitol Police. It is imperative that the events of January 6th are fully investigated in the Congress and the American people know the truth of what actually occurred and that all those responsible are held accountable, particularly to ensure that horrific and shameful event in our history never repeats itself. I applaud you for pursuing this objective.

Even though there is overwhelming evidence to the contrary, including hours and hours of videos and photographic coverage, there is a continued, shocking attempt to ignore or try to destroy the truth of what truly happened that day and to whitewash the facts into something other than what they unmistakably reveal: an attack on our democracy by violent domestic extremists and a stain on our history and our moral standing here, home, and abroad.

As a child in the Dominican Republic, I looked up to the United States as the land of opportunity and a place to better myself. From the moment I landed at JFK in 1992, I have tried to pursue that goal. Thankfully, I achieved that goal on many levels. I was the first in my family to graduate college, join the Army, and become a police officer.

On July 23, 1999, the day before my 21st birthday, I raised my hand and swore to protect the Constitution of the United States because this country gave me an opportunity to become anything that I wanted.

At that time, I already started basic training with the Army Reserves. In fact, I raised my hand several times in ceremonies to pledge my commitment to defend and protect the Constitution of the United States: when I joined the Army Reserves; when I was promoted to sergeant while in the Army; during my naturalization ceremony; my reenlistment in the Army; when I joined the United States Capitol Police; and, last, when I was promoted to sergeant 3 years ago.

I have always taken my oath seriously. On January 6, 2021, I fulfilled my oath once more, this time to defend the United States Capitol and Members of Congress carrying out their Constitutional duties to certify the results of the November 2020 Presidential election.

To be honest, I did not recognize my fellow citizens who stormed the Capitol on January 6th or the United States that they claimed to represent. When I was 25 years old and then a sergeant in the Army, I had deployed to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom. From time to time, I volunteered to travel on IED-infested roads to conduct supply missions for U.S. and allied forces and local Iraqi population as well. But, on January 6th, for the first time, I was more afraid to work at the Capitol than my entire deployment to Iraq.

In Iraq, we expected armed violence because we were in a war zone, but nothing in my experience in the Army or as a law enforcement officer prepared me for what we confronted on January

6th. The verbal assaults and disrespect we endured from the rioters were bad enough. I was falsely accused of betraying my oath, of choosing my paycheck—choosing my paycheck—over my loyalty to the U.S. Constitution, even as I defended the very democratic process that protected everyone in the hostile crowd.

While I was at the Lower West Terrace of the Capitol working with my fellow officers to prevent the breach and restore order, the rioters called me a traitor, a disgrace, and shouted that I—I, an Army veteran and a police officer—should be executed.

Some of the rioters had the audacity to tell me there was nothing personal, that they will go through me, through us police officers to achieve their goal, as they were breaking metal barriers to use as weapons against us.

Or they used more menacing language: “If you shoot us, we all have weapons. We will shoot back.” Or, “We’ll get our guns. We outnumber you.” They said, “Join us.”

I heard specific threats to the lives of Speaker Nancy Pelosi and then also Vice President Mike Pence. But the physical violence we experienced was horrific and devastating. My fellow officers and I were punched, kicked, shoved, sprayed with chemical irritants, and even blinded with eye-damaging lasers by a violent mob who apparently saw us law enforcement officers, ironically dedicated to protecting them as U.S. citizens, as an impediment to their attempted insurrection.

The mob brought weapons to try to accomplish their insurrectionist objectives and used them against us. These weapons included hammers, rebars, knives, batons, and police shields taken by force, as well as bear spray and pepper spray.

Some of the rioters wore tactical gear, including bulletproof vests and gas masks. The rioters also forcibly took our batons and shields to use them against us.

I was particularly shocked at the scene that insurrectionists violently attacked us with the very American flag that they claimed to protect. Based on the coordinated tactics we observed and verbal commands we heard, it appears that many of these attackers had law enforcement or military experience.

The rioters were vicious and relentless. We found ourselves in a violent battle desperate to attempt to prevent a breach of the Capitol by the entrance near the inauguration stage. Metropolitan Police Officers were being pulled into the crowd. We have one right here, right next to me.

As we tried to push the rioters back from breaching the Capitol, in my attempt to assist two MPD officers, I grabbed one officer by the back of the collar and pulled him back to the police line.

When I tried to help the second officer, I fell on top of some police shields on the ground that were slippery because of pepper spray and bear spray. Rioters immediately began to pull me by my leg, by my shield, by my gear strap on my left shoulder.

My survivalist instincts kicked in, and I started kicking and punching as I tried in vain to get an MPD officer’s attention behind, above me, but they could not help me because they also were being attacked.

I finally was able to hit the rioter who was grabbing me with my baton and able to stand. Then I continued to fend off new attackers as they kept rotating and attacking us again and again.

What we were subjected to that day was like something from a medieval battle. We fought hand-to-hand, inch by inch to prevent an invasion of the Capitol by a violent mob intent on subverting our democratic process. My fellow officers and I were committed to not letting any rioters breach the Capitol.

It was a prolonged and desperate struggle. The rioters attempting to breach the Capitol were shouting, "Trump sent us. Pick the right side. We want Trump."

I vividly heard officers screaming in agony, in pain, just an arm's length from me. I didn't know at that time, but that was Officer Hodges, and he's here today to testify.

I too was being crushed by the rioters. I could feel myself losing oxygen and recall thinking to myself, "This is how I'm going to die, defending this entrance."

Many of the officers fighting alongside me were calling for shields because their shields had been stripped from them by the rioters. I was one of the few officers left with a shield, so I spent the majority of my time at the front of the line.

I later find out that my wife and relatives here in the United States and abroad were frantically calling and texting me from 2 p.m. onward because they were watching the turmoil on television. It was now 4:26 p.m., after giving CPR to one of the rioters who breached the Capitol in an effort to save her life, that I finally had a chance to let my own family know that I was alive.

After order had finally been restored at the Capitol and many hours, I arrived at home at nearly 4 a.m. on January 7th. I had to push my wife away from me because she wanted to hug me, and I told her no because of all the chemicals that my uniform had on.

Sorry.

I couldn't sleep because the chemical reactivated after I took a shower, and my skin was burning. I finally fell asleep 2 hours later, completely physically and mentally exhausted, yet, by 8 o'clock a.m., I was already on my way back to the Capitol. I continued to work for 15 consecutive days until after the inauguration. I made sure to work despite my injuries because I wanted to continue doing my job and help secure the Capitol complex. More than 6 months later, I'm still trying to recover from my injuries.

Many of my fellow Capitol officers, as well as MPD officers, suffered several physical injuries from the violence inflicted on us on January 6th. I sustained injuries on both my hands, my left shoulder, my left calf, and my right foot. I already have undergone bone fusion surgery on my right foot, and I was just told that I need surgery on my left shoulder. I have been on medical and administrative leave for much of the past 6 months, and I expect to need further rehabilitation for possibly more than a year.

There are some who express outrage when someone kneels while calling for social justice. Where are those same people expressing the outrage to condemn the violent attack on law enforcement, the Capitol, and our American democracy? I'm still waiting for them.

As America and the world watched in horror what was happening at the Capitol, we did not receive timely reinforcement and

support we needed. In contrast, during the Black Lives Matter protests last year, U.S. Capitol Police had all the support we needed and more. Why the different response?

Were it not for the brave members of the MPD and, later on, from other law enforcement agencies, I'm afraid to think what could have happened on January 6th. I want to publicly thank all the law enforcement agencies that responded to assist that day, for their courage and their support. I especially want to thank those Capitol Police Officers who responded on their own from home after working midnight shift.

Despite being outnumbered, we did our job. Every Member of the House of Representatives, Senators, and staff members made it home. Sadly, as a result that day, we lost officers—some really good officers. But we held the line to protect our democratic process because the alternative would have been a disaster. We are not asking for medals, recognition. We simply want justice and accountability.

For most people, January 6th happened for a few hours but for those of us who were in the thick of it, it has not ended. That day continues to be a constant trauma for us literally every day, whether because of our physical or emotional injuries, or both. While it has not received much attention, sadly many of my colleagues have quietly resigned from the Capitol because of that day.

I am also regularly called by law enforcement officials and prosecutors to help identify from photographs and videos the rioters.

To be honest, physical therapy is painful and hard. I could have lost my life that day, not once but many times. But, as soon as I recover from my injuries, I will continue forward and proudly serve my country in the U.S. Capitol Police.

As an immigrant to the United States, I'm especially proud to have defended the U.S. Constitution and our democracy on January 6th. I hope that everyone in position of authority in our country has the courage and conviction to do their part by investigating what happened on that terrible day and why. This investigation is essential to our democracy, and I'm deeply grateful to you for undertaking it.

I'm happy to assist as I can and answer any questions you may have to the best of my ability.

Thank you.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much for your vivid testimony, Sergeant Gonell.

I now recognize Officer Fanone to summarize his testimony.

Officer FANONE.<sup>2</sup> Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Members of this Committee for inviting me to provide my eyewitness testimony of the violent assault on our Nation's Capitol on January 6, 2021.

My name, for those of you who don't know, is Michael Fanone. While I've been a sworn officer with the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, DC, for almost two decades, my law enforcement career actually began here in this building as a United States Capitol Police Officer shortly after 9/11.

In part because of the 2001 attack on our country by the terrorists, I felt called to serve. As a Capitol Police Officer, I was proud

<sup>2</sup>Officer Fanone's prepared statement is included in the Appendix beginning on p. 57.

to protect this institution and dedicated Members of Congress and their staff who work hard each day to uphold our American democracy.

I remain proud of the work of the United States Capitol Police and MPD Officers, who literally commit their lives to protecting the safety of each of you and all of us in this room in our Nation's Capitol.

After leaving the United States Capitol Police, I became an MPD officer, serving the residents of Washington, DC. I have spent the majority of my nearly 20 years as a Metropolitan Police Officer working in special mission units whose responsibilities include the investigation and arrest of narcotics traffickers and violent criminals.

I've worked both as an undercover officer and the lead case officer in many of these investigations. In this line of work, it probably won't shock you to know that I've dealt with some dicey situations. I thought I had seen it all many times over, yet what I witnessed and experienced on January 6, 2021, was unlike anything I had ever seen, anything I had ever experienced or could have imagined in my country. On that day, I participated in the defense of the United States Capitol from an armed mob—an armed mob—of thousands determined to get inside.

Because I was among the vastly outnumbered group of law enforcement officers protecting the Capitol and the people inside it, I was grabbed, beaten, tased, all while being called a traitor to my country. I was at risk of being stripped of and killed with my own firearm as I heard chants of "kill him with his own gun." I can still hear those words in my head today.

Although I regularly deal with risky situations on the job, nowhere in my wildest imagination did I ever expect to be in that situation or sitting here before you talking about it. That experience and its aftermath were something that not even my extensive law enforcement training could prepare me for.

I was just one of hundreds of local police who lined up to protect Congress, even though I had not been assigned to do that. Some had asked why we ran to help when we didn't have to. I did that because I simply could not ignore what was happening. Like many other officers, I could not ignore the numerous calls—numerous calls—for help coming from the Capitol complex.

I am a plainclothes officer assigned to the First District Crime Suppression Team. But, for the first time in nearly a decade, I put on my uniform.

When my partner, Jimmy Albright, and I arrived at the Capitol around 3 that afternoon, it was like—excuse me. It was unlike any scene I had ever witnessed. Jimmy parked our police vehicle near the intersection of South Capitol Street and D Street in Southeast, and we walked to the Capitol, from there passing the Longworth House Office Building. It was eerily quiet. The sidewalks, usually filled with pedestrians, were empty.

As we made our way to Independence Avenue, I could see dozens of empty police vehicles that filled the street, police barricades which had been abandoned, and hundreds of angry protesters, many of whom taunted us as we walked toward the Capitol Building.

Jimmy and I immediately began to search for an area where we could be of most assistance. We made our way through a door on the south side of the Capitol, walking then to the Crypt, and finally down to the Lower West Terrace tunnel.

It was there that I observed a police commander struggling to breathe as he dealt with the effects of CS gas that lingered in the air. Then I watched him collect himself, straighten his cap and trench coat adorned with its silver eagles, and return to the line.

That commander was Ramey Kyle of the Metropolitan Police Department, and those images are etched into my memory, never to be forgotten. In the midst of that intense and chaotic scene, Commander Kyle remained cool, calm, and collected as he gave commands to his officers. "Hold the line," he shouted over the roar.

Of course, that day, the line was the seat of our American Government. Despite the confusion and the stress of the situation, observing Ray's leadership protecting a place I cared so much about was the most inspirational moment of my life. The bravery he and others showed that day are the best examples of duty, honor, and service. Each of us who carries a badge should bring those core values to our work every day.

The fighting in the Lower West Terrace tunnel was nothing short of brutal. Here I observed approximately 30 police officers standing shoulder to shoulder, maybe 4 or 5 abreast, using the weight of their bodies to hold back the onslaught of violent attackers. Many of these officers were injured, bleeding, and fatigued, but they continued to hold the line.

As I don't have to tell the Members in this room, the tunnel is a narrow and long hallway. It is not the sort of space anyone would want to be pulled into hand-to-hand combat with an angry mob, although the narrowness of the hallway provided what was probably the only chance of holding back the crowd from entering your personal offices, the House, and Senate Chambers.

In an attempt to assist the injured officers, Jimmy and I asked them if they needed a break. There were no volunteers. Selflessly, those officers only identified other colleagues who may be in need of assistance.

The fighting dragged on. I eventually joined the tactical line at the tunnel's entrance. I can remember looking around and being shocked by the sheer number of people fighting us; as my police body-worn camera shows, thousands upon thousands of people seemingly determined to get past us by any means necessary.

At some point during the fighting, I was dragged from the line of officers and into the crowd. I heard someone scream, "I got one."

As I was swarmed by a violent mob, they ripped off my badge. They grabbed and stripped me of my radio. They seized ammunition that was secured to my body. They began to beat me with their fists and with what felt like hard metal objects. At one point, I came face to face with an attacker, who repeatedly lunged for me and attempted to remove my firearm. I heard chanting from some in the crowd: "Get his gun and kill him with his own gun."

I was aware enough to recognize I was at risk of being stripped of and killed with my own firearm. I was electrocuted again and again and again with a taser. I'm sure I was screaming, but I don't think I could even hear my own voice.



My body camera captured the violence of the crowd directed toward me during those very frightening moments. It's an important part of the record for this Committee's investigation and for the country's understanding of how I was assaulted and nearly killed as the mob attacked the Capitol that day, and I hope that everyone will be able to watch it.

The portions of the video I've seen remained extremely painful for me to watch at times, but it is essential that everyone understands what really happened that tragic day.

During those moments, I remember thinking there was a very good chance I would be torn apart or shot to death with my own weapon.

I thought of my four daughters who might lose their dad.

I remain grateful that no Member of Congress had to go through the violent assault that I experienced that day.

During the assault, I thought about using my firearm on my attackers, but I knew that if I did, I would be quickly overwhelmed and that, in their minds, would provide them with the justification for killing me. So, I instead decided to appeal to any humanity they might have. I said as loud as I could manage, "I've got kids."

Thankfully, some in the crowd stepped in and assisted me. Those few individuals protected me from a crowd and inched me toward the Capitol until my fellow officers could rescue me. I was carried back inside.

What happened afterwards is much less vivid. I had been beaten unconscious and remained so for more than 4 minutes. I know that Jimmy helped to evacuate me from the building and drove me to MedStar Washington Hospital Center despite suffering significant injuries himself.

At the hospital, the doctors told me that I had suffered a heart attack, and I was later diagnosed with a concussion, a traumatic brain injury, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

As my physical injuries gradually subsided and the adrenaline that had stayed with me for weeks waned, I have been left with the psychological trauma and the emotional anxiety of having survived such a horrific event. My children continue to deal with the trauma of nearly losing their dad that day.

What makes the struggle harder and more painful is to know so many of my fellow citizens, including so many of the people I put my life at risk to defend, are downplaying or outright denying what happened.

I feel like I went to hell and back to protect them and the people in this room, but too many are now telling me that hell doesn't exist or that hell actually wasn't that bad. The indifference shown to my colleagues is disgraceful.

My law enforcement career prepared me to cope with some of the aspects of this experience. Being an officer, you know your life is at risk whenever you walk out the door, even if you don't expect otherwise law-abiding citizens to take up arms against you.

But nothing—truly nothing—has prepared me to address those elected Members of our Government who continue to deny the events of that day and, in doing so, betray their oath of office—those very Members whose lives, offices, staff members I was fighting so desperately to defend.

I agreed to speak here today and have talked publicly about what happened because I don't think our response to the insurrection should have anything to do with political parties. I know that what my partner, Jimmy, and I suited up for on January 6th didn't have anything to do with political parties or about politics or what political party any of you public servants belong to.

I've worked in this city for two decades, and I've never cared about those things, no matter who was in office. All I've ever cared about is protecting you and the public so you can do your job in service to this country and for those whom you represent.

I appreciate your time and attention. I look forward to the Committee's investigation, and I am hopeful, with your commitment, we as a country will confront the truth of what happened on January 6th and do what is necessary to make sure this institution of our democracy never falls into the hands of a violent and angry mob.

We must also recognize the officers who responded that day, many unsolicited, and their countless acts of bravery and selflessness. It has been 202 days since 850 MPD officers responded to the Capitol and helped stop a violent insurrection from taking over this Capitol complex, which almost certainly saved countless Members of Congress and their staff from injury and possibly death. The time to fully recognize these officers is now.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide my testimony here today.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much for your testimony.

Now, I don't think there is any question you have our commitment that we will do just that as a Committee.

Officer FANONE. Thank you, sir.

Chairman THOMPSON. I now recognize Officer Hodges to summarize his testimony.

Officer HODGES.<sup>3</sup> Good morning to the Committee, members of the press, and to the country.

To the Members of the Committee, I'd like to thank you for your invitation today to provide my account of my knowledge and experiences from January 6, 2021.

As the Chairman mentioned, I am a member of Civil Disturbance Unit 42 and was working in that capacity on the day in question. We started that day at 7:30 a.m., and our assignment at the time was to maintain high visibility along Constitution Avenue, namely the blocks leading up to President's Park, where then-President Donald Trump was holding his gathering.

My particular station was in front of 1111 Constitution Avenue, where I stood on foot as the crowd poured down the street and into the park. There were a significant number of men dressed in tactical gear attending the gathering or wearing ballistic vests, helmets, goggles, military face masks, backpacks. Without identifiable visible law enforcement or military patches, they appeared to be prepared for much more than listening to politicians speak at a park.

