

9 Lessons We Learned from the Capitol Riot

As we take a step back from the events that happened on Capitol Hill on the 6th of January, it only seems appropriate to take a step back and look at the situation.

But unlike what many others are doing, I want to look at it from the viewpoint of what we can learn from it, specifically what we can learn as preppers, and even more particularly, how we can keep ourselves from suffering harm through such a situation.

Granted, it's unlikely that any of us are going to be faced with the same situation, as that was a once in a lifetime sort of event. Nevertheless, there are important lessons that I feel we can learn from it. Lessons, I might add, which we would not find from an earthquake or hurricane.



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Considering the amount of civil unrest and violence that has happened in the last year, it's safe to say that we're going to see more of it in the future. Most of that civil unrest happened in Democrat-controlled cities, so the fact that the Democrat Party has control of both houses of Congress and the presidency isn't going to change that. If anything, it would indicate that they will increase, as the people doing the riots are leftists and Democrat politicians have a history of excusing their behavior or blaming it on conservatives.

Some of this is purely political, as the great political

divide in our country continues to widen. Even so, we need to survive and even thrive under these circumstances. While there are those who are already strategizing about how to change the results of the next election, we must remember that the other side is doing that as well. There's no guarantee about who will be in power in the future. The only guarantee we can find is that winning will become increasingly harder, as more potential for fraud is allowed into the system.

Politicians aren't Everything

So much of the news is about politics when in reality, politics plays a much smaller part in our lives than a host of other, more important things. While the political party in power and their actions do affect us, their impact is much less than that of a natural disaster.

Focusing on politics turns us into political creatures, just as much as it does those who have offices in the Capitol. Yet we aren't... not really. We're survivalists. Surviving an adverse political climate is really no different than any of the other things we have to face.

One sad thing I've encountered is how ready many preppers are to allow politics to affect their prepping. When Obama was in office, many conservatives were caught up in prepping, motivated by their fear. Then, when Trump took office, many of those same preppers became lazy, ultimately being caught off-guard by the COVID pandemic. At the same time, Democrats, who had never been interested in prepping, suddenly became interested, afraid that Trump would trigger a TEOTWAWKI event. Now that Biden is in office, the tables seem to be flipping again.

Of all the disasters we prepare for, few are affected by politics. So if that's what we focus on, we're missing the much larger issues that should be important to us, reducing our level of readiness.

Trouble Can Happen Anytime



This is nothing new; but worth repeating nonetheless; trouble can happen at any time. None of us were expecting the break-in of the capitol building on the 6th, but it happened anyway. From what I've seen, I'd have to say that the people there weren't even expecting it, other than a few extremists who might have been there just for that purpose. But our not expecting it didn't do a thing to keep it from happening.

Our attitude needs to be one of expecting a crisis, rather than not expecting it. That expectation leads us to be looking for it so that we can see the early signs of it coming. I don't know if that would have helped stop the break-in; but if I had been one of the first people to get to the capitol building from the Trump rally, I would have been suspicious to see others already there. I hope that would have been enough to cause me to find someplace else to be.

Bad Emotions Multiply & Cause Problems

I can't prove it, but much of the anger we are seeing in society today has been caused by people being locked up, isolated from their friends, and their normal activities for months. Not only is this causing an increased suicide rate,

especially amongst teens, but it's also causing people to lash out in anger much easier. That played a part in last year's riots and it played a part on Capitol Hill.

We need to take extra precautions any time there's a possibility that people's emotions are running on high. While that may not always be easy to see, one sure way of recognizing them is to look objectively at our own families. If we're struggling in dealing with a situation, we can be sure that others are too.

Don't Lose Track of Your Priorities

It seems that all too many preppers are forgetting who we are and what we do. While I'm a firm believer in exercising our rights and voting, that is not my life. I'm a prepper and survivalist before that. So my decisions about what I'm going to do are based on that priority, not on being somewhere to hear some politician speak.

If politics are a higher priority to you than your family's survival, that's fine. You have to decide your priorities for yourself. Then take action on those priorities; but if they aren't politics, then don't allow politics to override your survival priorities.

Don't get me wrong here. I'm not saying that we should ignore politics altogether. As I said, I'm a firm believer in exercising our right to vote. All I'm saying is that for any of us to put ourselves in a potentially dangerous situation, for a lower priority in our life, is to ignore or temporarily change those priorities. Is that something that any of us want to do?

Don't be Where Trouble Can Happen



The most basic rule of dealing with mob violence is to avoid the mob. In order to do that, we need to avoid any situations where a mob might gather. That means avoiding crowds in general, especially crowds that gather for anything that can be considered to be political or activist in any way, shape, or form. As we've seen a number of times in the last year, any peaceful protest can turn violent.

