



# One Year Later:

## Assessing the Public Safety Implications of President Trump's Mass Pardons of 1,600 January 6th Rioters and Insurrectionists



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## INTRODUCTION

On his first day back in office, President Donald Trump [pardoned nearly 1,600](#) rioters and insurrectionists for crimes connected to the storming of the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021. Hundreds of the convicted offenders had [violently assaulted](#) police officers [with](#) baseball bats, steel pipes, flagpoles, broken furniture, bear spray, unknown chemicals, and other weapons of convenience; others had smashed windows and destroyed federal property; and still others had conspired to block the peaceful transfer of power by attacking Vice President Mike Pence or destroying Electoral College ballots in order to nullify Joe Biden’s election and make Donald Trump president again.

[At least 33 pardoned January 6th insurrectionists have now been convicted of, charged with, or arrested for additional crimes since the violent attack on the Capitol.](#) The crimes committed by rioters before and after the insurrection [include](#): child sexual assault, production of child pornography, possession of child pornography, rape, conspiracy to commit murder of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents, kidnapping, sexual assault, aggravated robbery, reckless homicide, driving under the influence causing death, illegal possession of firearms, domestic violence by strangulation, burglary, vandalism, grand theft, stalking, violation of protective orders, threatening public officials, and drug trafficking.

After the mass pardon of the mob he set in motion, President Trump proceeded to [systematically punish thousands](#) of federal law enforcement officers, both FBI agents and Assistant United States Attorneys, who investigated and prosecuted the January 6th offenders he just pardoned. These experienced agents and career government prosecutors, decorated and promoted in countless ways over the course of their careers, were sacked or demoted for no reason other than the fact that they conducted the investigations and prosecutions they were assigned, holding to account offenders involved in the largest criminal case in American history.

The violence of January 6, 2021, would never have happened without then-President Trump’s instigation and involvement. And President Trump’s shocking pardon-the-perpetrators-and-purge-the-prosecutors offensive has made clear that the Executive Branch, reorganized as a “unitary” mechanism under President Trump’s direct and personal control, now stands firmly on the side of autocratic political violence. This authoritarian movement has undermined the public safety of the American people, capsized the traditional independence of the Department of Justice (DOJ), deprived federal law enforcement of thousands of years of collective investigative and prosecutorial experience, and moved our government into the moral and operational realm of the world’s gangster states.

## THE JANUARY 6TH PARDONS UNDERMINE PUBLIC SAFETY

The January 6th mass pardon may serve President Trump’s most extreme political purposes by creating a private militia of proven street fighters “standing back and standing by” for future street battles, but it is a nightmare for American public safety.

By overriding the U.S. Pardon Attorney and the Justice Department’s time-honored process for analyzing individual clemency applications, President Trump threw caution to the wind, summarily commuting [over a thousand](#) years of prison sentences for serious violent crimes, canceling fines and restitution ordered against insurrectionists, removing countless civil and legal disabilities from the convicted offenders and releasing *en masse* back into the general population hundreds of incarcerated dangerous, violent criminals who never demonstrated any remorse, much less rehabilitation, for the crimes they committed on January 6th.

The January 6th rioters that President Trump pardoned had been convicted—either as the result of a trial or a guilty plea—of criminal felonies that included: seditious conspiracy, assaulting federal officers (including with deadly weapons), civil disorder, criminal conspiracy, destruction of government property (felony-level), theft of government property (felony-level), weapons possession in federal facilities, robbery of federal property, and tampering with documents (not to mention another half-dozen misdemeanors).

One of those rioters was Daniel Rodriguez, who [plunged](#) a stun gun again and again into the neck of Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Officer Michael Fanone, as the crowd [chanted](#) “Kill him!” and “Get his gun!,” causing Officer Fanone to suffer a heart attack and sustain other injuries. Officer Fanone later testified to Congress: “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.” Mr. Rodriguez was subsequently sentenced to more than 12 years in prison after a federal judge [called](#) him a “one-man army of hate.” He was pardoned by President Trump on his first day in office.

Another was Patrick McCaughey III, who [used](#) a stolen police riot shield to crush MPD Officer Daniel Hodges in a metal doorframe at the entrance to the Capitol’s Lower West Terrace tunnel. He left Officer Hodges trapped, bleeding, and crying for help from his fellow officers. Officer Hodges [testified](#): “If I was there much longer being assaulted in such a way, I knew that it was very likely I wouldn’t be able to maintain my consciousness.” Judge Trevor McFadden, a Trump appointee, described Mr. McCaughey as the “poster child of all that was dangerous and appalling about” January 6th, stating that his actions were “some of the most egregious crimes that were committed that day.” Mr. McCaughey was sentenced to more than seven years in prison. He was pardoned by President Trump on his first day in office.

David Dempsey, who [used](#) pepper spray on officers, kicked their shields, took a long pole from the crowd and swung it at officers, threw a short pole-like object striking a police officer, stomped on officers’ heads, and yelled expletives at officers [“F--- you b---ass cops”]. Prosecutors [described](#) him as “political violence personified” and noted that he had a significant criminal history, including assaulting anti-Trump protesters with bear spray in 2019 and assaulting counter

protesters at political events in 2019 and 2020. Mr. Dempsey was sentenced to 20 years in prison. He too was pardoned by President Trump on his first day in office.

**A . Trump Pardoned Rioters Who Already Had Criminal Records When They Attacked the Capitol or Who Were Awaiting Trial for Crimes They Had Committed Before They Attacked the Capitol**

The normal pardon review process, which President Trump discarded, requires examination of the entire criminal career of the pardon petitioner. But President Trump indiscriminately pardoned convicted defendants who already had extensive criminal records for serious offenses [including](#) child sexual assault, rape, domestic violence, conspiracy to murder federal agents, reckless homicide, illegal possession of weapons, burglary, and possession of child pornography.

Of the nearly 1,600 pardoned January 6th rioters, [at least 159](#) already had criminal records. Some of the rioters President Trump pardoned had already proven themselves to be dangerous threats to the social order by compiling extensive criminal rap sheets prior to January 6th. Examples include Peter Schwartz, who had what federal prosecutors [described](#) as a “jaw-dropping” criminal history consisting of 38 prior convictions dating back to 1991. This three-decade pattern of criminal conduct [included](#) assault with a deadly weapon, battery, making terroristic threats, domestic violence, and multiple assaults on police officers. Daniel Ball, another January 6th insurrectionist, [had](#) prior convictions for domestic violence battery by strangulation, resisting law enforcement with violence, and battery on law enforcement. A magistrate judge [called](#) his conduct on January 6th, which involved hurling an explosive device into the packed Lower West Terrace tunnel of the Capitol, “some of the most violent and serious offenses of any of the charges being brought against participants in the January 6 events.” And Kasey Hopkins, another rioter, had what prosecutors [called](#) “a lengthy and troubling criminal history” [including](#) a 2002 conviction for forcible rape, for which he received a seven-year prison sentence, as well as a conviction for assault on a law enforcement officer. These are the people President Trump deemed worthy of federal pardons for assaulting the Capitol on January 6th.