Two of my colleagues were approached by a group of 3 to 4 such men. They were white men, in good shape, with load-bearing vests equipped with MOLLE pouches. They were wearing BDUs, or bat-

<sup>3</sup> Officer Hodges's prepared statement is included in the Appendix beginning on p. 59.

tle dress uniform pants, tactical boots, black sunglasses, and short haircuts. They had radios, and one was equipped with an earpiece.

After a bit of small talk, one of them asked my colleague something to the effect of, Is this all the manpower you have? Do you really think you are going to be able to stop all these people? Dumbfounded, my colleague simply expressed they didn't understand what the speaker meant, and the group continued on.

As the day went on and speakers in the park said their piece, I monitored the crowd on the radio. Over the radio, I heard our gun recovery unit working constantly, monitoring those in the crowd suspected of carrying firearms and making arrests and seizures when possible.

Multiple gun arrests were made from January 5th through the 7th against those attending and likely had attended or planned to attend Donald Trump's gathering. Unfortunately, due to the course of events that day, we will never know exactly how many were carrying firearms and other lethal weapons.

I don't know what time it was, but eventually the flow of foot traffic reversed, with people leaving President's Park and traveling eastbound down Constitution Avenue toward the United States Capitol.

At approximately 12:30 p.m., I noticed a commotion about half a block to my east, and I saw the crowd starting to coalesce around two figures. I ran to where they were and found a confrontation at the intersection of 10th and Constitution Avenue Northwest.

One counter-protester, a Black man, was backpedaling away from a white man in a Trump-labeled face mask who was closely following him with an outstretched arm. Myself and my colleague first arrived and physically separated the two, but a crowd of Donald Trump's people had gathered.

They attempted to bait the counter-protester into attacking, shouting insults such as, "Your mother's a whore," and accusing him of hiding behind the cops. Eventually, enough MPD members had gathered to move along the crowd who continued eastbound toward the Capitol Building, and the counter-protester departed northbound on 10th Street.

Returning to my post, I continued to monitor the radio. I could hear Commander Glover leading the defense efforts at the Capitol as the protesters began their transition from peaceful assembly into terrorism. I became agitated and wished we could move in to support, as I could hear the increasing desperation of the commander's voice, yet we still had to wait for our orders to change, and eventually they did.

At approximately 1:30 p.m., the commander authorized rapid response platoons to deploy their hard gear and respond to the Capitol, including CDU-42.

The last thing I remember hearing over the air before departing for the Capitol Grounds was confirmation that our Explosive Ordnance Disposal team had discovered a device. Given which unit was being associated with the device, I immediately realized MPD had discovered a bomb of some type near the Capitol. This thought was never far from my mind for the rest of the day.

We ran back to our vans and got on our hard gear as quickly as we could. Navigating alternate routes to avoid the foot traffic, we

drove as close as we could to the Capitol, disembarking at the northwest side of the Capitol Grounds. We gave our gear a final check and marched toward the West Terrace.

The crowd was thinner the further out from the Capitol you were, so as we marched, the resistance that we initially met was verbal. A man sarcastically yelled, "Here come the boys in blue, so brave." Another called on us to "remember your oath." There was plenty of booing. A woman called us storm troopers. Another woman, who was part of the mob of terrorists laying siege to the Capitol of the United States, shouted, "Traitors." More found appeal in this label and shouted "traitors" at us as we passed. One man attempted to turn it into a disyllabic chant. We continued to march.

We had been marching in two columns, but as we got closer to the West Terrace, the crowd became so dense that in order to progress, we marched single file with our hands on the shoulders of the man in front of us in order to avoid separation. However, as we came close to the terrorists, our line was divided, and we came under attack.

A man attempted to rip the baton from my hands, and we wrestled for control. I retained my weapon after I pushed him back. He yelled at me, "You're on the wrong team."

Cut off from our leadership, which was at the front of our formation, we huddled up and assessed the threat surrounding us. One man tried and failed to build a rapport with me, shouting, "Are you my brother?" Another takes a different tact, shouting, "You will die on your knees."

I was at the front of our group and determined that we had to push our way through the crowd in order to join the defense proper, so I began shouting "make way," as I forged ahead, hoping that I'm clearing a path for others behind me to follow. However, as I looked back, I saw that the rest of the group came under attack and were unable to follow.

The crowd attempted to physically bar the rest of the platoon from following. I backtrack and started pulling the terrorists off my team from their backpacks and their collars.

Around this time, one of the terrorists who had scaled the scaffolding that adorned the Capitol at the time threw something heavy down at me and struck me in the head, disorienting me. I suspect this resulted in the likely concussion I dealt with in the weeks after.

Another man attempted to disarm me of my baton, and again, we wrestled for control. He kicked me in my chest as we went to the ground. I was able to retain my baton again, but I ended up on my hands and knees and blind. The medical mask I was wearing at the time to protect myself from the coronavirus was pulled up over my eyes so I couldn't see. I braced myself against the impact of their blows and feared the worst. Thankfully, my platoon had repelled their own attackers and got me back on my feet.

The crowd start chanting "U-S-A" at us, and we struck out again for the West Terrace. I led the charge through the midst of crowd control munitions, explosions, and smoke engulfing the area. Terrorists were breaking apart the metal fencing and bike racks into individual pieces, presumably to use as weapons.

Thankfully, we made it to the secondary defense line on the West Terrace that MPD and Capitol Police were managing to hold. The rest of my platoon got behind the line, and we could take stock of the situation.

I realized that back during the previous assault, someone had stolen my radio. From that point on, I was in the dark as to our current status, when reinforcements would arrive.

Terrorists were scaling the scaffolding on both our sides of the tower that was in front of us and attempting to breach the waist-high metal fencing that was the only barrier we had aside from ourselves.

The sea of people was punctuated throughout by flags, mostly variations of American flags and Trump flags. There were Gadsden flags. It was clear the terrorists perceived themselves to be Christians. I saw the Christian flag directly to my front. Another read, "Jesus is my savior. Trump is my President." Another, "Jesus is king." One flag read, "Don't give up the ship." Another had crossed rifles beneath a skull emblazoned with the pattern of the American flag.

To my perpetual confusion, I saw the thin blue line flag, the symbol of support for law enforcement—more than once—being carried by the terrorists as they ignored our commands and continued to assault us. The acrid sting of CS gas, or tear gas, and OC spray, which is mace, hung in the air as the terrorists threw our own CS gas canisters back at us and sprayed us with their own OC, either that they bought themselves or stole from us. Later, I learned at least one of them was spraying us in the face with wasp spray.

The terrorists alternated between attempting to break our defenses and shouting at or attempting to convert us. Men alleging to be veterans told us how they had fought for this country and were fighting for it again. One man tried to start a chant of "4 more years." Another shouted, "Do not attack us, we're not Black Lives Matter," as if political affiliation is how we determine when to use force.

A man in a QAnon hoodie exclaims, "This is the time to choose which side of history to be on." A man whose shirt read, "God, guns, and Trump" stood behind him silently, holding a Trump flag.

A new man came to the front and fixated on me, continually berating me, telling me to take off my gear and give it to him to show solidarity with "We the People," or, "We're going to run over you." His voice cracked with the strain and the volume of his threats. He continued, "Do you think your little peashooter guns are going to stop this crowd? No. We're going in that building."

Eventually, there is a surge in the crowd, the fence buckled and broke apart, and we were unable to hold the line. A chaotic melee ensued. Terrorists pushed through the line and engaged us in hand-to-hand combat. Several attempted to knock me over and steal my baton. One latched on to my face and got his thumb in my right eye, attempting to gouge it out. I cried out in pain and managed to shake him off. I managed to shake him off before any permanent damage was done.

I couldn't fully engage anyone; for the moment I do is when another 20 terrorists move in to attack while my hands are full. It was all we could do to keep ourselves on our feet and continue to

fall back. I was sprayed with a fire extinguisher, and a red smoke grenade burns at our feet.

In the fight, a terrorist is knocked to the ground and his jacket rides up, exposing a large hunting knife on his belt. I, along with several other officers, piled on him while another removed the knife from his person. He regained himself unharmed and shouts indignantly, "What are you doing? What are you guys doing?"

At this point, the terrorists had claimed most of the western terrace, cornering myself and other officers on the southern edge. We found a side stair off of the terrace up to an upper landing, followed by more stairs up and inside.

Inside the Capitol Building, officers walked through the halls briefly until they found a place to sit, decontaminate their faces of OC and CS, and take a quick breather. I followed suit. Someone had managed to find a package of water bottles and was passing them out. I washed off my face as best I could, rinsed out my mouth, and drank the rest.

I took the opportunity of relative safety to don my gas mask. Not long afterward, I heard someone calling for officers to move to assist. I steeled myself for another round and descended the stairway into a long hallway filled with smoke and screams.

The Capitol Building is labyrinthine, but judging from the sound of intense combat, I could tell this hallway led outside to where the terrorists had forced our retreat. Officers were stacked deep, but every so often, one would fall back from the front line nursing an injury or struggling to breathe, and those who remained would take a step forward. It was a battle of inches, with one side pushing the other a few and then the other side regaining their ground.

At the time, I, and I suspect many others in the hallway, did not know that the terrorists had gained entry into the building by breaking in doors and windows elsewhere, so we believed ours to be the last line of defense before the terrorists had true access to the building and to potentially our elected representatives.

Eventually, it was my turn in the meat grinder that was the front line. The terrorists had a wall of shields that they had stolen from officers as well as stolen batons, what other armaments they brought. Even during this intense contest of wills, they tried to convert us to their cult.

One man shouted, "We all just want to make our voices heard, and I think you feel the same. I really think you feel the same," all while another man attempts to batter us with a stolen shield.

Another man, like many others, didn't seem to appreciate that this wasn't a game. He fought his way across the lawn, up the steps, through the western terrace, all the OC and CS gas, and at the front line of this final threshold was asking us to hold on because he has asthma.

The two sides were at a stalemate at a metal door frame that sat in the middle of the hallway. At the front line, I inserted myself so the frame was at my back, in an effort to give myself something to brace against and provide additional strength when pushing forward. Unfortunately, soon after I secured this position, the momentum shifted, and we lost the ground that got me there. On my left was a man with a clear riot shield stolen during the assault. He

slammed it against me and, with all the weight of the bodies pushing behind him, trapped me.

My arms were pinned and effectively useless, trapped against either the shield on my left or the door frame on my right. With my posture granting me no functional strength or freedom of movement, I was effectively defenseless and gradually sustaining injury from the increasing pressure of the mob.

Directly in front of me a man seized the opportunity of my vulnerability, grabbed the front of my gas mask and used it to beat my head against the door. He switched to pulling it off my head, the straps stretching against my skull and straining my neck. He never uttered any words I recognized but opted instead for guttural screams. I remember him foaming at the mouth.

He also put his cell phone in his mouth so that he had both hands free to assault me. Eventually, he succeeded in stripping away my gas mask, and a new rush of exposure to CS and OC spray hit me. The mob of terrorists were coordinating their efforts now shouting "heave-ho," as they synchronized pushing their weight forward, crushing me further against the metal door frame.

A man in front of me grabbed my baton that I still held in my hands, and in my current state I was unable to retain my weapon. He bashed me in the head and face with it, rupturing my lip and adding additional injury to my skull.

At this point, I knew I couldn't sustain much more damage and remain upright. At best, I would collapse and be a liability to my colleagues; at worst, be dragged out into the crowd and lynched. Unable to move or otherwise signal the officers behind me that I needed to fall back, I did the only thing that I could do and screamed for help.

Thankfully, my voice was heard over the cacophony of yells and the blaring alarm. The officer closest to me was able to extricate me from my position and another helped me fall back to the building again. I had found some more water and decontaminated my face as best I could. I don't know how long I waited in the halls for, but soon after I got back on my feet, I went to where the fight was again. Until reinforcements arrived, every able body made a difference.

Without my gas mask, I was afraid I'd be a liability in the hallway, so I took the exit outside of the upper landing above the West Terrace. I found a police line being held and the terrorists encircling us much like on the West Terrace Lower. It was getting later in the day, however, and it appeared we weren't the only ones getting tired. It seemed most of the mob was content to yell rather than try and break our line again.

After some time of guarding the upper landing, I saw reinforcements arrive from the south. I'm not sure which law enforcement agency it was, but I turned to them and I started clapping, as it was a sign that badly needed help was starting to finally arrive.

Soon after that, I started feeling the effects of the day taking their toll and went back inside to rest. Gradually, all the members of CDU-42 gathered in the room known as the Capitol Crypt. We checked on each other and convalesced, glad to see each other in one piece.

Despite our exhaustion, we would have ran out into the fight again should the need have arisen. Thankfully, as the day wore on, more and more resources had arrived at the Capitol to drive off the terrorists. We stayed in the Crypt until quite late.

Even after we were allowed to leave the grounds, we didn't get to go home. Those who needed immediate medical attention took a van to the local hospital, while the rest of us parked near the city center until the city was deemed secure enough for us to check off. I believe we finally got that message around 1 a.m. the following morning. We drove back to the Fourth District and from there went home.

Thank you for letting me testify.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much for your testimony. I now recognize Officer Dunn to summarize his testimony.

Officer DUNN.<sup>4</sup> Chairman Thompson, Members of the Select Committee, thank you for the opportunity today to give my account regarding the events of January 6, 2021.

From my first-hand experience as a Capitol Police Officer directly involved in those events, and still hurting from what happened that day, I'm providing this testimony solely in my personal capacity and not as a representative of the United States Capitol Police.

Before I begin, I'd like to take a moment of my time to ask for a moment of silence for my fallen colleague, Officer Brian Sicknick, who died from injuries he sustained in the line of duty defending the Capitol of our beloved democracy.

Thank you.

I reported for duty at the Capitol as usual early on the morning of January 6th. We understood that the vote to certify President Biden's election would be taking place that day and protests might occur outside the Capitol, but we expected any demonstrations to be peaceful expressions of First Amendment freedoms, just like the scores of demonstrations we had observed for many years.

After roll call, I took my overwatch post on the East Front of the Capitol standing on the steps that led up to the Senate Chamber. As the morning progressed, I did not see or hear anything that gave me cause for alarm. But around 10:56 a.m., I received a text message from a friend forwarding a screen shot of what appeared to be the potential plan of action, very different from a peaceful demonstration.

The screen shot bore the caption: "January 6th—Rally Point—Lincoln Park," and said the objective was "THE CAPITOL." It said, amongst other things, that "Trump has given us marching orders," and to "keep your guns hidden." It urged people "to bring . . . your trauma kits" and "gas masks" to "[l]ink up early in the day" in "6-12 man teams." It indicated there would be "time to arm up."

Seeing that message caused me concern. To be sure, looking back now, it seemed to foreshadow what happened later. At the time, though, we had not received any threat warnings from our chain of command. I had no independent reason to believe that violence was headed our way.

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<sup>4</sup>Officer Dunn's prepared statement is included in the Appendix beginning on p. 63.



As the morning progressed and the crowd of protesters began to swell on the east side of the Capitol, many displaying Trump flags, the crowd was chanting slogans like “Stop the steal,” and “We want Trump.” But the demonstration was still being conducted in a peaceful manner.

Earlier that afternoon, Capitol Police dispatch advised all units over the radio that we had an active 10–100 at the Republican National Committee nearby: 10–100 is police code for a suspicious package, such as a potential bomb. That radio dispatch got my attention, and I started to get more nervous and worried, especially because the crowds on the East Front of the Capitol were continuing to grow.

Around the same time, I started receiving reports on the radio about large crowd movements around the Capitol coming from the direction of The Ellipse to both the West and East Fronts of the Capitol. Then I heard urgent radio calls for additional officers to respond to the west side and an exclamation, a desperate voice, that demonstrators on the west side had breached the fence. Now it was obvious that there was a direct threat to the Capitol.

I quickly put on a steel chest plate, which weighs approximately 20 pounds, and carrying my M–4 rifle, sprinted around the north side of the Capitol to the West Terrace and the railing of the inaugural stage, where I had a broad view of what was going on.

I was stunned by what I saw. What seemed like a sea of people, Capitol Police Officers and Metropolitan Police Officers, MPD, were engaged in desperate hand-to-hand fighting with rioters across the west lawn.

Until then, I had never seen anyone physically assault Capitol Police or MPD, let alone witness mass assaults being perpetrated on law enforcement officers. I witnessed the rioters using all kinds of weapons against officers, including flagpoles, metal bike racks that they had torn apart, and various kinds of projectiles. Officers were being bloodied in the fighting. Many were screaming, and many were blinded and coughing from chemical irritants being sprayed in their faces. I gave decontamination aid to as many officers as I could, flushing their eyes with water to dilute the chemical irritants.

Soon thereafter, I heard, “Attention all units, the Capitol has been breached,” and that rioters were in various places inside the building. At that point, I rushed into the Capitol with another officer, going first to the basement on the Senate side where I’d heard an MPD officer needed a defibrillator.

After returning outside to the West Terrace to assist the officers, I went back into the Capitol and up the stairs toward the Crypt. There I saw rioters who had invaded the Capitol, carrying a Confederate flag, a red MAGA flag, and a “Don’t Tread on Me” flag.

I decided to stand my ground there to prevent any rioters from heading down the stairs to the Lower West Terrace entrance, because that’s where officers were getting decontamination aid and were particularly vulnerable.

At the top of the stairs, I confronted a group of insurrectionists, warning them, do not go down those steps. One of them shouted, “Keep moving, patriots.” Another displayed what looked like a law enforcement badge and told me, “We’re doing this for you.” One of

the invaders approached me like he was going to try to get past me and head down the stairs. I hit him, knocking him down.

After getting relieved by other officers in the Crypt, I took off running upstairs toward the Speaker's Lobby and helped the plainclothes officer who was getting hassled by insurrectionists. Some of them were dressed like members of a militia group, wearing tactical vests, cargo pants, and body armor. I was physically exhausted, and it was hard to breathe and to see because of all the chemical spray in the air.

More and more insurrectionists were pouring into the area by the Speaker's Lobby near the Rotunda, and some wearing MAGA hats and shirts that said, "Trump 2020." I told them to just leave the Capitol, and in response they yelled, "No, man, this is our house." "President Trump invited us here." "We're here to stop the steal." "Joe Biden is not the President." "Nobody voted for Joe Biden."

