



## The “Coups” in Washington.

Keith Finch

January 8, 2021

This is a word I am seeing a whole lot of this morning.

**Coup**; *a sudden, violent, and illegal seizure of power from a government. or a notable or successful stroke or move.*

The Trump protester and Q-Anon actors in D.C. yesterday accomplished neither, and they had no hope of doing so.

Even had the crowd done the unthinkable and somehow seized and held Congressional members, that would not have changed the certified results of the election. The protested results out of states like Arizona and Pennsylvania, to highlight election irregularities and possible cases of fraud, were all found wanting of evidence and sent up certified.

Was there fraud? Yes. Was it more than the usual multi-ballot attempts and other garbage? No. And it isn't like all those fraudulent votes got counted when they were found to be fraudulent. Do we believe for a single moment that if a credible case could have been built against Joe Biden's win in such a close election that it would not have? This wouldn't have over turned a landslide victory, Biden won by the width his well used nose hairs of a margin. A minor shift in political parlance could have seen all the objections and anger flowing the opposite way.

President Trump lost this election all on his own. He played the cult of personality card and it didn't carry far enough. For each of his arguably positive political achievements there existed arguably and objectively negative counter points and while it almost carried... it didn't.

Had the media been unfair to him? Yes, but that isn't new. Nor was it an insurmountable challenge in 2016. But in 2020 it was a different challenge and the base beneath had shifted. This loss starts and ends with the President.

So what did happen in Washington D.C. if it was not a *Coup D'état*?

**Tantrum**; an uncontrolled outburst of anger and frustration, typically in a young child.

“Typically,” but not always.

The protest in D.C. wanted to, in their words, “Stop the Steal.” This had only the barest of validity in facts but you can protest just about anything you want to validly. I was once swept into a circumcision protest. Yes, that’s a thing apparently. Nope, I don’t understand. But I was told very emphatically that I, “deserve my whole penis.”

However the riot in D.C. wanted what every riot wants... to break shit.

A coup, or similar held to account event, would have seized the chambers and then held them until they found and returned the Congress. A coup would have direction. A coup would have a goal for legitimizing, in some manner, their actions. They might hold Congress until their demand of a new special presidential election, or a supervised recount of the disputed states, or every member of the House and Senate personally gave the President a hearty hug and handshake.

Something.

Instead we have broken windows, broken doors, trashed offices and hallways, one woman shot dead at the hands of Capitol Police, one Capitol Police officer dead of what is believed to be complications from an injury (I suspect head injury), and three dead of various stress induced medical incidents. No political ultimatum, even a goofy one.

*When people are no longer willing to lose at the polls, it's time to make elections less important.*

That subheading and the linked article at Reason bring up a very important question. One that we gun owners have been trying to solidify an answer toward on many fronts.

Elections *shouldn't* threaten us very much. The 546 elected and appointed Federal managers we have in D.C. shouldn't actively terrify us, no matter their political leaning. Whether it was Trump or Obama, AOC or Ted Cruz, who the elected officials *are* should only vary between a mild comfort and a slight annoyance as the various topics advance or stagnate around an immutable foundation of constitutional bedrock.

*“How do you maintain a political system when much of the population ceases to believe in its underlying principles? The problem is not just President Donald Trump—whose petulant refusal to accept his loss at the polls set the grounds for the violence that disrupted Congress’s count of Electoral College votes—but also his cultists who are more interested in maintaining one thuggish politician in power than they are in how power is acquired and used. Beyond them are*

*all too many Americans who have come to believe they can't afford to lose elections.” – Reason, J.C. Tuccille*

This is a banner year of distrust.

*“The election results didn't exactly sweep in an era of good feelings. Twenty-four (24%) percent of likely U.S. voters “think Biden voters are America's biggest enemy as 2020 draws to a close,” Rasmussen Reports noted early in December. “Nearly as many (22%) regard Trump voters as the biggest enemy.”*

A combined 46% of the nation are focused on the nation as the greatest enemy of the nation. Many for no better reasoning than a few buzzwords that end in ist, phobe, or some similar nonsense. A deeper look at policy support would probably put them very much in the same ballpark in a reasoned discussion. There will always remain a percentage of diametrically opposed voters and citizens in this nation, but it shouldn't be this *big*. Vast mismanagement has made it this big. Cheap political steals and jabs have made it this big. Thinking of the political capital pocket book instead of good policy first have made it this big.