President Trump also pardoned at least **four** participants in the January 6th attack who were also being prosecuted after the attack for other serious crimes they had committed before the attack. The Trump Administration knew about these crimes—including several cases involving the sexual assault of a child or possession of child pornography—but the President still chose to pardon these violent criminals anyway.

- 1. David Daniel:** Between 2015 and 2019, Mr. Daniel is [alleged to have taken naked photographs of a minor victim](#), forcing her to shower with him and sexually assaulting her on multiple occasions. Over the course of the investigation, a second minor suggested that she was also involved in a sexual relationship with Mr. Daniel.

On January 6, 2021, Mr. Daniel was part of the [mob attempting to break through a barricaded Senate door](#). He stayed inside the Capitol for about an hour before exiting the building through a broken window.

In September 2024, federal agents [arrested](#) Mr. Daniel at his home in Mint Hill, North Carolina. A search of his house found several electronic devices with sexually explicit images of his alleged victim. Mr. Daniel was indicted for production and possession of child sexual abuse materials (child pornography) in October 2024 and remains in custody.

In January 2025, Mr. Daniel pleaded guilty to illegally entering the Capitol Building.

Unmoved by the new charges relating to sexual abuse of a minor, President Trump pardoned Mr. Daniel for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

- 2. Andrew Kyle Grigsby:** In July 2020, Mr. Grigsby was charged with [12 counts of possessing child sexual abuse materials and pornography](#) at his home in London, Kentucky.

On January 6, 2021, Mr. Grigsby traveled to the Capitol where he attempted to break through the police line by aggressively [spraying officers with bear spray](#). One officer described being unable to breathe or see without unbearable, tortuous pain after Mr. Grigsby attacked him.

In 2024, Mr. Grigsby pled guilty to possession of child sex abuse material and was sentenced to three years in prison.

In January 2025, federal prosecutors indicted Mr. Grigsby for assaulting law enforcement officers at the Capitol.

But President Trump pardoned Mr. Grigsby for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

- 3. Theodore Middendorf:** In 2018, Mr. Middendorf [sexually assaulted a 7-year-old child](#).

In 2020, Mr. Middendorf and a friend [made plans](#) to travel to Washington, DC, as MAGA responded to President Trump's nationwide invitation to "Be there. Will be wild!" Mr. Middendorf and his friend had an associate make t-shirts with "F--- ANTIFA" emblazoned on the front.

On January 6, 2021, Mr. Middendorf and his friend entered the Capitol by climbing through a broken window. They moved through the building harassing police officers. At one point, cordoned off by police, they [used flag poles to smash the glass in windows](#) on the Senate side of the Capitol.

In May 2024, Mr. Middendorf pleaded guilty to "predatory criminal sexual assault of a child" and was sentenced to 19 years in prison. He is also subject to lifetime registration as a sex offender in Illinois.

In January 2025, Mr. Middendorf pleaded guilty to one felony count of destruction of property at the Capitol and was sentenced to an additional 11 months in prison.

Despite the disturbing child sexual assault conviction, President Trump pardoned the convicted child sex offender, Mr. Middendorf, for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

4. **Andrew Quentin Taake:** In 2016, Mr. Taake sent [sexually explicit messages to an undercover law enforcement officer posing as a 15-year-old girl](#). He was arrested in Harris County, Texas, within days.

While on pre-trial release on charges of online sexual solicitation of a minor, Mr. Taake traveled from Texas to Washington, DC, [armed with bear spray and a metal whip](#). On January 6, 2021, Mr. Taake confronted police outside the Capitol Building. At least four times, he surged towards the police line and sprayed officers with bear spray, engulfing them in a cloud of putrid orange chemicals. As the mob surged forward, Mr. Taake assaulted police with his metal whip. Once inside the building, he worked his way to the Capitol Crypt, whip in hand.

Later that day, Mr. Taake described his conduct at the Capitol to an individual on a dating app, leading to his identification and arrest in Houston, Texas, in July 2021.

In June 2024, Mr. Taake was sentenced to more than six years in prison for assaulting law enforcement officers and other related January 6th charges.

Disregarding the outstanding child sex solicitation charges, President Trump pardoned Mr. Taake for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

After Mr. Taake was released from federal prison, the Harris County District Attorney's Office issued a warrant for his arrest. Mr. Taake [spent more than two weeks as a fugitive](#) before he was finally tracked down and re-arrested. Mr. Taake ultimately pled guilty to online solicitation of a minor. He is subject to registration as a sex offender in Texas for the next ten years.

**B. Twenty-three January 6th Rioters and Insurrectionists Committed New Crimes Even After Attacking the Capitol on January 6, 2021, but President Trump Pardoned Them Anyway**

At least **23** violent insurrectionists committed serious new offenses between the breathtaking violence of January 6, 2021, and President Trump's second inauguration on January 20, 2025. These additional crimes included: plotting the murder of FBI agents in retaliation for the January 6th investigation; resisting arrest; violent assault; strangulation; burglary; stalking; stabbing; felony DWI; possession of child sexual abuse material; and reckless DUI homicide. President Trump gave all 23 of these dangerous recidivist criminals federal pardons for their January 6th-related violent offenses, apparently without any concern for public safety or the victims of either their January 6th actions or their new criminal offenses.

1. **John D. Andries:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Andries breached the Capitol Building through a broken window. Once inside, he [pushed past](#) Capitol Police officers and forced his way deeper into the building. He recorded himself threatening the police and urging the mob forward, making statements like “think they’re scared yet” and “the police have gotten the message, we ain’t back’n down.”

As police cleared the Capitol, Mr. Andries refused to leave. He shoved police officers trying to disperse the crowd. He then sat on a ledge and refused to move. [Police officers had to physically drag him away.](#)

In March 2022, while awaiting trial for his conduct on January 6th, Mr. Andries was charged with [assaulting multiple people at a bar](#) in St. Mary’s County, Maryland. Heavily intoxicated, Mr. Andries began to pull a woman’s hair and frighten other patrons. When he refused to leave the bar, police were called. Mr. Andries then attacked the arresting officers, repeatedly kicking the sergeant attempting to put him in a patrol car. He would later plead guilty to resisting arrest and receive a suspended sentence pending successful completion of probation.

In January 2023, Mr. Andries pleaded guilty to one felony count for breaching the U.S. Capitol Building. A federal court sentenced Mr. Andries to [12 months and one day in prison](#) and three years of supervised release. He was also ordered to pay \$2,000 in restitution.

President Trump pardoned Mr. Andries for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

In May 2025, after an arrest for repeated confrontations with his former girlfriend, Mr. Andries was found guilty of [two counts of violating a protective order](#) that had been imposed on him for her protection. He was later sentenced to 60 days in jail and three years of probation.

2. **Joshua Lee Atwood:** Mr. Atwood stands out as [one of the most violent rioters at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021](#), where he joined the mob gathered at the tunnel entrance to the Capitol. Throughout the day, Mr. Atwood threw several objects at the police officers defending the entrance—including a metal pole and a plastic bottle. He picked up a wooden pole and used it to beat back riot shields before striking an officer’s helmet and throwing the pole at the police line. Next, he unloaded a full canister of pepper spray on the police. He threw a baseball bat at the police line. He grabbed a riot shield and beat police with it. He picked up a piece of metal scaffolding and threw it at the police. The metal bounced off a riot shield and struck an officer in the head and neck. He picked up a loudspeaker and threw it towards the police. As he assaulted the officers on the police line, he called them “pieces of s---” and said they were “betraying [their] country.”