I'm a law enforcement officer, and I do my best to keep politics out of my job, but in this circumstance, I responded, "Well, I voted for Joe Biden. Does my vote not count? Am I nobody?"

That prompted a torrent of racial epithets. One woman in a pink MAGA shirt yelled, "You hear that, guys? This nigger voted for Joe Biden." Then the crowd, perhaps around 20 people, joined in screaming, "Boo, fucking nigger." No one had ever, ever called me a nigger while wearing the uniform of a Capitol Police Officer.

In the days following the attempted insurrection, other Black officers shared with me their own stories of racial abuse on January 6th. One officer told me he had never in his entire 40 years of life been called a nigger to his face, and that streak ended on January 6th. Yet, another Black officer later told me he had been confronted by insurrectionists in the Capitol who told him, "Put your gun down and we'll show you what kind of nigger you really are."

To be candid, the rest of the afternoon is a blur, but I know I went throughout the Capitol to assist officers who needed aid and help expel more insurrectionists. In the Crypt, I encountered Sergeant Gonell, who was giving assistance to an unconscious woman who had been in the crowd of rioters on the west side of the Capitol. I helped to carry her to the area of the House Majority Leader's Office where she was administered CPR.

As the afternoon wore on, I was completely drained, both physically and emotionally, and in shock and in total disbelief over what had happened. Once the building was cleared, I went to the Rotunda to recover with other officers and share our experiences from what happened that afternoon. Representative Rodney Davis was there offering support to officers, and when he and I saw each other, he came over and he gave me a big hug.

I sat down on a bench in the Rotunda with a friend of mine, who is also a Black Capitol Police Officer, and told him about the racial slurs I endured. I became very emotional and began yelling, how the blank could something like this happen? Is this America? I began sobbing. Officers came over to console me.

Later on January 6th, after order and security had been restored in the Capitol through the hard work and sacrifices of law enforcement, Members took the floor of the House to speak out about what had happened that day. Among them was House Minority Leader

Kevin McCarthy, who, along with my fellow officers, I had protected that day and will protect today and tomorrow—I had protected that day and will protect today and tomorrow.

The Minority Leader, to his great credit, said the following to the House: “The violence, destruction, and chaos we saw earlier was unacceptable, undemocratic, and un-American. It was the saddest day I have ever had serving in this institution.”

Members of this Select Committee, the Minority Leader was absolutely right how he described what took place in the Capitol. For those of us in the Capitol Police, who serve and revere this institution and who love the Capitol Building, it was the saddest day for us as well.

More than 6 months later, January 6th still isn’t over for me. I’ve had to avail myself of multiple counseling sessions from the Capitol Police Employee Assistance Program, and I am now receiving private counseling therapy for the persistent emotional trauma of that day. I’ve also participated in many peer support programs with fellow law enforcement officers from around the United States.

I know so many other officers continue to hurt both physically and emotionally. I want to take this moment to speak to my fellow officers about the emotions they are continuing to experience from the events of January 6th. There’s absolutely nothing wrong with seeking professional counseling. What we went through that day was traumatic, and if you are hurting, please take advantage of the counseling services that are available to us.

I also respectfully ask that this Select Committee review the available resources—the services available to us and consider whether they are sufficient enough to meet our needs, especially with respect to the amount of leave that we are allowed.

In closing, we can never again allow our democracy to be put in peril as it was on January 6th. I thank the Members of the Select Committee for your commitment to determine what led to disaster at the Capitol on January 6th, what actually took place that day, and what steps should be taken to prevent such an attack on our democracy from ever happening again.

I also want to thank and acknowledge my brothers and sisters in blue who fought alongside me on January 6th to protect our democracy. Each of you is a hero, and it is my honor to serve with you each and every day.

I’d like to thank the American people for all of the support that they have provided these past several months to me and my fellow officers.

Last, to the rioters, the insurrectionists, and the terrorists of that day, democracy went on that night and still continues to exist today. Democracy is bigger than any one person and any one party. You all tried to disrupt democracy that day and you all failed.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

I thank all the witnesses for their testimony.

The rules we established allowed you the opportunity to tell your story. There is no question about it; you have done it in your own words. We appreciate it. So, what we will do now is begin our questioning of you.

I now recognize myself for questions.

At the time of the attack on the Capitol, I was in the gallery observing the proceedings on the House floor. While Members of Congress were being protected by the police, you, the patriots protecting the Capitol in our very democracy, were being attacked by the mob outside.

I want to learn more about what you did and what you witnessed. Officer Fanone, as a narcotics officer, you weren't supposed to be at the Capitol on January 6th. Is that right?

Officer FANONE. Yes, sir, that's correct.

Chairman THOMPSON. What prompted you to come to the Capitol?

Officer FANONE. I mean, I was listening to the radio transmissions, specifically those coming from now-Commander Robert Glover, who was the on-scene commander. If you've listened to those transmissions, he identifies himself as Cruiser 50.

I heard things that I had never heard before in my law enforcement career. In addition to the numerous distress calls or 10-33s that I heard, which are, while not commonplace, also not uncommon in policing, I heard things like, you know, the declaration of a city-wide 10-33, which in my career, to my recollection, has only been utilized, in addition to the 9/11 attacks, on the Navy Yard attack. So, I found that particularly distressful.

Also, you could hear the tone of the individual officer's voices. They were scared. They were, you know, clearly outnumbered and being violently assaulted.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you. So, basically, the radio traffic, the 10-33 signal on the radio, and your basic law enforcement instinct said your fellow comrades needed help, and therefore you made your way, along with your friend, to the Capitol?

Officer FANONE. Yes, sir.

Chairman THOMPSON. So, you went anyway. Let me thank you for that. I understand a number of other people did the same.

Officer Hodges, we've seen the harrowing video of you being crushed in a doorway as you bravely fought to keep the mob from breaching the Capitol. Many of your fellow officers' acts of heroism were not captured on video and are not therefore known to the public. Can you please share with the Committee other acts of heroism by your colleagues on January 6th that you're aware of?

Officer HODGES. Absolutely. One of my sergeants, Sergeant Brian Peake, while fighting, maintained control over the barricades on the West Terrace, was struck by a rioter and fractured and severely lacerating his right index finger. He kept in the fight for several more hours after that and just put some tape on it, a napkin, and went back to work. He was there for several hours before finally accepting medical evac. He ended up having to have the tip of his finger removed.

Another officer who was out there in the fight with us, he—much like myself—he had a large, heavy object thrown and struck his head. He wasn't as lucky as me, though. He has suffered lost time from that day, and he remains still out on medical leave. Even today he has not returned to work, but at the time he was still fighting.

Another officer, who was fought on the West Terrace and in the tunnels, instrumental to the defense, after being completely soaked with OC spray, was shocked several times by a cattle prod one of the terrorists brought with them.

When I went over my testimony—my opening statement before, I mentioned that we were attacked outside the second area-of-defense line on the West Terrace, and after we rallied there, we continued onward. I know that another officer found a Capitol Police Officer who was being dragged out into the crowd, and he was unable to signal to us what was going on. So, he charged in there by himself and got that officer back out of there and in the process hyperextended his knee and took several other injuries.

You know, *The Washington Post* and Carnegie Mellon University have estimated that there were about 9,400 terrorists out there, and I would say we had about 150, 175 officers. So, any one of them could tell you any amounts of heroic acts or injuries they sustained, but these are just a few that I know of.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

Officer Gonell, you talked about your tour in Iraq and what have you—and thank you for your service. Can you give the Committee a sense of comparing that tour and experiences with what you experienced on January 6th?

Sergeant GONELL. Sure. Back when I was in Iraq and sometime on a convoy mission to provide mutual support or taking care packages or whatnot to my other units in detachment—we went through roadside bomb-infested IEDs, whatnot, convoys. My fears were minimal around that time. It was not as constant. I know we knew at that time that we could run over an IED and that was it, but at least we knew that we were in a combat zone. Here, in our country, in our very own Capitol, we are being attacked. Not once but multiple times we had—

Chairman THOMPSON. Can you pull the microphone to you just a little bit?

Sergeant GONELL. Oh, sorry. Not only we were attacked one time, but it was multiple times, over and over, different people. They hit us and then they got tired of hitting us and then they switch, somebody else, rotating in and out.

As my colleagues also have said, we were at the lowest entrance tunnel, and we didn't have a chance to rotate ourselves until later on, like after an hour and a half later. So, whoever was there, we were fighting for our life. We were fighting to protect all of you.

In our mind, that time, at that entrance, that was it. That was the point of breach, and we were not letting them in.

They tried to convert us. They tried to persuade us to let them in, yelling, and then once they saw that we were not doing that, they continued to attack us even more, and it was nonstop.

So, my time compared to Iraq, totally different. This is our own citizens, people who we swore an oath to protect, but yet they are attacking us with the same flag that they claim to represent. It was bad.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you.

Officer Dunn, you talked about being called the N-word, you talked about being talked about like you've never heard before, and you talked about sharing comments from your other colleagues, as

well as the seeing of the Confederate flag and other things carried through the Capitol.

As an African-American law enforcement officer, can you give us, this Committee and those who are watching, how you felt defending the Capitol on that day being called that and seeing the symbols of the Confederacy going through the Capitol at the same time?

Officer DUNN. Yes, sir. Thank you for your question. To be frank, while the attack was happening, I didn't view it and I wasn't able to process it as a racial attack. I was just trying to survive that day and get home.

When I did have a moment to process it, I think that's in the Rotunda where I became so emotional, because I was able to process everything that happened, and it was just so overwhelming. It's so disheartening and disappointing that we live in a country with people like that, that attack you because of the color of your skin just to hurt you. Those words are weapons.

Thankfully, at the moment, it didn't hinder me from doing my job, but once I was able to process it, it hurt. It hurt just reading it now and just thinking about it, that people demonize you because of the color of your skin, when my blood is red, I'm an American citizen, I'm a police officer, I'm a peace officer, I'm here to defend this country, defend everybody in this building, not just the Members, all the staff, guests, everybody.

It just hurts that we have people in this country that resort to that regardless of your actions and what you desire to do to make a difference out there. It's disheartening.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you. But because of your heroism on that day, lives were saved, and our democracy was preserved, in large part because you gave your all, all of you, for that day on January 6th. I assure you this Committee will ensure there is a comprehensive account of your heroic acts of that day, and your testimony this morning is an essential part of that record. Thank you for your service to this country and for coming before us today.

The Chair now recognizes Members for questions they may wish to ask the witnesses. The gentlewoman from Wyoming, Ms. Cheney, is recognized.

Ms. CHENEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Again, thank you to all of our witnesses for your heroism and your bravery that day, and also for being here today and telling your story. I certainly join the Chairman and every Member of this Committee in our commitment to making sure we get to the truth and that those who did this are accountable.

Officer Gonell, I'd like to ask you, you describe in your testimony that it was—you said it was like a medieval battlefield, that what you were subjected to that day was something like a medieval battlefield. You said, "We fought hand-to-hand and inch by inch to prevent an invasion of the Capitol by a violent mob intent on subverting our democratic process."

Is it the case that as you were fighting there, you were not aware that the Capitol had been breached elsewhere? I believe you said that you really thought that was—you were the last line of defense. Is that right?

Sergeant GONELL. That is correct, ma'am.

Ms. CHENEY. So, Officer Gonell, when you—

Sergeant GONELL. Sergeant.

Ms. CHENEY [continuing]. Think about that and share with us the vivid memory of the cruelty and the violence of the assault that day, and then you hear former President Trump say, “It was a loving crowd. There was a lot of love in the crowd,” how does that make you feel?

Sergeant GONELL. It’s upsetting. It’s a pathetic excuse for his behavior for something that he himself helped to create, this monstrosity. I’m still recovering from those hugs and kisses that day that he claimed that so many rioters, terrorists were assaulting us that day. If that was hugs and kisses, then we should all go to his house and do the same thing to him.

To me, it’s insulting, it’s demoralizing, because everything that we did was to prevent everyone in the Capitol from getting hurt. What he was doing, instead of sending the military, instead of sending the support, or telling his people, his supporters to stop this nonsense, he egged them to continue fighting.

I was in the Lower West Terrace fighting alongside these officers, and all of them—all of them—were telling us, “Trump sent us.” Nobody else. There was nobody else. It was not Antifa. It was not Black Lives Matter. It was not the FBI. It was his supporters that he sent them over to the Capitol that day. He could have done a lot of things; one of them was to tell them to stop.

He talks about sacrificing—sacrifices, whatnot; the only thing that he has sacrificed is the institutions of the country and the country itself only for his ego, because he wants the job but he doesn’t want to do the job. That’s a shame on him, himself.

Ms. CHENEY. Thank you.

Officer Fanone, you talked in your testimony about the fact that the line that day was the seat of American democracy, was the seat of our Government. Can you talk about, as you think now about what was under threat, first of all, did you have a sense at the time, as you were going through the battle before the horrific violence happened to you, of the nature of the gravity of the threat that we were facing, that the line was, in fact, the seat of American democracy?

Officer FANONE. Well, my response that day really was based off of my obligation as a police officer to not only protect the lives of the Members of Congress and their staff but also to my fellow officers. The politics of that day really didn’t play into my response at all.

Ms. CHENEY. Thank you.

Officer Hodges, in your testimony, you talk about when you were at The Ellipse, and you mentioned the significant number of men dressed in tactical gear attending the gathering, wearing ballistic vests, helmets, goggles. When you saw that, was that something that you had anticipated at all? Could you just tell us more about that crowd there at The Ellipse, the extent to which you saw people who clearly were in military or paramilitary garb?

Officer HODGES. It was absolutely a source of concern. Like I said, they had outer carrier vests designed to carry ballistic shielding, helmets, goggles, face masks, backpacks filled with unknown objects. I couldn’t get a count and we couldn’t stop and search ev-

everyone, so I don't know how many there were. But I know that, it was obviously a concern of mine.

Ms. CHENEY. Thank you very much.

Then, finally, Officer Dunn, you mentioned the text message that you received, and you expressed some surprise. You mentioned that you had not seen any intelligence that would have led you to believe that we should expect that kind of violence. Could you elaborate on that a little bit?

Officer DUNN. Yes, ma'am. We were expecting civil disobedience, as we do at the Capitol, at least that was what was relayed to us; a couple of arrests, name calling, unfriendly people, but nowhere near the level of violence or even close to it like that we experienced.

When I received the text messages, it made the hairs on my neck rise. But since our chain of command had not told us to prepare for any of these levels of violence, I was just like, okay, whatever. Like, I've been here—I start year 14 in November—and I've dealt with hundreds of protests where people get arrested and for peaceful First Amendment protests. Everybody has the right to protest. Okay. Do what you do, and we'll arrest you if you break the law, and we'll go home later that night. It was a lot different than that, but I was not alerted to the level of violence. Like, the text messages I got foreshadowed that looking back, but, no, we were not prepared for what we faced that day.

Ms. CHENEY. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask unanimous consent to enter that complete text message into the record.

Chairman THOMPSON. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. CHENEY. Thank you.

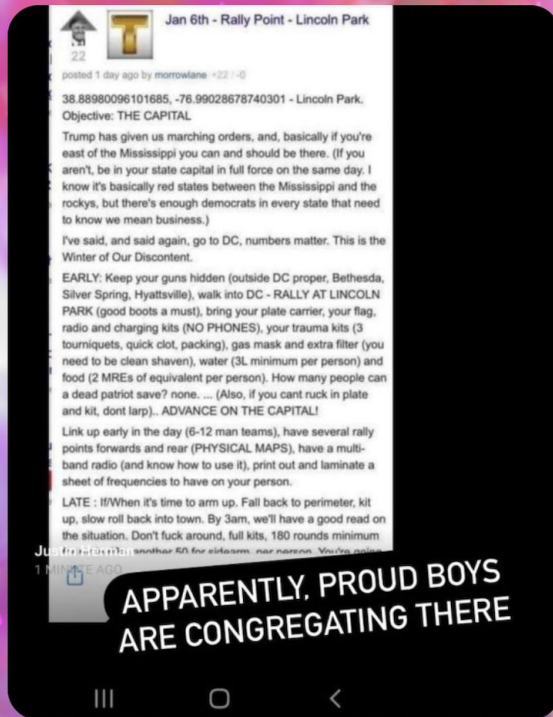
[The information follows:]



Wednesday, January 6, 2021

D

Is this legit? I mean not shocked but a coworker got this from a friend on the hill



APPARENTLY, PROUD BOYS ARE CONGREGATING THERE

MMS

I know you will but please be careful out there!

10:56 AM

Yea we've got this

We're taking super precautions

11:01 AM

D

Ok I worry about you out there but I



Ms. CHENEY. Again, I would just like to express my deep gratitude for what you all did to save us, and it won't be forgotten, and we will get to the bottom of this. Thank you very much.

With that, I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentlelady yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California, Ms. Lofgren.

Ms. LOFGREN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to each one of you and your colleagues for what you did. I was on the floor of the House helping to defend the voters of Arizona to a challenge to their electors while you were out trying to keep a violent mob from invading the Capitol.

So, I really do want to thank you for your tremendous courage and stamina and heroism, not just for myself; I Chair the House Administration Committee, and I know how many others work in this Capitol, not only the staff to the Members of Congress, but the food service workers who were present and clerical staff. You saved them as well, and so they also owe you a debt of gratitude.

I do realize that ultimately the rioters breached the Capitol, but the time that you kept them out really made a tremendous difference. You saved the day. You saved the Constitution, and it made a tremendous difference for our country.

Officer Dunn, I did hear you about the need for additional help, and I want to pledge to you that we will work with the Capitol Police to make sure that the resources, the mental health unit has the resources that officers need. I'll make that pledge to you right now.

Officer DUNN. Thank you.

Ms. LOFGREN. I would like to ask, Sergeant Gonell, not everyone knew that you were fighting in the hallway near the Lower West Terrace on January 6th. Can you tell me what you went through on that hallway? Then while you were there, Metropolitan Police arrived to help you out. What difference did that make?

Sergeant GONELL. Sure, ma'am. Before I start, by no means am I suggesting that we would go to his house. I apologize for my outburst.

After we retreated to the Lower West Terrace entrance, it was rough. It was terrible. Everything that was happening to us, it was simultaneously, and we didn't have a lot of support. We had probably like 50 officers at most when we went back in. Once we were there, we started saying to ourselves, this is it. This is the entrance where they're going to try to breach. We're going to hold the line. We're going to do everything possible, without even coordinating among ourselves.