Of course, there's always the risk of some radical group hijacking or at least trying to hijack an event. There's at least some appearance of that happening at the capitol, between the QAnon Shammon and that one BLM agitator being arrested. The same has happened at a number of the BLM protests, where ANTIFA operatives came in and turned what started out to be a peaceful demonstration into something else entirely.

We must remember that there are forces at work within this nation, which are putting a lot of effort into causing division. Those forces will use any opportunity they can, turning it violent. If they can turn that violence against anyone particular group, so much the better. But they'll accept violence in general, if they can't get anything else, as that will further the mistrust and division between us.

“Everyone Else is Doing it” is Never a Good Reason

One of the key components of mob mentality is that people stop thinking for themselves and just follow the mob. If everyone else is doing it, then they just go along, doing it as well. That's extremely dangerous, both from a criminal point of view and our own personal safety.

I have a hard time believing that the female air force veteran who was shot by the police had no part in instigating the riot or in committing any other crime than entering the building. We'll probably never know. But it appears that she saw a broken window and just went through it, following the crowd. Sadly, that ended up being enough to forfeit her life.

How many other such situations could there be. It's clear that the new administration is nervous about “right-wing extremism.” We can see that by them calling for 25 thousand National Guardsman to be on duty in Washington DC on inauguration day. While I can understand needing some extra troops for crowd control and security, doesn't 25,000 seem a bit excessive? What exactly were they expecting; 100,000 Trump supporters to show up with guns blazing?

There's a Very Real “Double Standard” in Place

The public reaction to the capitol rioters, compared to the BLM rioters makes it clear that there's a clear double standard going on, just in case that wasn't obvious before. While those of us on the political left are calling for the prosecution of both those who were involved in the capitol break-in and the BLM riots to be prosecuted, those on the right are only calling for the prosecution of those involved in storming the capitol. Even newly elected Vice-president

Harris was involved in providing bail money to the BLM rioters.

To say the two events weren't the same is preposterous, although there are those who are. Actually, the big difference was that the BLM protests caused a whole lot more damage and included a whole lot more looting. What happened at the capitol wasn't any more of a "threat to the democracy" than the other riots were.

The same can be said of political rhetoric. Former President Trump's statement, encouraging people to "peacefully and patriotically" walk down to the capitol building is being taken as seditious and instigating violence. But at the same time, calls from politicians on the left to actually kill people are being ignored by both the news media and Congress. Obviously, it all depends on who the words are being interpreted to be against.

We need to walk softly though, due to that double standard. Regardless of how unfair and unrighteous it is, it's real. The chances of us being detained, charged, and prosecuted seem to be much higher than it is for the radicals on the left. So, while we should not keep quiet about our beliefs, we do need to be careful about how we express them, making sure that we do so in a way that can't be construed to be illegal.

Always Have an Escape Plan



Probably the biggest mistake that anyone who was there at the capitol and at Trump's rally made was not having a pre-planned escape plan. When those first people from the rally arrived at the Capitol Building and found that there were already people inside the building, they should have put their escape plan into effect and gotten away before things got out of hand. Yet some actually entered the building, being curious about what happened.

I don't know if these innocent people were amongst those who were arrested, but they could have been. I know that if I was a peace officer working in that place, I would have arrested everyone who was inside the building, regardless of what they were doing. Sorting the good ones from the bad could come later, and would probably be accomplished by the DA's office.

Regardless of the situation, we need to have a plan to get ourselves out of there, should things turn bad. I teach on the use of firearms, and I tell people all the time that they shouldn't go into any place, without figuring out how you will get out if things turn bad. Call it a mini bug out plan if you want, but always know how you're going to bug out when and if the crisis comes.

Don't Believe the News Media

This one isn't new to anyone who has watched what's been happening in the media over the last decade; but don't trust

what the media says. It is clear that we're living in a time when "news" has been replaced by commentary. The only difference between the left-leaning news and the right-leaning news on this, besides their political slant and how that causes them to "spin" things, is that those on the right are at least honest enough to call it political commentary, while those on the left still try to call that commentary news.

Either way, what we're getting isn't the facts of the situation. Trying to put a political spin on everything prevents the news media from even reporting things accurately. Calling the break-in at the Capitol Building a "riot," "insurrection" or "coup" is not only technically inaccurate, but it's misleading. It was a protest that got out of hand, nothing more. If those people were actually Trump supporters, there was no way it could have been an insurrection or coup, because Trump was still in charge. It would have had to happen after Biden was sworn into office, for it to qualify as an uprising against lawful authority.

We all need to find news sources that will provide us with accurate facts, not just political commentary. Our decisions need to be made on those facts, not on what someone tells us they think about the facts. While there are a number of right-leaning commentators I like to listen to, I don't make my decisions on what they say. Rather, I seek out the facts for myself, checking what they say. I'm responsible for my actions; they aren't going to go to jail for me.



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