In April 2023, while awaiting trial, Mr. Atwood went on *another* rampage, this time at [the Crazy Donkey restaurant](#) in Chester, West Virginia. During a heated argument with the

restaurant's owner, Mr. Atwood stole money from the cash register, stabbed the owner, then attempted to flee. He hid from the police for several weeks before he was arrested outside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

In December 2024, Mr. Atwood pleaded guilty to [armed assault of a law enforcement officer](#) on January 6th. He was sentenced to four years in prison and three years of supervised release.

Undaunted by this rampage, President Trump pardoned Mr. Atwood for his relentless attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

In May 2025, Mr. Atwood returned to West Virginia to begin serving his six-month sentence for [stabbing the owner of the Crazy Donkey](#) establishment.

- 3. Bryan Betancur:** A [self-proclaimed white supremacist](#) and an “aspiring Proud Boy” who aspired to become a “lone-wolf killer,” Mr. Betancur was [already on probation](#) for a 2019 burglary conviction and was wearing a court-ordered GPS monitor when he arrived at the Capitol on January 6, 2021. He had convinced his probation officer that he was traveling to Washington, DC, to distribute Gideon Bibles to the poor.

On January 6th, Mr. Betancur climbed the scaffolding outside the Capitol, entered the building, and helped to remove furniture from a conference room—furniture that was later smashed into pieces and used as weapons and projectiles to attack the police. Pictures from the riot show him wearing a Proud Boys t-shirt and posing with a Confederate battle flag. He was arrested, his [probation was revoked](#), and he was ordered to serve a previously suspended 18-month sentence in jail.

In June 2022, a [rider on the D.C. Metro](#) complained that Mr. Betancur had harassed other passengers on the train, shouting racial slurs about Black people. Although he had a knife when he left the station, police stopped Mr. Betancur but did not arrest him.

In August 2022, Mr. Betancur was sentenced to four months in prison and one year of supervised release for storming the Capitol. Prosecutors told the court that Mr. Betancur “[voiced homicidal ideations, made comments about conducting a school shooting, and has researched mass shootings.](#)” They also said that he had voiced support for neo-Nazi James Fields, the man convicted of hitting and killing Heather Heyer with his car during the infamous 2017 “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia.

In September 2024, Mr. Betancur was ordered back to jail for repeatedly [violating a protective order and stalking an activist](#) in Washington, DC.

Despite Mr. Betancur's patent dangerousness and lengthy rap sheet, President Trump pardoned him for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

- 4. Dominic Box:** Mr. Box [livestreamed the insurrection on Facebook](#). In the video he shared online, he is seen teaching rioters how to overcome the tear gas that law enforcement

deployed to disperse the crowd. He entered the Capitol several times. In one video, he can be heard shouting, “we need more people!”

In August 2023, Mr. Box was expected back in federal court for a hearing on whether to revoke his bond. Mr. Box had refused a court-ordered breathalyzer test.

[Mr. Box did not appear](#) in federal court that day because he was already in jail in Jacksonville, Florida, where he had been [driving the wrong way down a one-way street](#) before backing into a metal pole. A sheriff’s deputy found him passed out in his car. The car was still running and in reverse when the deputy arrived. From the back of the deputy’s squad car, Mr. Box shouted “various racial slurs.” He was charged with DUI, careless driving, driving with a suspended license, and possession of an open container in a motor vehicle.

In October 2024, Mr. Box was found guilty of two felony counts of civil disorder and four other misdemeanors related to his behavior on January 6, 2021.

Ignoring Mr. Box’s string of criminal actions, President Trump pardoned him for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

- 5. Kyle Travis Colton:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Colton stood side-by-side with other rioters attempting to breach the Capitol. At one point, Mr. Colton [grabbed a flagpole that a rioter had been using to attack a police officer](#)—pulling the pole out of the hands of the officer and handing it back to the assailant.

In December 2023, Mr. Colton was arrested at his home in Citrus Heights, California, and charged with participating in the attack on the Capitol.

Separately, in February 2024, Mr. Colton was [indicted by a federal grand jury for receiving pornographic](#) “child sex abuse material.”

In January 2025, Mr. Colton pled guilty to the charges related to the breach of the Capitol. He asked for leniency in his sentencing, arguing that the child sex abuse material charges made “[a pardon much less likely.](#)”

Nonetheless, President Trump disregarded Mr. Colton’s possession of child sex abuse materials and pardoned him for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

Notably, in June, [Mr. Colton filed a motion to dismiss the child pornography charge](#) on the grounds that his Trump presidential pardon applies to that case as well.

- 6. Timothy Desjardins:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Desjardins [repeatedly struck police officers with a broken table leg](#) in a tunnel into the Capitol Building. His backpack was later found to carry several hatchets.

In September 2021, Mr. Desjardins [shot and wounded a man in the parking lot of a Walgreens](#) in Providence, Rhode Island.

In November 2021, while Mr. Desjardins was awaiting trial for that shooting, Providence Police spotted him walking through a residential neighborhood with a gun in his hand. Mr. Desjardins then barricaded himself inside a barbershop and initiated [an armed standoff with the police](#), who evacuated seven city blocks before convincing Mr. Desjardins to surrender.

In April 2023, Mr. Desjardins pleaded guilty to [multiple firearms charges](#) for the separate 2021 firearms crimes and was sentenced to [18 years in Rhode Island state prison](#).

None of this apparently changed President Trump's mind about Mr. Desjardins's fitness to be reintegrated into society. President Trump pardoned Mr. Desjardins for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

The federal case against Mr. Desjardins had been pending while he was on trial in Rhode Island. On January 21, 2025, the [Trump Administration asked the court to dismiss all charges](#) related to the attack on the Capitol.

- 7. James Tate Grant:** Mr. Grant helped lead the first wave of attack against the Capitol Police on January 6, 2021. In a widely viewed video, he can be seen waving the crowd forward, pushing and pulling on the barricades in front of the police line, shouting "let's go!" into his megaphone. A later video shows Mr. Grant trespassing inside the office of Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR).

In December 2021, police responded to a [disturbance in a restaurant parking lot](#) in Wake County, North Carolina. They found Mr. Grant heavily intoxicated inside of his car. As he was being arrested, Mr. Grant attempted to flee. Moments later, he dropped to the ground and told the officers, "Just kill me now. It's over." Police found an arsenal including an [AR-15 rifle, 60 rounds of .223-caliber ammunition, weapon accessories, and combat fatigues](#) in his car.

In September 2024, a federal court [sentenced](#) Mr. Grant to three years in prison and three years of supervised release for his actions at the Capitol on January 6, 2021.

President Trump saw fit to pardon Mr. Grant for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

- 8. Jarod Lee Hawks:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Hawks first confronted the Capitol Police at [Peace Circle](#), then made his way to the Capitol Building where he used a large "Trump 2020 Keep America Great" sign in a metal frame as a battering ram to plunge against the police barricades.