The few officers who were still carrying shields, we automatically assumed position in the front. Some of those shields were taken, ripped apart from the officers' hands. Some of the officers also got concussed because they were hit with the same shields they were holding, because that was so violently taken from them that they were concussed.

There were multiple struggles in terms of fighting. My shield was round, and I was able to get some strikes, but because we were in so close quarters, it was hard for us to even do that. The only thing we were allowed to was push forward. Whoever has shields

stay in the front, and whoever was in behind the people with the shield, then they were striking those rioters.

At some point, I fell on the floor on top of some shields, trying to help and assist some of the officers, and I got pulled to the crowd. Luckily, I was able to free myself and stand up.

Later on, the second time I went back to the front, that's when Officer Hodges was getting trampled. I was getting trampled, because just the mere force of the rioters pushing forward and police officers pushing out, we were getting trampled in the middle. So, it was a very terrible thing that happened to us, yes.

Ms. LOFGREN. Officer Fanone, before I ask you a question, I'd like to show a brief video clip of some of what you went through today. I realize this can be difficult to watch, but I think it's important for the public to see.

VOICE. Where is the West Front of the Capitol Building?

VOICE. What do you got there?

VOICE. 10-33.

CROWD. U-S-A! U-S-A! U-S-A!

CROWD. [unintelligible]

VOICE. Come on, MPD!

VOICE. Push!

VOICE. You've got to fight the right people.

VOICE. Push!

VOICE. I got you, Mike. That's my hand. You're good.

VOICE. Push them back!

CROWD. [unintelligible]

VOICE. This is for you guys. This is for you.

CROWD. [unintelligible]

VOICE. I've got one.

VOICE. You can't do this to me. I've got kids.

VOICE. . . . why the fuck?

VOICE. We need a medic! We need EMTs now!

Officer ALBRIGHT. Mike, stay in there, buddy. Mike, it's Jimmy; I'm here. Mike!

Ms. LOFGREN. Almost all of that was from your body camera footage. Can you walk us through what we've just seen, Officer Fanone?

Officer FANONE. Well, I believe the first portion of that video began—that was my body-worn camera footage from the Crypt area of the Capitol Rotunda. It was there that I first heard the 10-33, or distress call, come out from the Lower West Terrace tunnel, which I didn't realize at the time was only a few hundred yards away from where I was at.

I told my partner, Jimmy Albright, who was there with me, that there was a 10-33 coming out from the Lower West Terrace. We tried to get our bearings and figure out which way that might be. We asked a group of Capitol Police Officers, and they directed us down a set of stairs. From there, Jimmy and I walked down to the Lower West Terrace tunnel.

The first thing I remember was seeing a buddy of mine, Sergeant Bill Bogner, who is an administrative sergeant. He used to work in my district. Now he works over at the academy. He was unable to see. He had been sprayed in the face with bear mace.

I went up to him and told him, "Hey, it's Fanone." I remember he stretched out his hand to shake mine. That's when he told me that the guys that were just beyond that set of double doors had been fighting there for—I believe he said about 30 minutes. I don't think he realized what time it was because they had been fighting

since around 1 p.m. It was 3 o'clock. So, those guys had been there fighting for 2 hours unrelieved.

I remember looking up through the set of double doors. There was glass panes, and you could see the CS gas, like white powder, still lingering in the air. It was at that point that I realized I probably should have brought my gas mask.

So, I went through the double doors, and I saw Ramey Kyle, who was, at the time, a commander with our Criminal Investigations Division, overseeing all the detectives units. Like many other officers, sergeants, lieutenants, captains that day, he self-deployed and found himself commanding a group of about 30 or 40 officers there in the Lower West Terrace tunnel.

Commander Kyle was having a difficult time breathing. I remember I followed him back out through the set of double doors into that initial hallway, as he kind of cleared himself, straightened himself up. I described it before. I thought he looked like George Patton.

I remember he put his hat back on and walked right back out through the doorway into the tunnel, and I followed him. It was at that point, I think, when I started approaching that group of officers there defending the doorway that I realized the gravity of the situation.

My initial thought was these guys looked beat to hell, and, you know, maybe I could try to get in there and get some guys some help.

So, I told Jimmy that, you know, we needed to get in there and try to offer assistance, and that's what we did initially. We started making our way through the crowd of officers, yelling out, "Who needs a break?"

Like I said in my initial testimony, there were no volunteers. There were officers who identified other colleagues who were in need of help, and I remember somebody yelling out, "This guy needs help," and handed me that officer. I handed him off to Jimmy and told him to get him to the back. I continued to make my way up to the front lines.

Once I got up there, it was the first time I really came face-to-face with these terrorists. They were dressed in, you know, clothing adorned with political slogans, "Make America Great Again," "Donald Trump 2020," things of that nature. They were wearing military-style clothing, Kevlar vests, Kevlar helmets. Many of them had gas masks, and quite a few had shields, which they had taken away from law enforcement officers, and they were using them to beat us at the front line.

The first thing I told them was, "Hey, man, we've got to get these doors closed. We've got injured officers in here."

That really seemed to piss those guys off. They became incredibly violent, and that's when that surge that you watched in some of the video began. You had a large group at the mouth of that tunnel entrance trying to push their way through the officers who were fighting to defend it.

I believe, had they done so or had they accomplished that, they would have trampled us to death. Most certainly, you would have had police officers killed.

I fought there at the front for some time. I was yelling out, you know, trying to inspire some of the other officers that were up there that were tired, telling them to dig in and push, and we started to make some progress.

Sergeant GONELL. I remember that.

Officer FANONE. We pushed those guys out of the tunnel, out through the initial threshold, and I remember thinking to myself, "Man, it's good to get some fresh air." It was at that point that I was pulled off the line.

That initial period of time where I was pulled off that line was kind of a blur. I just remember getting violently assaulted from every direction and eventually found myself out probably about 250, maybe 300 feet away from the mouth of the tunnel where the other officers were at. I knew that I was up shit creek without a paddle.

I was trying to push guys off of me, create some space. All the while, I recognized the fact that there were individuals that were trying to grab a hold of my gun. I remember one of them distinctly lunging at me time and time again trying to grab my gun. I heard people in the crowd yelling, "Get his gun, kill him with his own gun," and words to that effect.

I thought about using my weapon. I believed that there were individuals in the crowd whose intentions were to kill me. I came to that conclusion because of the fact that, separated from these other officers, who were only trying to defend the Capitol, I no longer posed any type of threat nor was I an impediment to them going inside of the building, but yet they tortured me. They beat me. I was struck with a taser device at the base of my skull numerous times. They continued to do so until I yelled out that I have kids.

I said that hoping to appeal to some of those individuals' humanity, and fortunately, a few did step in and intervene on my behalf.

They did assist me back toward the mouth of the tunnel entrance, and other officers were then able to rescue me and pull me back inside. But, at that point, I was unconscious. Based off the body-worn camera footage, it's believed that I was unconscious for approximately 4 minutes.

Ms. LOFGREN. Thank you, Officer. Thanks to each one of you. Our country is lucky, really blessed that you are as patriotic and brave as you are.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentlelady yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Kinzinger.

Mr. KINZINGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to my colleagues on the Committee.

Thank you to our witnesses. I never expected today to be quite as emotional for me as it has been. I've talked to a number of you and gotten to know you.

I think it's important to tell you right now, though. You guys may individually feel a little broken. You guys all talked about the effects you have to deal with and you talked about the impact of that day.

But you guys won. You guys held.

You know, democracies are not defined by our bad days. We're defined by how we come back from bad days, how we take account-

ability for that. For all the overheated rhetoric surrounding this Committee, our mission is very simple. It's to find the truth, and it's to ensure accountability.

Like most Americans, I'm frustrated that, 6 months after a deadly insurrection breached the United States Capitol for several hours on live television, we still don't know exactly what happened. Why? Because many in my party have treated this as just another partisan fight. It's toxic, and it's a disservice to the officers and their families, to the staff and the employees on the Capitol complex, to the American people who deserve the truth, and to those generations before us who went to war to defend self-governance because self-governance is at stake.

That's why I agreed to serve on this Committee. I want to know what happened that day. But, more importantly, I want all Americans to be able to trust the work this Committee does and get the facts out there free of conspiracy.

This cannot continue to be a partisan fight. I'm a Republican. I'm a conservative. But, in order to heal from the damage caused that day, we need to call out the facts. It's time to stop the outrage and the conspiracies that fuel the violence and division in this country. Most importantly, we need to reject those that promote it.

As a country, it's time to learn from our past mistakes, rebuild stronger so this never happens again, and then we can move onward. Serving on this Committee, I'm here to investigate January 6th not in spite of my membership in the Republican Party but because of it; not to win a political fight but to learn the facts and defend our democracy.

Here is what we know: Congress was not prepared on January 6th. We weren't prepared because we never imagined that this could happen—an attack by our own people fostered and encouraged by those granted power through the very system they sought to overturn. That is a lesson. That is not a conspiracy theory or a counternarrative. We don't blame victims. We go after the criminals.

Some have concocted a counternarrative to discredit this process on the grounds that we didn't launch a similar investigation into the urban riots and looting last summer.

Mr. Chairman, I was called on to serve during the summer riots as an Air National Guardsman. I condemn those riots and the destruction of property that resulted, but not once did I ever feel that the future of self-governance was threatened like I did on January 6th. There is a difference between breaking the law and rejecting the rule of law, between a crime—even grave crimes—and a coup.

As we begin our work today, I want to call this Committee's attention to the oath of office, an oath not to a party, not to an individual, but to the Constitution that represents all Americans. Everyone in elected office knows how hard it can be sometimes to keep that oath, to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States in the forefront of our minds, what with the political pressures and reelections always around the corner.

But, Mr. Chairman, our witnesses today, like every law enforcement officer across the country, took the same oath we did. On January 6th, the temptation to compromise their oaths didn't come

in the form of a campaign check or a threat from leadership or an all-caps tweet. It came in the form of a violent mob.

While we on this dais were whisked away from the danger, heroes like those here stood their posts before it and paid the price, and we are only here now because you guys were here then.

Therefore, it's altogether fitting that we begin our investigation of January's lawless attack against the Constitution with these four men who made sure that the attack did not succeed, with those who helped to ensure that democracy held. I think it's important to remember that you are four with stories, but there are hundreds with stories as well that you represent, where you sit.

Officer Fanone, I know your passion is to make sure that D.C. Metro gets the credit it's due, and I thank you. I know that you represent the hundreds of officers, like Officer Hodges, that responded to that call.

What I want to ask: Does this feel like old history to any of the four of you? Sometimes we hear out there: It's time to move on, right? It's been 6 whole months, time to move on.

Does this feel like old history and time to move on? You can just say yes or no.

Sergeant GONELL. No, sir.

Officer FANONE. Nope.

Officer HODGES. There can be no moving on without accountability. There can be no healing until we make sure this can't happen again.

Officer DUNN. I echo that. How do you move on without correcting what happened?

Mr. KINZINGER. Let me ask you all—one of the narratives out there—and, Officer Fanone, it triggered something in your testimony when you said it. So, there has been this idea that this was not an armed insurrection, as if somehow that is justification for what happened. We know the hugs and kisses. We know it was BLM and Antifa, right? Of course, then you would, I'm sure, want to investigate that if that's the case.

Now we've heard maybe the FBI actually had started this. But one of the ones that has always held was that this was not an armed insurrection.

Officer Dunn, you mentioned that those that stormed the Capitol were very well-organized and trained. Let me ask you—and I'll ask actually to all four of you. Officer Hodges, I know this was part of your job initially before you responded to the Capitol. If, in the middle of all that melee, you see somebody with a gun in that crowd, would you be able to go out, apprehend, arrest them, read them their rights, and go through that process, or was the mission at the moment survival and defense of the Capitol?

So, I'm asking: Is it possible that people maybe had guns? We've seen that actually there were, but this idea that, wow, people weren't arrested with guns. At the time, it was raw survival.

We can just start on the left. Let me ask you: What's your response to that?

Sergeant GONELL. For those people who continue to downplay this violent attack on our democracy and officers, I suggest them to look at the videos and the footage, whatnot, because common things were used as weapons, like a baseball bat, a hockey stick,

a rebar, a flagpole, including the American flag, pepper spray, bear spray.

So, you name it. You had all these items and things that were thrown at us and used to attack us. Those are weapons. No matter—if it is a pen, the way they were using these items, it was to hurt officers. It was to hurt police officers. Their intent was not to say, “Hey, let me go and find the Republicans or the Democrats in there, or the Independents.” It was every single body that was here in this building, in the Capitol, that their intent was to get them out and hurt them.

It would have been a much different outcome had we not stopped them, especially at the Lower West Terrace entrance. Even though, at that time, we didn’t know that there were other breaches in the Capitol, our intent was to stop whoever was trying to come in through that door.

Those weapons that were used, those were common items, but the way they were using it was as weapons.

Mr. KINZINGER. Let me ask, too, in kind of my final moments, Sergeant Gonell—Officer Hodges, you were a Virginia guardsman, I believe—fellow guardsmen?

Officer HODGES. Yes, sir.

Mr. KINZINGER. At any time in your service in the military—as you know, I’m an Air Guardsman—and, Sergeant Gonell, you specifically mentioned your time in Iraq. At any time in your military service, did you change how you defended the person to your left or right or how you trained with them based on their political affiliation—

Officer HODGES. No. Not at all.

Mr. KINZINGER [continuing]. Whether it was in a war or anything?

Officer HODGES. No.

Sergeant GONELL. No, sir. The way I viewed it at the time was I’m an American, and the person right next to me is an American, and I would do everything possible for me to defend him and the country at that time.

Mr. KINZINGER. You guys did that. You guys did that in the blue.

Sergeant GONELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. KINZINGER. I want to say that is the mission of this Committee. We may have our deep differences on other policy issues, but we are all Americans today, and we thank you for holding that line.

Officer DUNN. Congressman, if I may? If I may respond to Congressman—

Mr. KINZINGER. Please.

Officer DUNN. When you asked about the armed part, when the officers—assumed officers—showed me what appeared to be a police badge, I don’t know too many police officers—this is just me being a police officer for 13 years—that carry their badge and don’t carry a gun with them.

We look on their hips. You see a print. I didn’t see that it was a gun, but a reasonable police officer will believe that that’s a gun on their hip.

Mr. KINZINGER. Just to quickly be specific, a print is basically what looks like the outline of a gun?



Officer DUNN. That's correct.

Mr. KINZINGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, witnesses.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you.

The gentleman yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Schiff.

Mr. SCHIFF. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I was on the House floor from the beginning of the joint session until the attack and evacuation by the Capitol Police, and I want to thank you. I'm convinced that one of the lives you saved that day might very well have been my own. We are all greatly in your debt. You are all heroes.

Sergeant Gonell, Representative Lofgren asked you about your experience, and I won't ask you to repeat that. I would like the public to see, from your perspective, some video, if you're comfortable with my showing it?

Sergeant GONELL. Yes, that's fine.

Mr. SCHIFF. If the clerk could roll the video, please.

CROWD. [unintelligible]  
 VOICE. You're going to die tonight.  
 VOICE. You gotta lock 'em together. Here, like this. Arms through these shields. You know how to put your arms? Do we have a hard platoon guy here?  
 VOICE. Yeah.  
 VOICE. Show them how to lock the shields together and hold the shields.  
 VOICE. We need an avenue of escape, so wait to lock this one in. Go ahead.  
 CROWD. [unintelligible]  
 VOICE. Gas! Gas! Gas! Gas! Gas! Gas!  
 CROWD. [unintelligible]  
 VOICE. Back up! No, stop! Stop! Stop! Stop!  
 CROWD. [unintelligible]

Mr. SCHIFF. Sergeant, in that video, one of the first things you hear is someone saying, "You're going to die tonight." You described in your opening statement being crushed by rioters. You could feel yourself losing oxygen, thinking this was how your life was going to end, trampled to death defending the Capitol.

It's hard for any of us to understand what you went through even though we were there. It's even harder, I think, for people around the country to understand what that was like.

Can you tell us what you were thinking when you were losing oxygen and thought that might be the end?

Sergeant GONELL. My rationale there and the way I was thinking, like we can't let these people in, no matter what, even if it costs my life. That bloody hand that you saw, that's me in there. Both my hands were bleeding bad. At no point in time did I stop, to consider to stop, because the attacks were so relentless. I was thinking I need to survive this, if possible, but I'm willing to sacrifice myself to prevent the attackers from coming in.

I swore an oath to protect the public, the Members of Congress, and the United States Constitution and whatnot. That's what I was doing that day, regardless of my personal safety, along with everybody else who was there that day.

They were calling us traitors, even though they were the ones committing the treasonous act that day. It is devastating and demoralizing for people, whoever party it is, to call this attack and continue to minimize it like nothing happened. It was an attempted

coup that was happening at the Capitol that day. If it had been another country, the United States would have sent help.

People need to understand the severity of, and the magnitude of, the event that was happening that day. We were all fighting for our lives, to give them—to give you guys—a chance to go home to your family, to escape. Now the same people who we helped, the same people who we gave them the borrowed time to get to safety, now they're attacking us. They're attacking our characters. They're attacking Officer Harry's character, people who never served in the military or in law enforcement. It's a disgrace.

My actions that day was to save you guys, regardless of my personal safety. I still continue to want to do that today, tomorrow, and as long as I'm permitted to do it, and if it is demanded of myself to do that in the future.

Mr. SCHIFF. Sergeant, this obviously had a deep impact on you, all of you, but it's also had a big impact on your family. You described how, when you got home, you couldn't even hug your wife because you had chemicals all over you. You wanted to go back. It seems like, no sooner had you gotten home, you wanted to go back.

Sergeant GONELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. SCHIFF. I think I read that you said you felt guilty.

Did your wife want you to go back?

Sergeant GONELL. No.

Mr. SCHIFF. Why did you go back, and what was your conversation with her about that?

Sergeant GONELL. After I took a shower, I spent about 10 minutes hugging her and my son. I told her, "I've got to get some sleep because I've got to go back to work."

She said, "No, you're not. You're hurt."

I said, "No. I'm still able to continue to carry out my duties." By 8 o'clock, I was already on my way back despite her concerns for my safety.

My sense of duty for the country, for the Constitution, at that time was bigger than even my love for my wife and my son. I put that ahead.