*It's tempting to suggest that the Trumpist rioters in D.C. did a credible job of fulfilling their detractors' fears. But that overlooks the evidence from sources like the Democracy Fund Voter Study Group that neither dominant political tribe was prepared to accept a loss. Even the Biden-aligned Transition Integrity Project—which anticipated Trump's bogus claims of electoral fraud and unwillingness to concede—also warned of political chaos if Biden's supporters were disappointed. In the end it was the current president's fans who rioted, but an uneventful tally of ballots didn't appear to be in the cards.*

Here is the crux of it folks. We were *very likely* to get a riot this year, and we got it. It didn't matter who won because the other side is not in a position to trust the result. The biggest casualty of 2020 was trust, and that death has been building for years, perhaps decades.

*Elected officials, like Trump, who defy constitutional constraints and sheer reason can be removed from office at the polls, by impeachment, or by processes such as those outlined in the 25th Amendment. **But what do you do when many voters themselves think the only legitimate elections are those that they win?** [emphasis added]*

This isn't Trump's fault, he is the symptom, not the cause. This is the fault of the consistent provable deceit, bad faith politics, and cheap shot campaigning that we've seen come to prominence since as early as George W. Bush. Increasingly we saw both parties take every opportunity they saw to choose the low ground road to political points, because the low ground excited their extreme and vociferous bases and didn't seem to alienate their larger more moderate middle enough to matter. The bases then hit the rising way to shout at their fellow man, Social Media.

The middle, the moderate, should arguably have allowed themselves *to be* alienated. But they are reasonable people and give the benefit of the doubt more often than not.

Which leads us back to the point gun owners have been trying to build and that Reason is making in the article.

*One important step would be to make elections less consequential so that Americans aren't so fearful of the instruments of government in the hands of their enemies.*

*"It is more and more dangerous to lose an election," economist John Cochrane, a senior fellow of the Hoover Institution and an adjunct scholar of the Cato Institute, wrote in September. "Regulation has supplanted legislation, and dear colleague letters, interpretations, and executive orders have supplanted regulation... The vanishing ability to lose an election and not be crushed is the core reason for increased partisan vitriol and astounding violation of basic norms on both sides of our political divide."*

A Democrat held election cycle should not spell doom for Republican institutions and causes, and vice versa. A Democrat held election cycle should have us grumbling about moderately higher tax rates for awhile and maybe a minimum wage hike the way a Republican held election cycle should make social welfare supporters grumble about less funding for those programs and causes.

Instead we live in an era of genuine fear that when the "enemy" (not *opponent*) takes office again there is a very real possibility the only solution believed to be left to the loser is violent resistance. The fear that the enemy party is going to *come for* and *crush you* is very real and has been validated by politicians coming after various groups, like gun owners.

*In its reach into all areas of life, government in modern America increasingly resembles what the Israeli historian J. L. Talmon called "totalitarian democracy." This approach "treats all human thought and action as having social significance, and therefore as falling within the orbit of political action." Since there's no room for going your own way, contests for political power necessarily become existential fights that nobody can afford to lose.*

This political theory is the opposite of leaving people to their own devices for the most part and leaning on a constitutional societal core. Instead of very few things truly needing a vote, *everything* needs a vote to become the rule for *all*, even if that rule is actively hostile and detrimental to your livelihood, faith, and/or well-being.

We are at a time where we are clashing on many issues, some work together and many work at odds to each other. There is a gaping divide in governmental schools of thought to compound the general distrust of government.

It is a thoroughly poisoned well and will take an enormous amount of work to filter clean. The only alternative to that is to violently blast a new well, and the loudest voices calling for that option have no idea how to dig and set that well and how many people will be harmed in the process.

They have no clue.