Mr. Hawks has regularly found himself the subject of criminal charges in Volusia County, Florida, including [strangulation, false imprisonment, sexual battery, burglary with battery,](#)

[felony battery, fleeing a police car in pursuit, violation of pretrial release, and driving without a valid license.](#)

On November 25, 2024, police [arrested](#) Mr. Hawks on multiple charges related to his assault on the U.S. Capitol.

President Trump ignored his long list of violent criminal charges and pardoned Mr. Hawks for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

- 9. Joshua Dillon Haynes:** Although Mr. Haynes entered the Capitol on January 6, 2021, he appears to have done his most significant damage outside the building—where he [smashed an air conditioning unit](#) and broke several pieces of equipment that belonged to media outlets. Later that evening, he texted a friend: “broke lotsa stuff.” He continued: “We attacked the CNN reporters and the fake news and destroyed tens of thousands of dollars of their video and television equipment.” And he told the same friend: “I want to get busted for tearing up the nations [sic] capital and the fake news.” After his arrest in July 2021, Haynes was ordered to undergo a mental evaluation and to remain in his house except for court appearances and other court-approved appointments.

That same month, Mr. Haynes [strangled a family member](#). He was charged with several counts related to domestic violence and his [bail was revoked](#).

But President Trump ignored this violent crime spree and, on January 20, 2025, pardoned Mr. Haynes for his role in the attack on the Capitol.

- 10. Emily Hernandez:** On January 6, 2021, Ms. Hernandez [was photographed holding the broken nameplate of then-Speaker Nancy Pelosi](#). Days later, she pleaded guilty to five misdemeanor charges related to her participation in the riot.

In January 2022, Ms. Hernandez caused [a fatal drunk driving crash](#) in Sullivan, Missouri. She killed a 32-year-old woman, seriously injured her 36-year-old husband, and left their two children without a mother.

In November 2024, Ms. Hernandez [pleaded guilty](#) to two charges, a DWI causing death of another and a DWI causing serious physical injury to another.

However, President Trump, apparently still convinced of her rehabilitation and reform, pardoned Ms. Hernandez for her role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

A few days later, Ms. Hernandez was sentenced to ten years in Missouri state prison.

- 11. Colby Dillion Herrington:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Herrington—known online as the “MAGA Lumberjack”—stood at the front of the crowd [taunting officers](#), pointing at them, and gesturing at them with his middle finger. He threw a large piece of lumber and water bottles at the police line. He picked up a metal barricade, approached the Capitol

Police, then threw the barricade down. When the mob surged forward, he entered the Capitol Building.

Later in the day, as police cleared the building, officers noticed a knife blade in Mr. Herrington's back pocket. When he was arrested, officers found a [large military-style knife and a stun gun](#) in his pockets.

In December 2023, Mr. Herrington [pleaded guilty to assaulting police officers](#) and was sentenced to 37 months in prison and three years of supervised release.

In December 2024, a grand jury in Limestone County, Alabama, separately indicted Mr. Herrington of [raping a woman “who was incapable of consent by reason of being physically helpless or mentally incapacitated.”](#) Mr. Herrington reportedly broke the victim's glasses and bruised her body. A witness said they [thought the victim was](#) dead during the alleged violent rape. The court denied his bond.

President Trump nevertheless pardoned Mr. Herrington for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

- 12. Daryl Eugene Johnson:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Johnson and his son, Daniel Johnson, climbed through a “smashed-out” window to enter the Capitol, rushed a group of police officers, and helped [push open the East Rotunda doors of the Capitol](#), allowing more rampaging rioters outside the building to enter.

On January 7, 2021, Mr. Johnson posted: “Mark my words Yesterday will be the beginning of the revolution ... [i]t will be [hangings on the front lawn of the capital](#) – that crowd is not messing around.”

In January 2022, Mr. Johnson pleaded guilty to multiple offenses related to entering the Capitol. In June 2022, he was sentenced to one month in jail.

In January 2023, Mr. Johnson was arrested for using his cell phone to [secretly video-record a woman who was changing clothes at a tanning salon](#) in Mason City, Iowa. A search of his phone uncovered evidence that Mr. Johnson had [spied on](#) naked female customers multiple times. He pleaded guilty to four counts of invasion of privacy and was sentenced to 180 days in jail. He was also ordered to register with the Iowa Sex Offender Registry for ten years.

Undeterred by these new offenses, President Trump pardoned Mr. Johnson for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

- 13. Edward Kelley:** Mr. Kelley was one of the first insurrectionists to breach the Capitol on January 6, 2021. On surveillance video, he can be seen confronting the Capitol Police, climbing the scaffolding, and [using a piece of wood to smash a window](#) next to the Senate Wing Door. Another video shows him in the group of rioters distracted by U.S. Capitol

Police Officer Eugene Goodman outside the Senate chamber as Senators and Vice President Pence were evacuated to safety.

While awaiting trial at his home in Maryville, Tennessee, Mr. Kelley [developed a “kill list”](#) of FBI agents who investigated his participation in the attack on the Capitol. He planned to use car bombs and incendiary devices to attack the Knoxville FBI Field Office. He strategized about assassinating FBI employees in their homes and in movie theaters. He told co-conspirators to “take out their office” in the event of his arrest. [“Every hit has to hurt. Every hit has to hurt.”](#)

On November 8, 2024, Mr. Kelley was convicted of assaulting police at the U.S. Capitol, among other charges.

On November 20, 2024, Mr. Kelley was convicted of conspiring to murder FBI employees, among other charges.

But President Trump was apparently unmoved by Mr. Kelley’s plans to kill FBI agents and proudly pardoned Mr. Kelley, along with all the other J6ers, for his role in the insurrectionary attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

Fortunately, a federal court found that [the Trump pardon did not apply to Mr. Kelley’s subsequent plan to murder federal law enforcement officials](#). “His acquisition of firearms, ammunition, and explosive materials, coordination with [co-conspirators] to train for combat, and his distribution of a list of targeted victims” have no direct relation to Mr. Kelley’s conduct on January 6, 2021, the judge found.

On July 2, 2025, Mr. Kelley was sentenced to life in prison for his Tennessee offenses.

- 14. Kene Brian Lazo:** Mr. Lazo wore a black helmet, goggles, and an American flag cape during the attack on the Capitol. He carried a [Captain America-style shield attached to a small wooden broom](#).

Mr. Lazo was arrested for breaching the Capitol on May 28, 2021.

In August 2021, while on pretrial release, Mr. Lazo was again arrested—this time, for [sexually assaulting a child](#). He was held without bond in jail in Norfolk, Virginia. Details of the case are sealed to protect the victim.

In March 2022, Mr. Lazo pleaded guilty to charges relating to the breach of the Capitol. He was sentenced to 45 days in prison.

Disregarding his other serious offenses, President Trump pardoned Mr. Lazo for his role in the violent attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

- 15. Jia Liu:** Mr. Liu, a former Marine Corps reservist, [entered the Capitol through a broken window](#) on January 6, 2021. He was arrested and charged with illegally entering

the building but was not charged with any violent crimes for his conduct while on the Capitol grounds.