For me, it's confounding that some people who have sworn an oath, elected officials, including people in the military, that I seen at the Lower West Terrace fighting against me, they swore an oath, and they're forgetting about the oath. They're not putting the country before the party, and that's what bothers me the most because I, as a former soldier, I know what that inherits, that oath, and I'm still willing to do that.

We've got people right now in front of the Justice Department asking to release some of the very same people even though we are testifying about the trauma and the agony, everything that happened to us. It's pathetic, and they shouldn't be elected officials anymore.

Mr. SCHIFF. Officer Dunn, you described talking to your fellow Black officer about what you went through and experiencing those racial epithets. You asked a question, I think, that I've been haunted by ever since: Is this America? I'm very interested to know your thoughts on the answer to that question.

Is this America, what you saw?

Officer DUNN. Well, thank you for your question.

You know, I've done a few interviews before about my experiences that day, and I said that it was a war that we fought, and a war is composed of a bunch of different battles. Everybody, even sitting at this table, fought a different battle that day, but it was all for the same war.

As Black officers, I believe we fought a different battle also. The fact that we had our race attacked and just because of the way we look, you know, to answer your question, frankly, I guess it is America. It shouldn't be, but I guess that's the way that things are.

I don't condone it. I don't like it, but, I mean, if you look at our history, of American history, things are—countries existed because they beat—they won a war, or colonies and State lines and boundaries exist because of violence and wars like—so I guess it sounds silly, but I guess it is American.

But it's not the side of America that I like. It's not the side that any of us here represent. We represent the good side of America, the people that actually believe in decency—human decency. We appeal to just the good in people. That's what we want to see.

Whether we disagree with how they vote on a bill about infrastructure, everybody wants the right thing, people to do okay.

So, that's why I'm glad to see this Committee composed of Republican Members also. So, that's encouraging. It's encouraging. So, that's the side of America that I say, yes, this is America. This is the side that I like and the side that I acknowledge.

Mr. SCHIFF. Officer, thank you. I believe in this country, and I believe in it because of people like you, who understand what the flag means and what our Constitution means and risk their lives to defend it.

I'd like to think, as Amanda Gorman so eloquently said, that we're not broken; we're just unfinished. Because, if we're no longer committed to a peaceful transfer of power after elections if our side doesn't win, then God help us. If we deem elections illegitimate merely because they didn't go our way rather than trying to do better the next time, then God help us. If we're so driven by bigotry and hate that we attack our fellow citizens as traitors if they're born in another country or they don't look like us, then God help us.

But I have faith because of folks like you.

Adam, I didn't expect this would be quite so emotional either, but it must be an Adam thing today.

But I'm so grateful to all of you.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Aguilar.

Mr. AGUILAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Committee.

Gentlemen, like my colleagues, I want to extend my gratitude and appreciation for your service on January 6th and since then, what you've had to go through.

I was on the House floor, like my colleagues, on the 6th when I was told that a violent mob had breached the Capitol. It's because of your service—it's because of you and your colleagues—that we're

here today, because you were literally the last line of physical defense, laying your life on the line for democracy.

My time will be limited, so I'll be asking questions of Officer Hodges and Sergeant Gonell, primarily about the weapons that you observed and how they were used.

Officer Hodges, you were in a unique position because you were down Constitution. You were closer to the White House to start, as you indicated in your testimony. During the morning and the early afternoon on the 6th, what did you hear specifically about guns and explosives that had been discovered by your fellow officers?

Officer HODGES. I was listening on the radio to our gun recovery unit, working the crowd. What we usually try to do is wait for the crowd to disperse before making arrests. That way, we don't set off the crowd, set off a riot. So, I think they may have identified people of interest that they never got a chance to address. They were working the crowd to try and confirm reports of firearms on certain people, but it's also difficult to do given the nature of the crowd and how many there were.

When I heard our EOD confirm the existence of a device, there was only one thing it could be. You know, explosives. But, in 42, we had our own objective, our own mission, so we would scan the crowd, but these people—they know how to conceal their weapons. So, on a big avenue like Constitution, it's difficult to detect the print or, if it's in a backpack, there is really not much you can do.

But we continue to scan the crowd and find what we could, but mostly it was up to our other units to make those discoveries.

Mr. AGUILAR. In response to Representative Cheney, you talked about the gear that the individuals were wearing. So, combined with what you saw visually with what you had heard on the radio about guns, that all kind of led you to give pause about the next few hours, correct?

Officer HODGES. Absolutely. You know, once we got to the Capitol and we were fighting, I was wondering, how many more bombs are there? What's the trigger? Is it going to be a cell phone? Is it on a timer? How many guns are there in this crowd? If we start firing, is that the signal to them to set off the explosives, however many there are in the city? Is that the signal for them to break out their firearms and shoot back?

So, that's the reason why I didn't shoot anyone and I imagine why many others didn't, because, like I said before, there were over 9,000 of the terrorists out there with an unknown number of firearms, and a couple hundred of us maybe.

So, if that turned into a firefight, we would have lost, and this was a fight we couldn't afford to lose.

Mr. AGUILAR. I want to play a video, and I'd ask that everyone watching pay attention specifically to the weapons the rioters were using. You can hear someone yell, "Get your machete." You can see officers being attacked with flagpoles, flares, and gas canisters.

If we could roll the video.

POLICE RADIO TRANSMISSION. We're still taking rocks, bottles, and pieces of flag and metal pole.

POLICE RADIO TRANSMISSION. Cruiser 50, the crowd is using munitions against us. They have bear spray in the crowd. Bear spray in the crowd.

VOICE. [unintelligible]

VOICE. Get your machete. Get your machete.

VOICE. [unintelligible]  
 VOICE. Pull back. Pull back.  
 VOICE. [unintelligible]

Mr. AGUILAR. Sergeant Gonell, in the video, we just saw someone throw a large speaker. Was that directed your way?

Sergeant GONELL. I was further inside. That was afterward, toward the end—before they got clear. When they threw the speaker at me I was further inside the tunnel.

Mr. AGUILAR. What types of weapons did you see used against your fellow officers?

Sergeant GONELL. Police shields, police baton, the sledgehammer that you saw on that video, flagpoles, tasers, pepper spray, bear spray, rebars, bats, PVC pipes, copper pipes, rocks, table legs broken down, furniture broken down, the guardrails for the inauguration stage, cones, four-by-four, any weapons, any items that they could get their hands on that day.

Mr. AGUILAR. You were further down the corridor, but a speaker was thrown at you, and it hit your foot. Is that correct?

Sergeant GONELL. Correct, sir.

Mr. AGUILAR. We have a photo—

Sergeant GONELL. It was thrown my way, and then, when it landed, it hit somebody else, and it hit my foot.

Mr. AGUILAR. I think we have the photo of your foot here as well that we'd like to show.

Sergeant GONELL. That is correct.

Mr. AGUILAR. Can you tell me how you're doing? You mentioned in your opening statement about your continued physical therapy related to the foot. Can you tell me how you're doing?

Sergeant GONELL. The foot, I had several conditions—one is fusion on No. 1 metatarsal, tarsal—metatarsal. Then there was the hammer toe as a result of the hit. Then the second and third digit also got damage. In order to fix one, they need to correct the big toe to stabilize. If not, later on in the future, I would have had the same problem returning.

It is very painful. With a lot of patience and determination that I had gone through, I still have the same problems in terms of pain and stiffness, whatnot.

The doctor last week, on Tuesday, told me that I'm going to need surgery on my shoulder because I have a labrum tear that has not healed even more than 6 months later. Possibly my rotator cuff also is going to need some work.

So, you're talking about 8 months to a year more of physical treatment and rehab.

Mr. AGUILAR. Sergeant, you're an immigrant from the Dominican Republic, a naturalized U.S. citizen, and you mentioned how individuals had zeroed in on your race that day.

Sergeant GONELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. AGUILAR. Can you tell me how that made you feel?

Sergeant GONELL. Before, or right after, MPD arrived with the fluorescent mountain bike unit, I was on the front line, and apparently they seen—even through my mask—they saw my skin color and said, "You're not even American."

Regardless whether I was in the military, they don't know that, but they yelling and saying all these things to me. I mean, when

I heard that, I wasn't even thinking about any racial stuff. I was like, "Okay. You don't know that for a fact," so I'm not even entertaining that.

But it's—just like Officer Harry Dunn, it takes time for you to process that, and you only realize what was happening after you go back and see it from a different point in time because I only saw that recently. But, for me, I wasn't even thinking of it. I'm there to stop them regardless. I'm not thinking what they were yelling in terms of my skin color or my race. I know I'm an American former soldier and a police officer. I didn't take that into account when I was defending all of you guys.

Mr. AGUILAR. Officer Hodges, you characterized the attack on the Capitol as a white nationalist insurrection.

Can you describe what you saw that led you to label the attack that way?

Officer HODGES. The crowd was overwhelmingly white males, usually a little bit older, middle-aged, older, but some younger. I think, out of the entire time I was there, I saw just two women and two Asian males. Everyone else was white males.

They didn't say anything especially xenophobic to me, but to my Black colleagues and anyone who is not white, and some of them would try to recruit me. One of them came up to me and said, "Are you my brother?"

There are many, many known organizations with ties to white supremacy who had a presence there, you know, like Three Percenters, Oath Keepers, that kind of thing. Everyone I've ever—people who associate with Donald Trump are, I find, more likely to subscribe to that kind of belief system.

Mr. AGUILAR. I want to thank the four of you for taking the very difficult step of sharing your stories and your recollections of the threats and violence that you endured. No one should have to experience what you went through.

This Committee will continue its work to give a complete accounting of what happened, to protect further officers, and to amplify the stories that you've shared today.

Thank you so much for being here.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Florida, Mrs. Murphy.

Mrs. MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to the witnesses for your testimony today, for your bravery on January 6th, and for your service to our country.

I know all of you endured a great deal on January 6th, and I know we've watched a lot of difficult video in this testimony so far, but I hope it's okay with you if I show a brief video of what Officer Hodges experienced that day.

Can you please cue the video?

VOICES. [unintelligible]

VOICE. Hold it, baby. Hold it, baby.

VOICES. [unintelligible]

VOICE. Hold it, baby.

VOICE. Back up! Back up!

CROWD. [screaming]

VOICE. Interlock the shields. Interlock shields.

VOICE. Watch out! Watch out!

VOICE. Interlock the shields. Shields!

CROWD. Heave-ho. Heave-ho. Heave-ho.

Officer HODGES. [screaming]

Mrs. MURPHY. Officer Hodges, I know that must have been difficult to watch, but I really think it's important for the American people to see that because that's the beginning of the kind of accountability that this Committee is committed to in order for us to do what you said, moving forward as a country.

You know, January 6th was an attack on our democracy. It was an attack on the peaceful transfer of power, and it was an attack on this Capitol Building. But it was also an attack on real people. Most people don't know this, and I don't think even you know this, but your actions had a profound impact on me.

So, at 3 p.m. on January 6th, while you were holding back the mob at the Lower West Terrace entrance, I was holed up with Congresswoman Kathleen Rice in a small office about 40 paces from the tunnel that you all were in. That's about from the distance where I'm sitting here on the dais to that back wall.

From that office, in close proximity to where you all held the line, I listened to you struggle. I listened to you yelling out to one another. I listened to you care for one another, directing people back to the makeshift eyewash station that was at the end of our hall.

Then I listened to people coughing, having difficulty breathing. But I watched you and heard you all get back into the fight. I think Congresswoman Rice and I were the only Members of Congress to be down there on that Lower West Terrace.

You know, we had taken refuge in that office because we thought for sure being in the basement at the heart of the Capitol was the safest place we could be, and it turned out we ended up at the center of the storm.

Officer Fanone, you had said, you know, you were 250 feet off of that tunnel, and you felt certain that they were going to kill you. Imagine if they had caught the two Members of Congress that were just 40 feet from where you all were.

I know, Sergeant Gonell and Officer Hodges, you both said that you didn't realize that other parts of the Capitol had been breached, but you really felt like you were the last line of defense. Well, I'm telling you that you were our last line of defense.

During the exact period of time, Officer Hodges, in that video where you were sacrificing your body to hold that door, it gave Congresswoman Rice and I and the Capitol Police Officers who had been sent to extract us the freedom of movement on that hallway to escape down the other end of that hallway. I shudder to think about what would have happened had you not held that line.

You know, I have two young children. I have a 10-year-old son and a 7-year-old daughter, and they're the light of my life. The reason I was able to hug them again was because of the courage that you and your fellow officers showed that day.

So, just a really heartfelt thank you.

I think it's important for everybody, though, to remember that the main reason rioters didn't harm any Members of Congress was because they didn't encounter any Members of Congress. They

didn't encounter any Members of Congress because law enforcement officers did your jobs that day, and you did it well.

I think, without you, what would have been a terrible and—what was a terrible and tragic day—would have been even more terrible and more tragic.

So, just very grateful for all of you.

Now, I'd like to talk a little bit about that video. You've talked a little bit about it in your opening statement, but can you walk us through what is happening in that scene? My understanding is that is a mix of your body camera as well as video from other vantage points.

Officer HODGES. That's correct. At the beginning, you see me walking into the Capitol. That was after we were driven off of the West Terrace. I think you see me spit on the floor unfortunately. I was trying to clear my lungs and mouth of all the CS and OC. You see me preparing my gas mask, donning it, ready to get back out there.

I followed the noise to the tunnel where it was just, you know, wall-to-wall people, packed, fighting with everything they had. It was full of OC and CS gas at the time, and I believe that the smoke was from a fire extinguisher. You could see all the residue on the officers who were there.

It's like I said before. You know, they outnumbered us 50-something to 1, so it didn't matter how many we defeated. We just had to hold on. We couldn't let anyone through, and they always had essentially an infinite number of replacements. They'd say, you know, "We need fresh patriots up here," and there would be more.

So, we just had to hold until someone came to help.

Like I said, once I got out to the front, I didn't want any more pressure on the officers behind me, so I tried to insert myself to where I could use the door frame, brace myself, and push forward so I could take back more territory. Unfortunately, that backfired.

So, once we lost ground, I was unable to retreat. I was crushed up against the door frame, and, in my most vulnerable moments, the man in front of me took advantage and beat me in the head; ripped off my gas mask, straining my neck, skull; split my lip open; just everything he could.

At that point, I recognized that, if I stayed there, then I was going to pass out from lack of oxygen or get dragged out into the crowd and end up like Fanone.

So, I called for help. You know, I tried to make it clear that, you know, my position was untenable, I had to fall back. Thankfully the other officers heard that, were able to get me out of there, and to the back where I recuperated as best I could before I got back out there again.

Mrs. MURPHY. Well, it's clear that you suffered immense pain from the assault. It's clear that you were outnumbered, and yet you just said you got back out there again. Tell me what's worth all of that pain? What was worth it? What were you fighting for that day?

Officer HODGES. Democracy. You were 40 feet away, 40 yards, whatever. Especially with the razor-thin margins of Democrats and Republicans in the House and Senate, if any single one person was kidnapped or killed, which I have no doubt in my mind was what



they intended, that would affect the outcome of legislation and all your duties for years to come. And that's just one person. What if, you know, more than one person? The difference would be even greater than what should be and will be.

And obviously, for each other. You know, your immediate concern is the well-being of your colleagues, the other officers who were there fighting beside me. I think I can speak for everyone when I say we worry about each other more than ourselves. That's just in our nature. It's part of why you become a police officer.

So, like when Fanone said he was trying to find out who needs help and no one would volunteer, that's just an example of that kind of a mindset that we have. So, it was for democracy; it was for the men and women of the House and Senate; it was for each other; and it was for the future of the country.

Mrs. MURPHY. Thank you, Officer Hodges, and thank you all for defending democracy, and I appreciate your testimony, and I appreciate your continued service.

With that, I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentlelady yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Raskin.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Sergeant Gonell, Officer Fanone, Officer Hodges, Officer Dunn, you are great law enforcement officers and a hero to law enforcement officers across the country. You are great public servants. You are a hero to public servants across the country. But you are great Americans, and you are heroes to all of America. Long after you are gone, you will be remembered as heroes to our country, along with your fellow officers.

Those who attacked you and those who beat you are fascist traitors to our country and will be remembered forever as fascist traitors.

Now, Officer Dunn, I've got to start with you, because you're my constituent, and you are the pride of Maryland today because of the way you stood up for the Capitol and for the Congress and for our democracy.

But you said something fascinating in your testimony. You said you'd never seen anybody physically assault a single officer before in your 13 years on the force, much less thousands and thousands of people attacking hundreds of officers. So, how did you experience that when it first happened?

Officer DUNN. So, with regards to the never seeing, I'm sure I've seen videos of officers being attacked and people resisting arrest, but to clarify, it's never been the assault on the scale that we have seen like that before. I just wanted to clarify that.

Can you repeat your question for me?

Mr. RASKIN. Well, it leads to my next one actually. You made a really interesting point. You said you'd seen protests for many, many years. You'd seen even civil disobedience for many years. There's an effort today to portray the events of January 6th like some kind of resurrection of Dr. King's march on Washington in 1963, you know.

I've seen a lot of protests here too. I've seen the March for Our Lives that the young people did about gun violence. I see people marching for D.C. Statehood, arguing for their rights to representa-

tion in Congress, and I've seen civil disobedience. But was this like any of those rallies or marches or demonstrations you'd ever seen? If not, what was different about it?

Officer DUNN. So, the marches that you—the protests that you specifically talked about, I'll go a step further and talk about the ones that had the potential to be not-so peaceful. You had the Million Man March rally, the 20th anniversary of it. There was a lot of opposition to that. You had the Klan that came up here. You had people that were pro-guns that wanted to come up here. So, all of those had the potential to be very violent and, frankly, quite deadly, but they did not.

This wasn't the first time that, if I can just use this quote, that the MAGA people came up here to the Capitol before. They were in the District of Columbia before. There were some skirmishes, but it was never the attempt to overthrow democracy. I think this was maybe their second or third time that they had come up, on January 6th, and even then, as belligerent as they were, it didn't account to this violence.

So, the only difference that I see in that is that they had marching orders, so to say. When people feel emboldened by people in power, they assume that they're right. Like, one of the scariest things about January 6th is that the people that were there, even to this day, think that they were right. They think that they were right, and that makes for a scary recipe for the future of this country.

I think that's why it's very important that you all take this Committee seriously and get to the bottom of why this happened, and let's make it never happen again.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you.

Officer Fanone, I think you've given our Committee our marching orders today, which is to hold the line. You held the line, and now we've got to hold the line. So, I want to thank you for that. If we show a fraction of the courage and the valor that you all demonstrated on January 6th, then we will hold the line in this Committee.