In February 2022, federal prosecutors accused Mr. Liu of engaging in a conspiracy to distribute [hundreds of stolen and fake COVID-19 vaccine cards](#). He appears to have specifically targeted the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves, selling fake vaccine cards to help reservists evade vaccination requirements at the height of the pandemic. He [boasted](#) to one co-conspirator: “you have no idea how many documents I have faked in my usmc career.”

In April 2024, a federal court sentenced Mr. Liu to 21 months in prison for his [fake vaccine card scheme](#).

President Trump pardoned Mr. Liu for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

- 16. Martin Joseph Pastucci:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Pastucci entered the Capitol, broke into Speaker Pelosi’s office, and [rifled through papers on the Senate dais](#). When police confronted him, he refused to leave the building; after he was ejected, he shoved an officer and pushed his way back inside the Capitol.

On July 1, 2023, police responded to a domestic disturbance call from Mr. Pastucci’s girlfriend at his home in Fairview, Pennsylvania. Officers investigated and charged Mr. Pastucci with [rape, aggravated assault, sexual assault, stalking, and false imprisonment](#).

In December 2024, a federal court sentenced Mr. Pastucci to 26 months in prison for multiple felonies, including assaulting a police officer, stemming from his entering the Capitol.

The next month, President Trump pardoned Mr. Pastucci for his crimes in the attack on the Capitol.

- 17. Donald Nathan Pelham:** Mr. Pelham appears to have entered the Capitol for only a few minutes on January 6, 2021. He was identified by his outfit: [a pair of goggles, a neck gaiter, and a baseball hat with a Proud Boys logo](#).

In April 2023, federal prosecutors [charged](#) Mr. Pelham with four misdemeanors related to January 6th.

On the evening before his scheduled surrender to the FBI, Mr. Pelham’s father [called the sheriff’s office](#) in Hunt County, Texas, to alert them that Mr. Pelham was waving a gun and threatening to kill himself. When sheriff’s deputies arrived at Mr. Pelham’s home, his daughter ran out of the house and gunfire erupted inside. An hour later, Mr. Pelham [emerged from the house and fired several shots at the deputies](#). After being ordered to put down the weapon, Mr. Pelham fired again. No officers were hit, but one later

reported that [“I could hear the distinct whistling sound as the bullet traveled by me and then strike a metal object to my right side.”](#)

Two days later, the FBI executed a search warrant on Mr. Pelham’s residence. Agents found a handgun, ammunition, and bullet holes in walls throughout the house.

Because Mr. Pelham was [already a convicted felon](#), federal prosecutors added a felony charge to the criminal complaint. Mr. Pelham pleaded guilty to [illegal possession of a firearm](#) and was sentenced to two years in prison.

President Trump pardoned Mr. Pelham for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

- 18. Narayana Chandra Rheiner:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Rheiner was part of a group of rioters attempting to gain access to a hallway blocked by police. When the officers used pepper spray to disperse the mob, he yelled, [“You know how many times I’ve been sprayed today? That s--- ain’t nothing!”](#) and [“Why don’t you just go home!”](#) He also told officers, [“We’re not backing up!”](#)

Four months later, deputies with the Talbot County Sheriff’s Office in Talbot, Maryland, pulled over Mr. Rheiner in a routine traffic stop. They arrested Mr. Rheiner when they found [cocaine hidden in a cigarette pack](#).

In May 2024, Mr. Rheiner pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 15 months in prison [for obstructing police officers in the Capitol Building](#).

President Trump pardoned Mr. Rheiner for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

- 19. Alan Michael St. Onge:** Mr. St. Onge was part of the mob pushing against and [crushing the body of a police officer](#) in a tunnel entrance to the Capitol. He was arrested in Brevard, North Carolina, for his assault on these officers in June 2023.

In November 2023, Mr. St. Onge went to a bar in Asheville, North Carolina. He made advances on a woman who rebuffed him, then continued to harass her. When two other patrons, a man and a woman, intervened, Mr. St. Onge began to harass them too. He threw an ashtray at the woman, who threw a cup of water at him in retaliation—then he [punched the woman in the throat](#). In the ensuing fight, Mr. St. Onge pushed the man to the ground, kicked him, and stomped on his chest.

On July 10, 2024, Mr. St. Onge pleaded guilty to civil disorder at the U.S. Capitol and was sentenced to 18 months in prison.

Despite Mr. St. Onge’s continuing violent assault on innocent people, President Trump pardoned him for his role in the insurrectionary attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

**20. Hatchet Speed:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Speed raced from his home in Virginia to [join the insurrection already in progress](#). He later told an undercover investigator: “I was like, ‘I’m going in there. Like I have no respect for people in this building. They have no respect for me. I have no respect for them.’ [S]o we all went in and we took control. Like, when you have that many thousands of people, like there’s nothing the cops can do ... it’s impressive.”

He told a friend: “We made it to the Crypt (in the Capitol) with sheer force of numbers.” Mr. Speed left the building only because he believed that Speaker Pelosi had agreed to delay the certification of the presidential election. On January 7, Mr. Speed texted: “Pelosi fooled us.” He told the undercover agent that he wanted Speaker Pelosi to resign “out of fear for her life.”

Mr. Speed is a member of the Proud Boys and a self-professed anti-Semite. He expressed his admiration for Adolf Hitler, calling him “one of the best people that’s ever been on this earth.” In discussions with the undercover agent, he also “[outlined a plan to enlist Christians to wipe out the country’s entire Jewish population](#).”

From February to May 2021, Mr. Speed [spent more than \\$40,000 stockpiling weapons and ammunition](#) as part of a [plan to kidnap Jewish leaders and stage their mock trials and public executions](#).

In June 2022, Mr. Speed was arrested at his home in McLean, Virginia, and charged with breaching the Capitol. Prosecutors described him as a [heavily armed Nazi sympathizer](#). An FBI search of Mr. Speed’s residence found 13 firearms, seven silencers, and evidence of additional weapons belonging to his housemates.

In March 2023, a [federal judge convicted Mr. Speed](#) on all counts related to his conduct at the Capitol.

In April 2023, Mr. Speed was convicted in a separate case for possessing unregistered firearm silencers. The judge in that case commented: “It is difficult to understand how anyone could conclude that [the Unabomber and Eric Rudolph and Hitler](#) could be a positive influence on anyone, much less role models worthy of admiration and emulation.” Mr. Speed had been studying all three murderers. [He was sentenced to three years in prison](#).

In May 2023, Mr. Speed was sentenced to an additional four years in prison for his role in the attack on the Capitol. The judge called the evidence against Mr. Speed one of the “strongest and most damning” cases he had ever seen.

But President Trump nonchalantly pardoned Mr. Speed for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

**21. Taylor Taranto:** Mr. Taranto brought a “[weaponized cane](#)” to the Capitol on January 6, 2021. Video shows him using it to batter several police officers. In one video, he appears to shield another rioter as he wrestles a police baton out of the hands of Officer Jeffrey

Smith, a Metropolitan Police Department officer who later took his own life after the January 6th attack. Officer Smith's widow would later name Mr. Taranto in a [civil suit seeking accountability for her husband's death](#).