But I want to ask you about holding the line. I want to go back to this question of weapons so we can clear this up, because there are still some people who are saying that the insurrectionists were unarmed. I wonder what your reaction is to that, because we've heard about—well, first of all, rampant baseball bats, lead pipes, Confederate battle flags and so on, and what about the question of firearms. So, what is your reaction generally to this proposition that they weren't armed?

Officer FANONE. First and foremost, I would say that the implements that you just described are most certainly weapons. With regards to firearms, I know that in the days immediately before the January 6th insurrection and January 6th itself, firearms were recovered by law enforcement from individuals in Washington, DC, who were believed to have been participants or at least those who were planning to participate in the January 6th insurrection. Yes, those were firearms, handguns, and such.

Mr. RASKIN. Forgive me for these questions, but I've got to ask you, apparently in some nether regions of the internet it's being said that you, Officer Fanone, maybe were mistaken for Antifa and

that's why you were nearly beaten to death that day and carried into the crowd. Is there any way you think you were mistaken for Antifa?

Officer FANONE. Well, I was in full uniform. I was, like I said, wearing a uniform shirt adorned with the Metropolitan Police Department's patch. I had my badge on, until somebody ripped it off my chest. I do not believe I was mistaken for a member of Antifa.

Mr. RASKIN. You mentioned in your testimony that there's some people who would prefer that all of this go away, that we not have an investigation, let's let bygones be bygones. But you seem pretty determined to get the country to focus on this. Why is that so important to you?

Officer FANONE. Well, first and foremost, because of the actions of officers who responded there that day, specifically from my department, but also from the U.S. Capitol Police and some of the surrounding jurisdictions. You know, downplaying the events of that day is also downplaying those officers' response.

Like Sergeant Gonell said, and some of the officers, part of the healing process from recovering from the traumatic events of that day is having the Nation accept the fact that that day happened.

Mr. RASKIN. Some people were saying that, as public servants, you all should not be speaking out; that cops, firefighters, teachers should just serve the public but should not speak out as citizens. What do you think about that, Officer Fanone?

Officer FANONE. Well, I disagree. I've been outspoken throughout my career, never to this magnitude. As an undercover officer and a narcotics officer, I've preferred obscurity in the public eye. However, this event is something that we have not experienced in our lifetimes.

Mr. RASKIN. Officer Hodges, I read your testimony carefully. I hope every American reads your testimony. But I noted that you referred to "terrorists" or "terrorism" 15 different times to describe the people who were assaulting officers, dragging them through the crowd, stealing their weapons, smashing them over the head, gouging eyes, and so on.

However, some of our colleagues have been calling the violent insurrectionists not terrorists but tourists. Why do you call the attackers terrorists, and what do you think about our colleagues who think we should call them tourists?

Officer HODGES. Well, if that's what American tourists are like, I can see why foreign countries don't like American tourists. But I can see why someone would take issue with the title of "terrorist." It's gained a lot of notoriety in our vocabulary in the past few decades, and we like to believe that, no, that couldn't happen here, no domestic terrorism, no home-grown threats.

But I came prepared. U.S. Code Title 18, part 1, chapter 113, B as in Brown, section 2331: The term "domestic terrorism" means activities that involve acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State; and B, appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; or to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping, and occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States.

Mr. RASKIN. Well, thank you for that.

I had one final question for Sergeant Gonell, but it looks like my time is up, so I yield back to you.

Chairman THOMPSON. The Chair will give the gentleman an opportunity to ask his question.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Chairman.

Are there questions, Sergeant Gonell, that you hope we can answer as a Committee about the causes of the attack, the nature of the attack, and what happened in the weeks prior to January 6th as we develop our work plan moving forward?

Sergeant GONELL. I think, in my opinion, we do need to get to the bottom of who incited, who brought those people here, why the people were made to believe that the process was rigged, along those lines.

But going back to what Hodges says, I had, in my 15 years of service, I had given a tour to thousands of people at the Capitol, as an officer, as a sergeant, and even in plainclothes uniform. At no point in time did I ever get attacked.

I don't know how you call an attack on police officers a tour. When you see me bleeding, my hands, when you see all the officers getting concussions, getting maimed, getting fingers shattered, eye gouged, it's undecipherable. You're defending the undefensible, and you demoralize, not just the rank and file, but the future recruits that we are trying to get.

What do you think people considering becoming law enforcement officers think when they see elected leaders downplaying this? Why would I risk my life for them when they don't even care? They don't care what happened to the public. They don't care what happened to the officers. All they care is their job, their position.

If they don't have the courage to put their job on the line because they want to feed some lies or whatnot to feed somebody's ego or a "like" for a tweet, that's not putting the country first.

We are willing to risk our life, but at least make it worth it. We do that regardless, whether you're a Republican, Democrat, Independent. We don't care. When radio call or dispatch sends a call, we don't ask, "Hey, by the way, before I treat you, before I take care of you, are you a Republican or Democrat or Independent?" We don't. We just respond.

Normally, under any other circumstances, we just stay shut. We don't talk about politics. We don't talk about what happened to us. But this is bigger than that. You downplay an event that happened to the country itself, to democracy, to the rule of law.

You don't care about people who claim that they are pro-law enforcement, pro-police, pro-law and order, and then yet when they have the chance and the opportunity to do something about it, to hold people accountable, you don't. You pass the bucket like nothing happened.

It's so devastating for recruiting. Yes, we need bodies right now, but this makes it harder, especially when we're trying to attract the talent that we need, people who are willing to risk their lives to protect you guys.

Mr. RASKIN. Well, thank you very much, Sergeant Gonell.

Mr. Chairman, you know, the question was asked by Officer Dunn: Is this America? I think these gentlemen embody the spirit

of America, and we must do justice to their sacrifice in the work of our Committee.

I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. No question about it.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Virginia, Mrs. Luria.

Mrs. LURIA. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to say to the four officers here today that I'm grateful for your service, for you sharing your stories, for your willingness to speak to the Members of this Committee and to the American people about the horrific things that you experienced on January 6th, truly experienced in defense of our democracy.

Sergeant Gonell, we talked earlier, and you mentioned the many times that you took the oath, both to become a naturalized citizen, to join the Army, to serve as an officer of the Capitol Police force.

Officer Hodges, you mentioned as well as a National Guardsman and as a police officer. And something I can't share with you, the horrific experiences that you had that day, but all of us having taken that oath, and I took it when I was 17 and joined the Navy and over 2 decades.

Sergeant Gonell, when you mentioned and compared this earlier to the experiences that you had in Iraq, that in a war zone you didn't feel like you felt that day, can you share that with us in a little more detail what was going through your head, your thoughts about what you had experienced defending our Nation on foreign soil and then being here in the heart of our Nation in our Capitol and being assaulted the way that you were?

Sergeant GONELL. It is very disappointing in terms of, like when I was at the Lower West Terrace, and I saw many officers fighting for their lives against people, rioters, our own citizens turning against us—people who had the thin blue line on their chest, or another rioter with a Marine hat that says "veteran," or any other type of military paraphernalia or whatnot. And then, they're accusing us of betraying the oath when they're the ones betraying the oath.

When I was in Iraq, the sense of camaraderie, it didn't matter whether you were white, Black, Spanish, Middle Eastern, we all knew what we were fighting for. My experience there—there were times that yes, I was scared of going on convoys or doing my supply mission to local Iraqi population, because at any point we were possibly ambushed or getting shot at. We knew the risk.

But here it was simultaneously over, over, and over, our own citizens; why they were attacking us, because we're defending the very institution that they are claiming that they're trying to save.

Mrs. LURIA. Thank you for sharing that. I know it's been difficult today as we've watched these images from the Capitol, but I did want to share one more video. But this time I would ask people, you could even like close your eyes and listen without watching, just listen to what is being said as these brave men were being overrun.

VOICE. Traitors, how do you live with yourself?

VOICE. Die! Die, traitors!

VOICE. You should be mad too. Fucking traitors!

VOICE. You're on the wrong side of freedom. You're on the wrong side!

CROWD. Fuck-the-blue! Fuck-the-blue! Fuck-the-blue!

VOICE. Fuck you guys! You can't even call yourselves American. You broke your fucking oath today. 1776!

VOICE. You're a traitor.

CROWD. Traitor! Traitor! Traitor! Traitor! Traitor!

Mrs. LURIA. So, Officer Fanone, I wanted to turn to you. When you hear the rioters chanting things in this video, things like, F the blue, you can't even call yourself an American, you are on the wrong side of freedom, can you share how that makes you feel?

Officer FANONE. Again, I think—you know, my response that day—and at no point that day did I ever think about the politics of that crowd. Even the things that were being said did not resonate in the midst of that chaos. But what did resonate was the fact that thousands of Americans were attacking police officers who were simply there doing their job, and that they were there to disrupt Members of Congress who were doing their job.

You know, in retrospect now, thinking about those events and the things that were said, it's disgraceful that members of our Government, I believe, were responsible for inciting that behavior and then continue to propagate those statements, things like, you know, this was 1776, or that police officers who fought risked their lives and some who gave theirs were red coats and traitors. To me, those individuals are representative of the worst that America has to offer.

Mrs. LURIA. Thank you.

Thinking about the events that happened on January 6th and thinking about what led up to that day, I was reminded of a quote, a quote that I frequently heard used from Hemingway that asks, you know, how do these things happen? How do things like this happen? That quote, it's very short. It just says, "gradually and then suddenly." I think that our Founders understood that our Republic was very fragile and it would be tested, and it was tested here on January 6th.

In 20 years, I don't want to look back on this moment and think that we saw these signs coming gradually, that these were signs that we ignored—signs that people thought were just isolated incidents or signs of things that we thought could never happen. I don't want to say to my daughter or, Sergeant Gonell, to your son or, Officer Fanone, to your 4 daughters, I don't want any of us to say that this happened gradually and then suddenly, and that some were just too worried about winning the next election to do something about it or too cowardly to seek the truth.

So, that's the task before this Committee. I am sure that we'll be attacked by cowards—by those in the arena, those only in the stands—and that we'll be attacked by people who are more concerned about their own power than about the good of this country.

But my oath, your oath, all of our oaths here today to protect and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic, will be our guiding light for this investigation.

As Officer Dunn said earlier, you said, "we can never again allow our democracy to be put in peril." So, I will say that we will persevere, we will do what is right, and our Nation is truly ever grateful to you who held that line. Your actions on January 6th could very well have been what saved our democracy, and we thank you.

Mr. Chair, I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you.

The gentleman from Maryland asked a question in terms of what you would expect this Committee to do in our body of work. Sergeant Gonell responded, but we didn't give the other three members an opportunity to kind of tell us, based on the last 202 days of your life, what would you task this Committee in its body of work? What would you like to see us do?

Officer Fanone, I'll start with you.

Officer FANONE. Yes, sir. So, while I understand that there have been investigations into the events of January 6th, my understanding is that those have addressed some of the micro-level concerns, that being the immediate security of the Capitol Building itself, also the force mobilization of officers that day, planning and preparation, and training and equipment concerns.

A lot of, you know, the events of January 6th and the days preceding, I guess it's interesting, and from a law enforcement perspective, as a police officer, a lot of these events happened in plain sight. We had violent political rhetoric. We had the organization of a rally whose title was "Stop the Steal," and that that rally occurred on January 6th, which I don't believe was a coincidence that on January 6th Members of Congress, you here in the room today, were charged with tallying the electoral votes and certifying the election of our President.

In the academy, we learn about time, place, and circumstance in investigating potential crimes and those who may have committed them. So, the time, the place, and the circumstances of that rally, that rhetoric, and those events, to me, leads in the direction of our President and other Members not only of Congress and the Senate.

But that is what I am looking for is an investigation into those actions and activities which may have resulted in the events of January 6th, and also whether or not there was collaboration between those Members, their staff, and these terrorists.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

Officer Hodges.

Officer HODGES. I think Fanone hit the nail on the head there. As patrol officers, we can only deal with the crimes that happen on the streets, the misdemeanors, and occasionally the violent felonies. But you guys are the only ones we've got to deal with crimes that occur above us.

I need you guys to address if anyone in power had a role in this, if anyone in power coordinated or aided or abetted or tried to downplay, tried to prevent the investigation of this terrorist attack, because we can't do it. We're not allowed to. I think a majority of Americans are really looking forward to that as well.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you.

Officer Dunn.

Officer DUNN. Thank you, Chairman. There's been a sentiment that's going around that says everybody's trying to make January 6th political. Well, it's not a secret that it was political. They literally were there to "stop the steal." So, when people say it shouldn't be political, it is. It was and it is. There's no getting around that.

Telling the truth shouldn't be hard. Fighting on January 6th, that was hard. Showing up January 7th, that was hard. The 8th,

the 9th, the 10th, all the way till today, that was hard. When the fence came down, that was hard, when we lost our layer of protection that we had. The fence came down and still nothing has changed. Everything is different but nothing has changed.

Liz Cheney and Adam Kinzinger are being lauded as courageous heroes, and while I agree with that notion, why? Because they told the truth? Why is telling the truth hard? I guess in this America it is. Us four officers, we would do January 6th all over again. We wouldn't stay home because we knew what was going to happen; we would show up. That's courageous. That's heroic.

So, what I ask from you all is to get to the bottom of what happened, and that includes, like I echo the sentiments of all of the other officers sitting here. I use an analogy to describe what I want as a hit man. If a hit man is hired and he kills somebody, the hit man goes to jail. But not only does the hit man go to jail, but the person who hired them does. There was an attack carried out on January 6th, and a hit man sent them. I want you to get to the bottom of that.

Thank you.

Chairman THOMPSON. Well, thank you. Very powerful comments, by the way.

Sergeant GONELL. Chairman Thompson?

Chairman THOMPSON. Yes.

Sergeant GONELL. If I may, I also would like for you guys to give us the tools, or at least the things we need, to succeed, to continue protecting you guys. I think that's essential for you guys to provide us what we need in terms of like financially. I don't know. I'm not part of the innuendo about how that process works, but perhaps fortifying the Capitol, that will help. I know we were literally desperate. If we had that, that would have made a big difference on January 6th.

I know people want to keep this place open to the public as much as possible, but there are things that we could do to remediate that and also to reinforce entrances, whatnot. It's hard, but it takes will. I could tell the Capitol has some regulations, whatnot, but the time has passed. We still have security measures from 20 years ago that have to go. We need to reinvent the wheel and change that, but only you guys have the power to authorize that. They won't do it unless you guys do.

The other thing is, we still are operating on certain things that we could adjust, things that we were doing back when 9/11 happened, we're still doing it today, even 6 months after the attack on the Capitol. But only you, perhaps with the Chief of Police, the new Chief of Police, which he seems receptive to some of these changes, perhaps that would change. But, just like Officer Dunn said, we're still doing things that prior to January 6th we were doing and we're still doing it today, and I think that should change.

Thank you.

Chairman THOMPSON. Well, again, I thank all of you for your testimony. Obviously you are our real heroes in this situation. What you did, in the Committee's opinion, helped preserve this democracy. The time you gave for reinforcements to finally get to the Capitol made the difference. So, for that we thank you. But you carried out your duties at tremendous risk.



Now we on this Committee have a duty, however a far less dangerous one, but an essential one, to get to the bottom of what happened that day. We cannot allow what happened on January 6th to ever happen again. We owe it to the American people. We owe it to you and your colleagues. We will not fail, I assure you, in that responsibility.

Thank you again to our witnesses as well as our distinguished colleagues of the Committee.

Without objection, Members will be permitted 10 business days to submit statements for the record, including opening remarks and additional questions for witnesses to appropriate staff at all meetings of the Select Committee.

Without objection, the Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]



## APPENDIX

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AQUILINO A. GONELL, SERGEANT, U.S. CAPITOL POLICE

JULY 27, 2021

Chairman Thompson and Members of the Select Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. It is with honor, and a heavy heart, that I come before you to tell you my story, from painful, first-hand experience, of what happened that terrible day at the Capitol. I am providing this testimony solely in my personal capacity, and not as a representative of the U.S. Capitol Police.

It is imperative that the events of January 6th are fully investigated, that Congress and the American people know the truth of what actually occurred, and that all those responsible are held accountable, particularly to ensure this horrific and shameful event in our history never repeats itself. I applaud you for pursuing this objective.

Even though there is overwhelming evidence to the contrary, including hours and hours of video and photographic coverage, there is a continuous and shocking attempt to ignore or try to destroy the truth of what truly happened that day, and to whitewash the facts into something other than what they unmistakably reveal: An attack on our democracy by violent domestic extremists, and a stain on our history and our moral standing here at home and abroad.

As a child in the Dominican Republic, I looked up to the United States as a land of opportunity and a place to better myself. From the moment I landed at JFK airport in 1992, I have strived to pursue that goal. Thankfully, I have achieved that goal on many levels: I was the first in my family to graduate college, join the U.S. Army, and become a police officer.

On July 23, 1999, the day before my 21st birthday, I raised my hand to give back to the country that gave me an opportunity to be anything I wanted. At the time, I had already started basic training with the Army Reserve. In fact, I have raised my hand several times in ceremonies to pledge my commitment to “Defend and Protect the Constitution of the United States”: When I joined the Army Reserves, when I was promoted to Sergeant while in the Army, during my naturalization ceremony, when I reenlisted in the Army, when I joined the United States Capitol Police, and last when I was promoted to sergeant in the U.S. Capitol Police 3 years ago. I have always taken my oath seriously.

On January 6, 2021, I fulfilled my oath once more: This time, to defend the United States Capitol and Members of Congress carrying out their Constitutional duties to certify the results of the November 2020 Presidential election.

To be honest, I did not recognize my fellow citizens who stormed the Capitol on January 6, or the United States they claimed to represent. When I was 25, and then a sergeant in the Army, I had deployed to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom. From time to time, I volunteered to travel on IED-infested roads to conduct supply missions for U.S. and allied military forces and local Iraqi populations. But on January 6, for the first time, I was more afraid working at the Capitol than during my entire Army deployment to Iraq. In Iraq, we expected armed violence, because we were in a war zone. But nothing in my experience in the Army, or as a law enforcement officer, prepared me for what we confronted on January 6.