For the next two years, Mr. Taranto routinely posted online threatening statements against public officials. In June 2023, he posted a video of himself at an elementary school in Takoma Park, Maryland, which he said he chose because it was close to [the home of Judiciary Committee Ranking Member Jamie Raskin](#), and said: “[I]t’s kind of like sending a shock wave through him because I did nothing wrong and he’s probably freaking out ... and saying s—t like, ‘Well, he’s stalking me.’”

In July 2023, Mr. Taranto [was charged with four misdemeanors related to entering the Capitol](#). At the time, he was living out of a van parked near the Washington, DC, jail.

Later that month, Mr. Taranto broadcast a video of himself driving his van. He stated that he had been [“working on a detonator”](#) and indicated that he would drive a car bomb into a building housing a “neutron reactor” located on the campus of the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

The next day, after President Trump posted what he claimed to be the home address of [former President Barack Obama](#) to social media, Mr. Taranto reposted the address. Then Mr. Taranto broadcast another video of himself in the same van, driving near the Obamas’ home in Northwest Washington, DC. After the former president and his neighbors were evacuated, the United States Secret Service arrested Mr. Taranto nearby. Although the officers discovered that [the bomb threat was a hoax](#), they found two firearms, multiple magazines, hundreds of rounds of ammunition and a machete knife in his van.

Despite this dangerous joy ride, President Trump pardoned Mr. Taranto on January 20, 2025.

Mr. Taranto was one of the few people charged in the attack on the Capitol to remain in jail after the pardon. In May 2025, he was [convicted of multiple felonies](#) related to his bomb threats and unlawful possession of firearms.

In October 2025, two federal prosecutors filed a sentencing memorandum that included a description of Mr. Taranto’s decision to join the [“mob of rioters \[who\] attacked the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021.”](#) The memo also referenced the fact that President Trump first posted the supposed home address of President Obama online. The U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia, led by Trump-appointed U.S. Attorney Jeanine Pirro, responded by [putting both prosecutors on leave](#), then filed an amended memorandum scrubbed of any mention of January 6th or President Trump’s actions. The court commended the professionalism of the prosecutors who had been removed from the case before imposing a sentence of time served, around 21 months, and three years of supervised release.

Last month, a federal judge ordered Mr. Taranto to return to his home in Washington State after he violated the terms of his release and was spotted [wandering around Ranking Member Raskin's neighborhood in Maryland](#).

- 22. Shane Jason Woods:** As the mob pushed forward on January 6, 2021, an individual in the crowd sprayed a Capitol Police officer in the face with pepper spray. The officer chased the suspect. Mr. Woods, who was standing next to the officer and outweighed him by more than 100 pounds, [lowered his shoulder, knocked the officer off of his feet, and sent him flying into a metal barricade](#).

Later, Mr. Woods helped to destroy a pile of equipment that had been abandoned by reporting crews. He approached a camera operator and began to harass him. When the camera operator attempted to walk away, Mr. Woods ran at him and attacked him with a blindside shoulder tackle, sending the operator crashing to the ground.

Mr. Woods was arrested on June 24, 2021, in Springfield, Illinois. He pleaded guilty to various charges in September 2022.

In November 2022, Mr. Woods deliberately [drove his truck into oncoming traffic](#) on Interstate 55, where he [struck and killed a 35-year-old woman](#).

In October 2023, Mr. Woods was sentenced to 54 months in prison and three years of supervised release on charges related to the two assaults at the Capitol.

President Trump pardoned Mr. Woods for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

In August 2025, a judge sentenced Mr. Woods for his crimes of reckless homicide and aggravated DUI. He received 17 years in Illinois state prison.

- 23. Miles Adkins:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Adkins was one of the first rioters to breach the Capitol building. He helped several other members of the mob find their way inside, physically pulling one individual [through a broken window](#). In a social media post, [he bragged about drinking a Coors Lite in the Capitol](#). Video recordings show him shouting “let’s go get a beer” as he leaves the building.

After leaving the Capitol but before being charged in the riot, Mr. Adkins went on a bender. In April 2022, he was charged with public intoxication. In June 2023, he was arrested for [driving under the influence](#) and refusing a breathalyzer test.

In 2024, Mr. Adkins pleaded guilty to two misdemeanor charges related to his conduct on January 6, 2021. At his hearing, the court took notice of his “[pattern of offending](#)” and sentenced him to 12 consecutive weekends in jail, two years of probation, periodic drug tests, and a mandatory alcohol treatment plan.

President Trump pardoned Mr. Adkins for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

**C. Newly Freed Rioters and Insurrectionists Have Committed or Been Arrested for New Crimes After Receiving Their Trump Presidential Pardons**

1. **Zachary Alam:** Mr. Alam was sentenced to eight years in prison for his role in the insurrection, which included [smashing the door in the Speaker’s Lobby](#) outside of the House chamber. He shouted, “I’m going to f--- you up” directly in the faces of the U.S. Capitol Police officers guarding the door to the floor of the House. He damaged property in other parts of the Capitol and threw objects as dangerous projectiles from the third-floor balcony at police officers working on the floor below. He was convicted of eight felonies, including assaulting, resisting, or impeding officers using a dangerous weapon.

President Trump pardoned Mr. Alam for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025. Mr. Alam went free with his Trump pardon and commutation—after serving only about half of his eight-year sentence.

But it took only a few months after his pardon for Mr. Alam to start breaking the law again. In May 2025, Mr. Alam was arrested and charged with [burglary, vandalism, and theft](#). He is accused of [breaking into a Virginia home](#), stealing items, and attempting to flee after being confronted by the residents. He was there—and not behind bars—only because of his Trump pardon.

2. **John Banuelos:** Outside the Capitol Building on January 6, 2021, Mr. Banuelos repeatedly held up a gloved hand [in the shape of a “finger gun”](#) and simulated “firing” at police officers. He later climbed the scaffolding around the inaugural stage on the West Front of the Capitol, pulled a real handgun from his waistband, and fired two shots in the air.

In March 2024, Mr. Banuelos was arrested and charged with multiple crimes related to his involvement in the riot. At his arraignment, Mr. Banuelos bragged that he would never face any real accountability for his conduct on January 6th. [“President Trump’s going to be in office six months from now, so I’m not worried about it.”](#)

Fulfilling the defendant’s dark prophecy, President Trump pardoned Mr. Banuelos for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025, and he was released from pretrial detention.

Mr. Banuelos is then suspected of having [stabbed to death](#) a 19-year-old man in Salt Lake City, Utah, shortly after traveling to Washington, DC, to participate in the insurrection. After he was arrested for the stabbing, Mr. Banuelos told police, “I was in the D.C. riots. You can look me up, OK?” Local prosecutors ultimately decided not to charge Mr. Banuelos for the stabbing, which he claimed had been in self-defense.

On October 17, 2025, nine months after he was pardoned by President Trump, police tracked Mr. Banuelos from Utah to Chicago, Illinois, where he was arrested on new charges of [kidnapping and sexual assault](#) from an incident in 2018. He is alleged to have [trapped his victim in his home](#), beaten her, strangled her, sexually assaulted her, and threatened to murder her.