The verbal assaults and disrespect we endured from the rioters were bad enough. I was falsely accused of betraying my “oath” and of choosing my “paycheck” over my loyalty to the U.S. Constitution—even as I defended the very democratic process that protected everyone in that hostile crowd. While I was on the Lower West Terrace at the Capitol, working with my fellow officers to prevent a breach and restore order, the rioters called me a “traitor,” a “disgrace,” and shouted that I (an Army veteran and police officer) should be “executed”. Some of the rioters had the audacity to tell me that it was “nothing personal,” that they would “go through” us to

achieve their goals as they were breaking metal barriers to use as weapons against us. Others used more menacing language: "If you shoot us, we all have weapons, and we will shoot back", or "we will get our guns". "We outnumber you, join us," they said. I also heard specific threats on the lives of Speaker Nancy Pelosi and then-Vice President Mike Pence.

But the physical violence we experienced was horrific and devastating. My fellow officers and I were punched, pushed, kicked, shoved, sprayed with chemical irritants, and even blinded with eye-damaging lasers by a violent mob who apparently saw us law enforcement officers, dedicated to ironically protecting them as U.S. citizens, as an impediment in their attempted insurrection. The mob brought weapons to try to accomplish their insurrectionist objectives, and they used them against us. These weapons included hammers, rebars, knives, batons and police shields taken by force, as well as, bear spray and pepper spray. Some rioters wore tactical gear, including bulletproof vests and gas masks. The rioters also forcibly took our batons and shields and used them against us. I was particularly shocked at seeing the insurrectionists violently attack us with the very American flag they claimed they sought to protect. Based on the coordinated tactics we observed and verbal commands we heard, it appeared that many of the attackers had law enforcement or military experience.

The rioters were vicious and relentless. We found ourselves in a violent battle in a desperate attempt to prevent a breach of the Capitol by the entrance near the Inauguration Stage. Metropolitan DC Police ("MPD") officers were being pulled into the crowd as we tried to push all the rioters back from breaching Capitol. In my attempt to assist two MPD officers, I grabbed one officer by the back of the collar and pulled him back to our police line. When I tried to help the second officer, I fell on top of some police shields on the ground that were slippery because of the pepper and bear spray. Rioters started to pull me by my leg, by my shield, and by my gear straps on my left shoulder. My survival instincts kicked in and I started kicking and punching as I tried in vain to get the MPD officers' attention behind and above me. But they could not help me because they were also being attacked. I finally was able to hit a rioter who was grabbing me with my baton and able to stand. I then continued to fend off new attackers as they kept rotating after attacking us.

What we were subjected to that day was like something from a medieval battlefield. We fought hand-to-hand and inch by inch to prevent an invasion of the Capitol by a violent mob intent on subverting our democratic process. My fellow officers and I were committed to not letting any rioters breach the Capitol. It was a prolonged and desperate struggle. I vividly heard officers screaming in agony and pain just an arms-length from me. One of those officers is here today. I, too, was being crushed by the rioters. I could feel myself losing oxygen and recall thinking to myself "this is how I'm going to die, trampled defending this entrance." Many of the officers fighting alongside me were calling for shields, because their shields had been stripped from them by the rioters. I was one of the few officers left with a shield, so I spent the majority of the time at the front of the line.

I later found out that my wife and relatives here in the United States and abroad were frantically calling and texting me from 2 o'clock p.m. onwards because they were watching the turmoil live on television. But it was not until around 4:26 p.m., after giving CPR to one of the rioters who breached the Capitol in an effort to save her life, that I finally had a chance to let my own family know that I was alive.

After order finally had been restored at the Capitol and after many exhausting hours, I arrived home at nearly 4 o'clock a.m. on January 7. I had to push away my wife from hugging me because of all the chemicals that covered my body. I couldn't sleep because the chemicals reactivated after I took a shower, and my skin was still burning. I finally fell asleep 2 hours later, completely physically and mentally exhausted. Yet by 8 o'clock a.m. that day I was already on my way back to the Capitol, and I continued to work for 15 consecutive days until after the Inauguration. I made sure to work despite my injuries because I wanted to continue doing my job and help secure the Capitol complex. Six months later, I am still trying to recover from my injuries.

Many of my fellow Capitol Police Officers, as well as MPD Officers, suffered terrible physical injuries from the violence inflicted on us on January 6. I sustained injuries to both of my hands, my left shoulder, my left calf, and my right foot. I have already undergone fusion surgery on my foot, and I was just told that I need surgery on my left shoulder. I have been on medical and administrative leave for much of the past 6 months, and I expect to need further rehabilitation for possibly more than a year.

There are some who expressed outrage when someone simply kneeled for social justice during the National anthem. Where are those same people expressing out-

rage to condemn the violent attack on law enforcement officers, the U.S. Capitol, and our American democracy?

As America and the world watched in horror what was happening to us at the Capitol, we did not receive the timely reinforcements and support we needed. In contrast, during the Black Lives Matter protest last year, U.S. Capitol Police had all the support we needed and more. Why the different response? Were it not for the brave members of the MPD and officers for other agencies, I am afraid to think what could have happened on January 6. I want to publicly thank all the law enforcement agencies that responded to assist that day for their courage and support. I especially want to thank those Capitol Police Officers who responded on their own.

Despite being outnumbered, we did our job. Every Member of the House of Representatives, Senator, and staff member made it home safely. Sadly, as a result of that day, we lost officers—some really good officers. But we held the line to protect our democratic process, and because the alternative would have been a disaster. We are not asking for medals or even recognition. We simply want accountability and justice.

For most people, January 6th happened for a few hours that day. But for those of us who were in the thick of it, it has not ended. That day continues to be a constant trauma for us literally every day, whether because of our physical or emotional injuries, or both. While it has not received much attention, sadly many of my colleagues have quietly resigned from the Capitol Police because of that day. I am also regularly called by the law enforcement officials and prosecutors to help identify rioters from photographs and videos. And to be honest, physical therapy is painful and hard. I could have lost my life that day, but as soon as I recover from my injuries I will continue forward and proudly serve my country and the U.S. Capitol Police. As an immigrant to the United States, I am especially proud to have defended the U.S. Constitution and our democracy on January 6. I hope that everyone in a position of authority in our country has the courage and conviction to do their part by investigating what happened on that terrible day, and why.

This investigation is essential to our democracy, and I am deeply grateful to you for undertaking it. I am happy to assist as I can, and answer any questions you have to the best of my ability.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL FANONE, OFFICER, METROPOLITAN POLICE  
DEPARTMENT

JULY 27, 2021

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of this Committee, for inviting me to provide my eyewitness testimony of the violent assault on our Nation's Capitol on January 6, 2021.

My name is Michael Fanone, and while I have been a sworn officer with the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, DC. for almost 2 decades, my law enforcement career actually began here in this building as a United States Capitol Police Officer shortly after 9/11. In part because of the 2001 attacks on our country by terrorists, I felt called to serve. As a Capitol Police Officer, I was proud to protect this institution and the dedicated Members of Congress and their staff who work hard each today to uphold our American democracy.

I remain proud of the work of the Capitol Police and MPD Officers who literally commit their lives to protecting the safety of each of you, and all of us in this room, in our Nation's Capital.

After leaving the United States Capitol Police, I became an MPD officer serving the residents of Washington, DC. I have spent the majority of my nearly 20 years at the Metropolitan Police Department working in special mission units whose responsibilities include the investigation and arrest of narcotics traffickers and violent criminals. I have worked as both an undercover officer and lead case officer in many of these investigations.

In this line of work, it probably won't shock you to know I've dealt with some dicey situations. I thought I had seen it all, many times over. Yet what I witnessed and experienced on January 6, 2021 was unlike anything I had ever seen, experienced, or could have imagined in my country. On that day, I participated in the defense of the United States Capitol from an armed mob of thousands determined to get inside. Because I was among a vastly outnumbered group of law enforcement officers protecting the Capitol and the people in it, I was grabbed, beaten, tased, all while being called a traitor to my country. I was at risk of being stripped of, and killed with, my own firearm as I heard chants of, "Kill him with his own gun!" I can still hear those words in my head now.

Although I regularly deal with risky situations on the job, nowhere in my wildest imagination did I ever expect to be in that situation, or sitting before you today talking about it. That experience and its aftermath were something that even my extensive law enforcement training didn't prepare me for.

I was just one of hundreds of local police who lined up to protect Congress even though we were not assigned to do that. Some have asked why we ran to help when we didn't have to. I did that because I simply could not ignore what was happening. Like many other officers, I could not ignore the numerous calls for help coming from the Capitol Complex. I'm a plainclothes officer assigned to the First District Crime Suppression Team. But for the first time in nearly a decade, I put on my uniform.

When my partner, Jimmy Albright, and I arrived at the Capitol around 3 that afternoon, it was unlike any scene I had ever witnessed. Jimmy parked our police vehicle near the intersection of South Capitol St. and D St., SE and we walked to the Capitol from there passing the Longworth House Office Building. It was eerily quiet and the sidewalks, usually filled with pedestrians, were empty. As we made our way to Independence Avenue, I could see dozens of empty police vehicles that filled the street, police barricades, which had been abandoned, and hundreds of angry protesters, many of whom taunted us as we walked toward the Capitol building.

Jimmy and I immediately began to search for an area where we could be of most assistance. We first made our way through a door on the south side of the Capitol, walking then to the crypt and finally down to the Lower West Terrace Tunnel. It was there that I observed a police commander struggling to breathe as he dealt with the effects of CS gas that lingered in the air. Then I watched him collect himself, straighten his cap and trench coat adorned with silver eagles, and return to the line. That Commander was Ramey Kyle of the Metropolitan Police Department and those images are etched into my memory never to be forgotten.

In the midst of this intense and chaotic scene, Commander Kyle remained cool, calm, and collected as he gave commands to his officers. "Hold the line," he shouted over the roar. Of course, that day "the line" was the seat of our American government. Despite the confusion and stress of the situation, observing Ray's leadership, protecting a place I cared so much about, was the most inspirational moment of my life. The bravery he and others showed that day are the best examples of duty, honor, and service. Each of us who carries a badge should bring those core values to our work every day.

The fighting in the Lower West Terrace Tunnel was nothing short of brutal. Here I observed approximately 30 police officers standing shoulder-to-shoulder, maybe 4 or 5 abreast, using the weight of their own bodies to hold back the onslaught of violent attackers. Many of these officers were injured, bleeding, and fatigued. But they continued to hold the line.

As I don't have to tell the Members in this room, the Tunnel is a narrow and long hallway. It is not the sort of space where anyone would want to be pulled into hand-to-hand combat with an angry mob, although the narrowness of the hallway provided what was probably the only chance of holding back that crowd from entering your personal offices and the House and Senate Chambers.

In an attempt to assist injured officers, Jimmy and I asked them if they needed a break. There were no volunteers. Selflessly, they only identified other colleagues who may be in need of assistance.

The fighting dragged on, and I eventually joined the tactical line at the Tunnel's entrance. I can remember looking around and being shocked by the sheer number of people fighting us. As my police body-worn camera shows, thousands upon thousands of people, seemingly determined to get past us by any means necessary.

At some point during the fighting, I was dragged from the line of officers into the crowd. I heard someone scream, "I got one!" as I was swarmed by a violent mob. They ripped off my badge. They grabbed my radio. They seized the ammunition that was secured to my body. They began to beat me, with their fists and with what felt like hard metal objects. At one point I came face-to-face with an attacker who repeatedly lunged for me and attempted to remove my firearm. I heard chanting from some in the crowd, "get his gun" and "Kill him with his own gun." I was aware enough to recognize I was at risk of being stripped of, and killed with, my own firearm. I was electrocuted, again and again and again with a Taser. I'm sure I was screaming, but I don't think I could even hear my own voice.

My body camera captured the violence of the crowd directed toward me during those very frightening moments. It's an important part of the record for this Committee's investigation and for the country's understanding of how I was assaulted and nearly killed as the mob attacked the Capitol that day, and I hope that everyone will be able to watch it. The portions of the video I've seen remain extremely

painful for me to watch. But it is essential that everyone understands what really happened that tragic day.

During those moments, I remember thinking that there was a very good chance that I would be torn apart or be shot to death with my own weapon. I thought of my four daughters who might lose their Dad. I remain grateful that no Member of Congress had to go through the violent assault that I experienced that day.

During the assault, I thought about using my firearm on my attackers. But I knew that if I did that, I would quickly be overwhelmed. And that, in their minds, it would provide them with the justification for killing me. So instead, I decided to appeal to any humanity they might have. I said as loud as I could manage, "I've got kids." Thankfully, some in the crowd stepped in and assisted me.

Those few individuals protected me from the crowd and inched me toward the Capitol until my fellow officers could rescue me. I was carried back inside the Capitol Building. What happened afterwards is much less vivid to me. I had been beaten unconscious and remained so for more than 4 minutes. I know that Jimmy helped evacuate me from the building and drove me to MedStar Washington Hospital Center despite suffering significant injuries himself. At the hospital, doctors told me that I suffered a heart attack, and I was later diagnosed with a concussion, traumatic brain injury, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

As my physical injuries gradually subsided and the adrenaline that had stayed with me for weeks waned, I have been left with the psychological trauma and the emotional anxiety of having survived such a horrifying event. And my children continue to deal with the trauma of nearly losing their Dad that day.

What makes that struggle harder and more painful is to know so many of my fellow citizens, including so many of the people I put my life at risk to defend, are downplaying or outright denying what happened. I feel like I went to Hell and back to protect the people in this room. But too many are now telling me that Hell doesn't even exist—or that Hell actually wasn't all that bad.

The indifference shown to my colleagues and I is disgraceful. My law enforcement career prepared me to cope with some aspects of this experience. Being an officer, you know your life is at risk whenever you walk out the door, even if you don't expect otherwise law-abiding citizens to take up arms against you. But nothing—truly nothing—has prepared me to address those elected Members of our Government who continue to deny the events of that day. Those very same Members whose lives, offices, staff members I was fighting so desperately to defend.

I agreed to speak here today, and have talked publicly about what happened, because I don't think our response to the insurrection should have anything to do with political parties. I know that when my partner Jimmy and I suited up on January 6, we didn't care what we or our fellow officers believed about politics or what political party any of you public servants belonged to. I've worked in this city for 2 decades and never cared about those things, no matter who was in office. All I've ever cared about is protecting you, and the public, so you can do your job in service to this country and for the people you represent.

I appreciate your time and attention. I look forward to the Committee's investigation. I am hopeful that with your commitment, we as a country will confront the truth of what happened on January 6th and do what is necessary to make sure this institution of our democracy never again falls into the hands of a violent and angry mob.

We must also recognize the officers who responded that day, many unsolicited, and their countless acts of bravery and selflessness. It has been 202 days since 850 MPD officers responded to the Capitol and helped stop a violent insurrection from taking over the Capitol Complex, which almost certainly saved countless Members of Congress and their staff from injury and possibly even death. The time to fully recognize these officers' actions is now.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide my testimony today.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF DANIEL HODGES, OFFICER, METROPOLITAN POLICE  
DEPARTMENT

Good morning to the Committee, members of the press, and to the country.

To the Members of the Committee, I'd like to thank you for the invitation today to provide my account of my knowledge of and experiences from January 6th, 2021.

As the Chairman mentioned I am a member of Civil Disturbance Unit 42 and was working in that capacity on the day in question. A fully-staffed CDU platoon consists of 1 lieutenant, 4 sergeants, and 28 officers. We started that day at 7:30 a.m. and our assignment was to maintain high visibility along Constitution Avenue, namely the blocks leading up to President's Park, where then-President Donald

Trump was holding his gathering. My particular station was in front of 1111 Constitution Avenue, where I stood on foot as the crowd poured down the street and into the park.

There were a significant number of men dressed in tactical gear attending the gathering. Wearing ballistic vests, helmets, goggles, military face masks, backpacks, and without identifiable, visible law enforcement or military patches, they appeared to be prepared for much more than listening to politicians speak in a park.

Two of my colleagues were approached by a group of 3 to 4 of such men. The men were white, in good shape, with load-bearing vests equipped with MOLLE pouches. They were wearing BDUs, or battle dress uniform pants, tactical boots, black sunglasses and short haircuts. They had radios and one was equipped with an earpiece.

After a bit of small talk one of them asked my colleagues something to the effect of, "Is this all the manpower you have? Do you really think you're going to be able to stop all these people?" Dumbfounded, my colleagues simply expressed that they didn't understand what the speaker meant, and the group continued on.

As the day went on and the speakers in the park said their piece, I monitored the crowd and the radio. Over the radio I heard our Gun Recovery Unit working constantly, monitoring those in the crowd suspected of carrying firearms and making arrests and seizures when possible. Multiple gun arrests were made from January 5th through the 7th against those attending, planning to attend, or had attended Donald Trump's gathering. Unfortunately due to the course of events that day we will likely never know exactly how many were carrying firearms and other lethal weapons.

I don't know what time it was, but eventually the flow of foot traffic reversed, with people leaving President's Park and traveling eastbound down Constitution Avenue toward the United States Capitol.

At approximately 12:30 p.m. I noticed a commotion about half a block to my east, and saw the crowd starting to coalesce around two figures. I ran to where they were and found a confrontation at the intersection of 10th and Constitution Avenue NW. One counter-protester, a Black man, was backpedaling away from a white man in a Trump-labeled face mask who was closely following him with an outstretched arm. Myself and my colleague arrived first and physically separated the two, but a crowd of Donald Trump's people had gathered. They attempted to bait the counter-protester into attacking, shouting insults such as "You're mother's a whore!" and accusing him of "Hiding behind the cops." Eventually enough MPD members had gathered to move along the crowd who continued eastbound toward the Capitol building, and the counter-protester departed northbound on 10th Street.

Returning to my post I continued monitoring the radio. I could hear Commander Glover leading the defense efforts at the Capitol as the protesters began their transition from peaceful assembly into terrorism. I became agitated and wished we could move in to support as I could hear the increasing desperation in the Commander's voice, yet we still had to wait for our orders to change. Eventually they did, as at approximately 1:30 p.m. the Commander authorized rapid response platoons to deploy their hard gear and respond to the Capitol, including CDU 42.

The last thing I remember hearing over the air before departing for the Capitol grounds was confirmation that our Explosive Ordinance Disposal team had discovered a "device". Given which unit was being associated with this "device" I immediately realized MPD had discovered a bomb of some type near the Capitol. This thought was never far from my mind for the rest of the day.

We ran back to our vans and got on our hard gear as quickly as we could. Navigating alternate routes to avoid the foot traffic, we drove as close as we could to the Capitol, disembarking at the northwest side of the Capitol grounds. We gave our gear a final check and marched toward the West Terrace.

The crowd was thinner the further out from the Capitol you were, so as we marched the resistance we initially met was verbal. A man sarcastically yelled "Here come the boys in blue! So brave!" Another called on us to "remember your oath." There was plenty of boo-ing. A woman called us "stormtroopers". Another woman, who was part of the mob of terrorists laying siege to the Capitol of the United States, shouted "Traitors!" More found appeal in the label, and shout "Traitors!" at us as we pass; one man attempted to turn it into a duosyllabic chant. We continue to march.

We had been marching in two columns, but as we got closer to the West Terrace the crowd became so dense that in order to progress we marched single-file, with our hands on the shoulders of the man in front of us in order to avoid separation. However as we came close to the terrace our line was divided and we came under attack. A man attempted to rip my baton from my hands and we wrestled for control. I retained my weapon and after I pushed him back, he yelled at me "You're on the wrong team!"



Cut off from our leadership at the front of our formation we huddled up and assessed the threat surrounding us. One man tried and failed to build a rapport with me, shouting, "Are you my brother?!" Another takes a different tack, shouting "You will die on your knees!"

I was at the front of our group and determined we had to push our way through the crowd in order to join the defense proper, so I began shouting "Make way!" as I forged ahead, hoping that I'm clearing a path for the others to follow. However as I looked back I saw that the rest of the group came under attack and were unable to follow. The crowd attempted to physically bar the rest of the platoon from following. I backtrack and started pulling terrorists off of my team by their backpacks. Around this time one of the terrorists who had scaled the scaffolding that adorned the Capitol at the time threw something heavy down at me and struck me in the head, disorienting me (I suspect this resulted in the likely concussion I dealt with in the weeks after). Another man attempted to disarm me of my baton again, and we wrestled for control. He kicked me in my chest as we went to the ground. I was able to retain my baton again, but I ended up on my hands and knees and blind; the medical mask I was wearing to protect myself from the coronavirus was pulled up over my eyes so I couldn't see. I braced myself against the impact of their blows and feared the worst. Thankfully my platoon had repelled their own attackers and got me back on my feet. The crowd started chanting "U-S-A!" at us, and we struck out again for the West Terrace.

I lead the charge again through the midst of crowd-control munitions, explosions, and smoke engulfing the area. Terrorists were breaking apart metal fencing and bike racks into individual pieces, presumably to use as weapons. Thankfully we made it to the secondary defense line on the West Terrace that MPD and Capitol Police were managing to hold. The rest of my platoon got behind the line and we take stock of the situation. I realized that back during the previous assault someone had stolen my radio; from that point on I was in the dark as to our current status and when reinforcements would arrive. Terrorists were scaling the scaffolding on both our sides, the tower that was in front of us, and attempting to breach the waist-high metal fencing that was the only barrier we had, aside from ourselves.

The sea of people was punctuated throughout by flags. Lots of American flags and Trump flags. Gadsden flags. It was clear the terrorists perceived themselves to be Christians: I saw the Christian flag directly to my front. Another read "Jesus is my Savior, Trump is my President." Another, "Jesus is King." One flag read, "Don't give up the ship". Another had crossed rifles beneath a skull emblazoned with the pattern of the American flag. To my perpetual confusion, I saw the Thin Blue Line flag, a symbol of support for law enforcement, more than once being carried by the terrorists as they ignored our commands and continued to assault us.

The acrid sting of CS gas (tear gas) and OC spray (mace) hung in the air, as the terrorists threw our own CS gas canisters back at us and sprayed us with their own OC, either that they brought themselves or stole from us. Later I learned that at least one of them was spraying us in the face with wasp spray.

The terrorists alternated between attempting to break our defenses and shouting at or attempting to convert us. Men alleging to be veterans told us how they had fought for this country and were fighting for it again. One man tried to start a chant of "Four-more-years!" Another shouted "Do not attack us! We are not 'Black Lives Matter!'" as if political affiliation is how we determine when to use force. A man in a "QAnon" hoodie exclaims, "This is the time to choose what side of history to be on!" A man whose shirt reads "God Guns & Trump" stood behind him, silently holding a Trump flag.

A new man came to the front and fixated on me, continually berated me, telling me to take off my gear and give it to him: "Show solidarity with 'we the people' or we're going to run over you!" his voice cracked with the strain and volume of his threats. He continued, "Do you think your little pea-shooter guns are going to stop this crowd? No! We're going in that building!"

Eventually there is a surge in the crowd, the fence buckled and broke apart and we were unable to hold the line. A chaotic melee ensued. Terrorists pushed through the line and engaged us in hand-to-hand combat. Several attempted to knock me over and steal my baton. One latched onto my face and got his thumb in my right eye, attempting to gouge it out. I cried out in pain and managed to shake him off before any permanent damage was done. I couldn't engage anyone fully for the moment I do is when another 20 terrorists move in to attack while I am occupied. It's all we could do to keep ourselves on our feet and continue to fall back. I'm sprayed with a fire extinguisher and a red smoke grenade burned at our feet.

In the fight a terrorist is knocked to the ground and his jacket rides up, exposing a large hunting knife on his belt. I along with several other officers piled on him

while another removed the knife from his person. He regained himself, unharmed, and shouts indignantly, "What are you doing! What are you guys doing!"

The terrorists had claimed most of the western terrace, cornering myself and other officers on the southern edge. We took a side stair off the terrace, up to an upper landing, followed by more stairs up and inside.

Inside the Capitol building officers walked through the halls briefly until they found a place to sit, decontaminate their faces of OC and CS, and take a quick breather. I followed suit. Someone had managed to find a package of water bottles and was passing them out. I washed off my face as best as I could, rinsed out my mouth and drank the rest. I took the opportunity of relative safety to don my gas mask. Not long afterward I heard someone calling for officers to move to assist. I steeled myself for another round and descended a stairway into a long hallway filled with smoke and screams.

The Capitol building is labyrinthine, but judging from the sound of intense combat I could tell this hallway led outside to where the terrorists had forced our retreat. Officers were stacked deep, but every so often one would fall back from the front line, nursing an injury or struggling to breathe, and those who remained would take a step forward.

It was a battle of inches, with one side pushing the other a few and then the other side regaining their ground. At the time I (and I suspect many others in the hallway) did not know that the terrorists had gained entry to the building by breaking in doors and windows elsewhere, so we believed ours to be the last line of defense before the terrorists had true access to the building, and potentially our elected representatives.

Eventually it was my turn in the meat grinder that was the front line. The terrorists had a wall of shields that they had stolen from officers, as well as stolen batons and whatever other armaments they brought. Even during this intense contest of wills they continued to try to convert us to their cult. One man shouted "We just want to make our voices heard! And I think you feel the same! I really think you feel the same!", all while another man attempts to batter us with a stolen shield. Another man, like many others, didn't seem to appreciate that this wasn't a game. He fought his way across the lawn, up the steps, through the western terrace, and at the front line of this final threshold was asking us to "hold on" because he "has asthma".

The two sides were at a stalemate at a metal door frame that sat in the middle of the hallway. At the front line, I inserted myself so that the frame was at my back in an effort to give myself something to brace against and provide additional strength when pushing forward. Unfortunately soon after I secured this position the momentum shifted and we lost the ground that got me there. On my left was a man with a clear riot shield stolen during the assault. He slammed it against me and, with the weight of all the bodies pushing behind him, trapped me. My arms were pinned and effectively useless, trapped against the either the shield on my left or the door frame on my right. With my posture granting me no functional strength or freedom of movement, I was effectively defenseless and gradually sustaining injury from the increasing pressure of the mob.

Directly in front of me a man seized the opportunity of my vulnerability. He grabbed the front of my gas mask and used it to beat my head against the door. He switched to pulling it off my head, the straps stretching against my skull and straining my neck. He never uttered any words I recognized, but opted instead for guttural screams. I swear I remember him foaming at the mouth. He also put his cell phone in his mouth so that he had both hands free to assault me. Eventually he succeeded in stripping away my gas mask, and a new rush of exposure to CS gas and OC spray hit me. The mob of terrorists were coordinating their efforts now, shouting "Heave! Ho!" as they synchronized pushing their weight forward, crushing me further against the metal door frame. The man in front of me grabbed my baton that I still held in my hands and in my current state I was unable to retain my weapon. He bashed me in the head and face with it, rupturing my lip and adding additional injury to my skull.

At this point I knew that I couldn't sustain much more damage and remain upright. At best I would collapse and be a liability to my colleagues, at worst be dragged out into the crowd and lynched. Unable to move or otherwise signal the officers behind me that I needed to fall back, I did the only thing I could still do and screamed for help.

Thankfully my voice was heard over the cacophony of yells and the blaring alarm. The officer closest to me was able to extricate me from my position and another helped me fall back to the building again.

I found some water and decontaminated my face as best as I could. I don't know how long I waited in the halls but soon after got back on my feet and went to where the fight was again. Until reinforcements arrived every able body made a difference.

Without my gas mask I was afraid I'd be a liability in the hallway so I took the exit outside to the upper landing above the West Terrace. I found a police line being held and the terrorists encircling us, much like on the West Terrace. It was getting later in the day however, and it appeared we weren't the only ones getting tired. It seemed most of the mob was content to yell rather than to break our line again.

After some time of guarding the upper landing I saw reinforcements arrive from the south. I'm not sure which law enforcement agency it was but I turned to them and started clapping, as it was a sign that badly-needed help was starting to finally arrive.

Soon after that I started feeling the effects of the day taking their toll, and I went back inside to rest. Gradually all the members of CDU 42 gathered in the room known as the Capitol Crypt. We checked on each other and convalesced, glad to see each other in one piece. Despite our exhaustion, we all would have ran out to the fight again should the need have arisen. Thankfully as the day wore on, more and more resources arrived at the Capitol to drive off the terrorists. We stayed in the Crypt until quite late, and even after we were allowed to leave the grounds we didn't get to go home. Those who needed immediate medical attention took a van to the local hospital while the rest of us parked near the city center until the city was deemed secure enough for us to check off. I believe we finally got that message around 1 a.m. the following morning. We drove back to the Fourth district and from there went home.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF HARRY A. DUNN, PRIVATE FIRST CLASS, U.S. CAPITOL  
POLICE

JULY 27, 2021

Chairman Thompson and Members of the Select Committee, thank you for the opportunity today to give my account regarding the events of January 6, 2021, from my first-hand experience as a Capitol Police Officer directly involved in those events, and still hurting from what happened that day. I am providing this testimony solely in my personal capacity, and not as a representative of the U.S. Capitol Police.

I reported for duty at the Capitol, as usual, early on the morning of January 6. We understood that the vote to certify President Biden's election would be taking place that day, and that protests might occur outside the Capitol, but we expected any demonstrations to be peaceful expressions of First Amendment freedoms, just like the scores of demonstrations we had observed for many years. After roll call, I took my overwatch post on the East Front of the Capitol, standing on the steps that lead to the Senate chamber. As the morning progressed, I did not see or hear anything that gave me cause for alarm.

But around 10:56 am, I received a text message from a friend forwarding a screen shot of what appeared to be a potential plan of action very different from a peaceful demonstration. The screen shot bore the caption "Jan. 6th—Rally Point—Lincoln Park," and said the "objective" was "THE CAPITAL." It said, among other things, that "Trump has given us marching orders," and to "keep your guns hidden." It urged people to "bring . . . your trauma kits" and "gas mask," to "[l]ink up early in the day" in "6-12 man teams," and indicated there would be a "time to arm up." Seeing that message caused me concern, to be sure, and looking back now, it seemed to foreshadow what happened later. At the time, though, we had not received any threat warnings from our chain of command, and I had no independent reason to believe that violence was headed our way.

As the morning progressed, the crowd of protestors began to swell on the east side of the Capitol, many displaying "Trump" flags. The crowd was chanting slogans like "Stop the Steal!" and "We want Trump!" But the demonstration was still being conducted in a peaceful manner.

Early that afternoon, Capitol Police dispatch advised all units over the radio that we had an "active 10-100" at the Republican National Committee nearby. "10-100" is police code for a suspicious package, such as a potential bomb. That radio dispatch got my attention and I started to get more nervous and worried, especially because the crowds on the East Front of the Capitol were continuing to grow. Around the same time, I started receiving reports on the radio about large crowd movements around the Capitol, coming from the direction of the Ellipse to both the West and East Fronts of the Capitol. Then I heard urgent radio calls for additional

officers to respond to the west side, and an exclamation, in a desperate voice, that demonstrators on the west side had “breached the fence!”

Now it was obvious that there was an active threat to the Capitol. I quickly put on a steel chest plate (which weighs about 20 pounds) and, carrying my M-4 rifle, sprinted around the north side of the Capitol to the West Terrace and the railing of the Inaugural stage, where I had a broad view of what was going on. I was stunned by what I saw. In what seemed like a sea of people, Capitol Police Officers and Metropolitan DC Police (“MPD”) officers were engaged in desperate hand-to-hand fighting with rioters across the west lawn. Until then, I had never seen anyone physically assault a Capitol Police or MPD Officer—let alone witness mass assaults being perpetrated on law enforcement officers. I witnessed the rioters using all kinds of weapons against the officers, including flag poles, metal bike racks they had torn apart, and various kinds of projectiles. Officers were being bloodied in the fighting, many were screaming, and many were blinded and coughing from chemical irritants being sprayed in their faces. I gave decontamination aid to as many officers as I could, flushing their eyes with water to dilute the chemical irritants.

Soon thereafter, I heard an “Attention, all units!” radio dispatch that the Capitol had been breached, and that rioters were in various places inside the building. At that point, I rushed into the Capitol with another officer, going first to the basement on the Senate side where I had heard an MPD officer needed a defibrillator. After returning outside to the West Terrace to assist officers, I went back into the Capitol and up the stairs to the Crypt. There, I saw rioters who had invaded the Capitol carrying a Confederate flag, a red “MAGA” flag, and a “Don’t Tread on Me” flag.

I decided to stand my ground there to prevent any rioters from heading down the stairs to the Lower West Terrace entrance, because that was where officers were getting decontamination aid and were particularly vulnerable. At the top of the stairs, I confronted a group of the insurrectionists, warning them not to go down. One of them shouted “Keep moving, Patriots!” Another, displaying what looked like a law enforcement badge, told me “We’re doing this for you!” One of the invaders approached like he was about to try and get past me and head down the stairs, and I hit him, knocking him down.

After getting relieved by other officers in the Crypt, I took off running upstairs toward the Speaker’s Lobby, and helped a plain-clothes officer who was being harassed by insurrectionists. Some of them were dressed like members of a militia group, wearing tactical vests, cargo pants, and body armor. I was physically exhausted, and it was hard to breathe and see because of all the chemical spray in the air.

More and more insurrectionists were pouring into the area by the Speaker’s Lobby near the Rotunda, some wearing “MAGA” hats and shirts that said “Trump 2020.” I told them to leave the Capitol, and in response, they yelled back: “No, no, man, this is our house!” “President Trump invited us here!” “We’re here to stop the steal!” “Joe Biden is not the President!” “Nobody voted for Joe Biden!”

I am a law enforcement officer, and I keep politics out of my job. But in this circumstance, I responded: “Well, I voted for Joe Biden. Does my vote not count? Am I nobody?”

That prompted a torrent of racial epithets. One woman in a pink “MAGA” shirt yelled, “You hear that, guys, this nigger voted for Joe Biden!” Then the crowd, perhaps around 20 people, joined in, screaming “Boo! Fucking Nigger!”

No one had ever—ever—called me a “nigger” while wearing the uniform of a Capitol Police Officer. In the days following the attempted insurrection, other Black officers shared with me their own stories of racial abuse on January 6th. One officer told me he had never, in his entire 40 years of life, been called a “nigger” to his face, and that that streak ended on January 6th. Yet another Black officer later told he had been confronted by insurrectionists inside the Capitol, who told him to “Put your gun down and we’ll show you what kind of nigger you really are!”

To be candid, the rest of that afternoon is a blur. But I know I went throughout the Capitol to assist other officers who needed aid, and to help expel more insurrectionists. In the Crypt, I encountered Sergeant Gonell, who was giving assistance to an unconscious woman who had been in the crowd of rioters on the west side of the Capitol. I helped to carry her to the House Majority Leader’s office, where she was administered CPR. As the afternoon wore on, I was completely drained both physically and emotionally, and in shock and disbelief over what had happened. Once the building was cleared, I went to the Rotunda to recover with other officers and share our experiences from that afternoon. Rep. Rodney Davis was there offering support to officers, and when he and I saw each other he came over and gave me a big hug.

I sat down on a bench with a friend of mine who is also a Black Capitol Police Officer, and told him about the racial slurs I had endured. I became very emotional

and began yelling “How the [expletive] can something like this happen?! Is this America?” I began sobbing, and officers came over to console me.

Later on January 6th, after order and security had been restored in the Capitol through the hard work and sacrifices of law enforcement, Members took to the floor of the House to speak out about what had happened that day. Among them was House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, who—along with my fellow officers—I had protected that day, and will protect today and tomorrow. And the Minority Leader, to his great credit, said the following to the House: “The violence, destruction, and chaos we saw earlier was unacceptable, undemocratic, and un-American. It was the saddest day I’ve ever had serving in this institution.” Members of this Select Committee, the Minority Leader was absolutely right that day in how he described what took place at the Capitol. And for those of us in the Capitol Police who serve and revere this institution, and who love the Capitol building, it was the saddest day for us as well.

More than 6 months later, January 6th still isn’t over for me. I have had to avail myself of multiple counseling sessions from the Capitol Police Employee Assistance Program, and I am now receiving private counseling therapy for the persistent emotional trauma of that day. I have also participated in many peer support programs with fellow law enforcement officers from around the United States. I know so many other officers continue to hurt, both physically and emotionally.

I want to take this moment and speak to my fellow officers about the emotions they are continuing to experience from the events of January 6th. There is absolutely nothing wrong with seeking professional counseling. What we all went through that day was traumatic, and if you are hurting please take advantage of the counseling services that are available to us. I also respectfully ask this Select Committee to review the services available to us and consider whether they are sufficient to meet our needs, especially with respect to the amount of leave we are allowed.

In closing, we can never again allow our democracy to be put in peril as it was on January 6th. I thank the Members of this Select Committee for your commitment to determine what led to the disaster at the Capitol on January 6th, what actually took place at the Capitol that day, and what steps should be taken to prevent such an attack on our democracy from ever happening again.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