- 3. Brent John Holdridge:** On November 29, 2021, Mr. Holdridge pleaded guilty to [one misdemeanor charge](#) of demonstrating in the Capitol building.

President Trump pardoned Mr. Holdridge for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

In May 2025, several months after his pardon, Mr. Holdridge was arrested for [stealing tens of thousands of dollars' worth of industrial copper wire](#) from an industrial facility in northern California, where he now faces charges of [burglary, grand theft, and possession of stolen property](#).

- 4. Matthew Huttle:** Mr. Huttle had a long criminal history prior to storming the Capitol on January 6, 2021, including the [felony assault he committed on his own 3-year-old son](#). After his arrest in 2023, he pleaded guilty to one count of illegally entering the Capitol grounds. He was sentenced to six months in prison and one year of supervised release and ordered to pay \$500 in restitution.

But President Trump pardoned Mr. Huttle for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

Several days after his pardon, Mr. Huttle was pulled over for a traffic stop in Jasper County, Indiana, where he resisted arrest and threatened to shoot himself. When he reached for a weapon, he was [shot and killed by a Jasper County sheriff's deputy](#). Police found a [loaded handgun](#) and ammunition in his car.

- 5. Christopher Moynihan:** Mr. Moynihan was among the first protesters to break through the security perimeter of the Capitol. Widely shared video showed him on the floor of the Senate, rifling through the desk and papers of Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX). In the video he says, “there’s gotta be something in here we can f--- use against these ---bags.” He was [sentenced to 21 months in prison](#) for his role in the January 6th attack.

President Trump pardoned Mr. Moynihan for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

On Friday, October 17, 2025, Mr. Moynihan [sent this text message](#) to an associate: “Hakeem Jeffries makes a speech in a few days in NYC I cannot allow this terrorist to live. Even if I am hated he must be eliminated I will kill him for the future.” He [became the first](#) rioter to have been charged *again* with threatening an elected federal official after January 6th and now faces [felony criminal charges in New York](#).

President Trump has had nothing to say, either about his pardon of this criminal or directly to House Minority Leader Jeffries.

## JANUARY 6TH RIOTERS AND INSURRECTIONIONISTS ARE NOW USING THEIR PARDONS IN COURT TO GET AWAY WITH OTHER CRIMES, AND PRESIDENT TRUMP'S DOJ IS HELPING THEM DO IT

### A. Trump's Department of Justice Has Dismissed Unrelated Criminal Charges Against Pardoned January 6th Rioters

1. **Daniel Ball:** Long before the attack on the Capitol, [Mr. Ball was a convicted felon](#). In 2017, he was convicted of domestic violence and strangulation. In 2021, he was convicted of resisting arrest. As a convicted felon, Mr. Ball is prohibited by federal law from purchasing or possessing a firearm.

On January 6, 2021, Mr. Ball worked with other rioters to push the police line back towards the Capitol. When the rioters' initial attempt was unsuccessful, Mr. Ball [threw an explosive device](#) towards the officers.

In 2023, Mr. Ball was arrested at his home in Homosassa, Florida. A search of his residence uncovered a rifle and ammunition illegally in his possession. Federal prosecutors separately charged Mr. Ball with unlawful possession of a firearm since he was a convicted felon.

Unbothered by these weapons charges against a convicted felon, President Trump pardoned Mr. Ball for his role in the insurrectionary attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

In February 2025, the acting United States Attorney for the Middle District of Florida asked the court to [dismiss the remaining gun charge](#) against Mr. Ball. The court granted the government's motion.

2. **Jeremy Brown:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Brown arrived at the Capitol dressed in a helmet, body armor, and a tactical vest. He carried [a radio, surgical shears, and zip ties](#). Federal prosecutors charged Mr. Brown with unlawfully entering the Capitol Building in September 2021.

Federal agents arrested Mr. Brown at his home in Tampa, Florida, that same month. A search of his home and RV uncovered [two live grenades](#) that Mr. Brown had stolen from the U.S. Army, classified documents, and two unregistered short-barreled shotguns.

In December 2022, Mr. Brown was found guilty on multiple felony charges. In April 2023, he was sentenced to seven years and three months in prison.

As part of his mass pardon, President Trump pardoned Mr. Brown for his role in the insurrectionary attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

Then, in February 2025, the [Trump Administration petitioned the court](#) to dismiss the other unrelated charges and release Mr. Brown from prison. Mr. Brown was freed on March 25, 2025.

- 3. Elias Costianes:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Costianes scaled a wall outside the Capitol and entered the building. Video shows him [riding an elevator](#) on the Senate side of the Capitol and standing in the gallery overlooking the Senate floor.

In February 2021, federal agents executed a search warrant at Mr. Costianes's residence in Nottingham, Maryland. The search uncovered [several unregistered firearms, hundreds of rounds of ammunition, three vials of steroids, a used hypodermic needle, and a large supply of marijuana](#). A search of Mr. Costianes's phone uncovered evidence that Mr. Costianes had purchased, used, and distributed a wide range of illicit drugs for many years.

In September 2023, Mr. Costianes was sentenced to two years in prison on [federal firearms charges](#).

True to form, President Trump pardoned Mr. Costianes for his role in the violent attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

In February 2025, the Trump Justice Department petitioned the court to dismiss the federal firearms charges and release Mr. Costianes from prison. Although the court initially [resisted the outlandish theory that the pardon covered these unrelated charges](#), Mr. Costianes was nonetheless freed soon thereafter. President Trump's DOJ is treating the January 6th pardon as a Get-Out-of-Jail-Free-Card for President Trump's insurrectionary foot soldiers.

- 4. Guy Wesley Reffitt:** On January 6, 2021, Mr. Reffitt [stormed the Capitol with a holstered handgun and plastic zip ties](#). He used a helmet-mounted camera to record himself talking to other rioters and describing his plan to drag Speaker Pelosi out of the building.

When he returned home to Wylie, Texas, he [threatened his own two teenage children](#): "If you turn me in, you're a traitor and you know what happens to traitors... traitors get shot." Long troubled by their father's affiliation with the Three Percenters and dangerous illegal activities, they contacted the FBI anyway.

Federal officials arrested Mr. Reffitt on January 16, 2021. While executing a search warrant at his residence, agents uncovered a large weapons cache—including an [illegal firearm suppressor](#).

Mr. Reffitt was the [first January 6th defendant to proceed to trial](#). He was [convicted on all counts](#) and sentenced to seven years and three months in prison.

In December 2022, Mr. Reffitt was indicted on a separate charge of possessing an [unregistered silencer](#).

President Trump pardoned Mr. Reffitt for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

In February 2025, the Trump Administration successfully petitioned the court to drop the completely unrelated firearms charge against Mr. Reffitt. Membership in President Trump’s mob has its privileges.

5. **Zachariah Sattler:** Mr. Sattler entered the Capitol on January 6, 2021, appeared to smoke marijuana in the Capitol Rotunda, and [later apologized for vomiting in the Capitol Building](#)—explaining that he drank too much peach schnapps, was out of shape, and inhaled too much tear gas.

In December 2022, [Mr. Sattler was arrested](#) at his home in Chestertown, Maryland. Federal agents found [two shotguns and a short-barreled rifle](#) on the premises. None of the guns were registered and, because Mr. Sattler was already a convicted felon, it was unlawful for him to possess a firearm.

In July 2023, Mr. Sattler pleaded guilty to charges related to entering the Capitol. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail.

President Trump pardoned Mr. Sattler for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

In February 2025, the Trump Administration successfully moved to dismiss the [separate weapons charges](#) pending against Mr. Sattler. The Justice Department policy effectively extends the presidential pardon, itself a dubious exercise of executive power, to cover completely separate and unrelated crimes.

**B. In Some Cases, Federal Judges Have Rejected the Trump Administration’s Efforts to Dismiss These Unrelated Criminal Charges**

1. **Benjamin Martin:** Mr. Martin has a long criminal history, including one conviction for domestic violence—which he received after he choked his girlfriend, then dragged her back into the house when she tried to flee. He has been [subject to at least three different restraining orders](#). As a convicted felon, he is prohibited by federal law from purchasing or possessing a firearm.

On January 6, 2021, Mr. Martin was recorded trying to push his way past police on the north side of the Capitol. When a door to the building briefly opened, Mr. Martin attempted to hold it open to allow other rioters to enter. In one video, he [struggles with a police officer to hold the door ajar](#). In another, he shouts at police, “move out of the way and let us in!” He eventually made his way into the Capitol.

In September 2021, Mr. Martin was arrested at his home in Madera, California. Federal agents observed eight firearms in plain view—a [weapons cache](#) that included an AR-15 rifle, multiple high-capacity magazines, and more than 500 rounds of ammunition. Shortly

after his arrest, Mr. Martin was recorded instructing his fiancée to lie to authorities and tell them that all the firearms belonged to her.

In the District of Columbia, Mr. Martin was charged with [multiple crimes related to his breach of the Capitol](#). In June 2024, he was [convicted of all charges](#).

In the Eastern District of California, Mr. Martin was separately charged with illegally possessing firearms. In November 2024, while he appealed his conviction to the Ninth Circuit, he was sentenced to [three years and two months in prison](#).

President Trump pardoned Mr. Martin for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

Initially, in a brief to the Ninth Circuit, the DOJ properly contended that the pardon did not apply to the firearms case: “he was pardoned in a separate and unrelated case relating to the events at the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021,” and the pardon “does not reach [a separate firearms offense he committed in California at a different time](#).” However, after intervention from U.S. Pardon Attorney Ed Martin—a January 6th apologist, participant and former defense attorney—the Trump Administration reversed itself and demanded that the Ninth Circuit remand the case to the district court where the firearms conviction could be dismissed.

In March 2025, the Ninth Circuit [declined to dismiss the case](#) but instructed the lower court to [release Mr. Martin on bail](#).

- 2. Dan Edwin Wilson:** In the weeks leading up to January 6, 2021, Mr. Wilson helped to coordinate the efforts of different militia groups intent on marching on the Capitol—including [the Oath Keepers, the Gray Ghost Partisan Rangers, and the Three Percenters](#). As rioters approached the Capitol, one co-conspirator asked, “How many patriots do we have pushing to the Capitol, Live Wired?” Mr. Wilson responded, “Hey, pass the word, Badlands, as fast as you can. The people are pushing on the Capitol. We need all hands on deck.”

The FBI arrested Mr. Wilson in Louisville, Kentucky, in May 2023. While executing a search warrant, agents found six firearms—two of which lacked serial numbers, two of which were loaded, and three of which were military-style M-4 rifles—and 4,800 rounds of ammunition. With three prior felony convictions, Mr. Wilson was prohibited from possessing any of these weapons.

In the District of Columbia, Mr. Wilson was charged with participating in a conspiracy to breach the U.S. Capitol. In the Western District of Kentucky, he was charged with unlawful possession of firearms. Prosecutors combined the cases in the District of Columbia and, in May 2024, Mr. Wilson [pleaded guilty to three felonies](#). In August 2024, he was sentenced to [five years in prison](#).

President Trump pardoned Mr. Wilson for his role in the attack on the Capitol on January 20, 2025.

When Mr. Wilson was released from custody, the DOJ initially argued that he had been “erroneously released” and asked that the court order him back to prison to finish serving the sentences associated with his firearm charges. The “plain language” of the pardon, prosecutors argued, clearly “[does not extend to these convictions.](#)”

Then the Trump Administration abruptly changed its mind. In a second filing, the government claimed that it had “[received further clarity on the intent of the Presidential Pardon](#)” and asked that the charges be dismissed. A clearly frustrated district court judge criticized the Department for its new position. “[The intent \[of a pardon\] cannot evolve over time as new cases are brought to his attention.](#)” The request was denied.

The Trump Administration appealed the request to the Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, which [denied Mr. Wilson bail.](#)

On November 15, 2025, [President Trump again pardoned Mr. Wilson](#)—this time, making explicit reference to the firearms found in his home. Amazingly, Mr. Wilson walked free.

## **CONCLUSION: THE AMERICAN PUBLIC IS UNSAFE IN A GANGSTER STATE WHERE DANGEROUS CRIMINALS WALK FREE**

New cases come to light every week, but this Report underscores the damage that President Trump has already visited on our communities through his indiscriminate mass pardon of participants in the insurrectionary mob violence he incited on January 6, 2021. Far from being tough on crime, President Trump has let violent criminals out of prison, enabling them to commit new crimes.

In addition to setting these criminals loose on communities around America, President Trump has gone so far as to install violent insurrectionists and their sympathizers at the highest ranks of the Department of Justice.

Astonishingly, President Trump appointed Ed Martin—a direct participant in the “Stop the Steal” movement, January 6th attendee and primary architect of the [January 6th revisionist narrative](#)—as U.S. Pardon Attorney. Mr. Martin’s appointment in May 2025, after a [failed bid for confirmation](#) as U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, was the final act in the evisceration of the Pardon Attorney’s office as a professional and nonpolitical decisionmaker in the clemency process. Mr. Martin, who [tweeted from the Capitol grounds himself](#) on January 6th and [described](#) that violent day as “Mardi Gras in D.C.,” has been a fervent January 6th apologist. He had spent the years prior to his appointment raising cash for the very January 6th offenders President Trump has let out of jail.

Upon taking office, Mr. Martin ignored established guidelines that had governed the office for over a century, bypassed career prosecutors, and staffed the office with political loyalists. He [hired](#) fellow January 6th participant and former defendant Jared Wise, who repeatedly yelled “kill ‘em” as officers were being attacked at the Capitol, as a senior advisor at the DOJ. Mr. Martin simultaneously runs a [Weaponization Working Group](#) within DOJ, launching retaliatory and harassing investigations into the career prosecutors and FBI agents who had originally investigated the Capitol attack.

The result of this moral capsizing at DOJ has been the complete institutional validation of political violence. By placing a [January 6th apologist](#) at the helm of the clemency process, the Administration does not just forgive the insurrectionists’ crimes—it celebrates them and validates them for the future. Mr. Martin’s office has become a clearinghouse and headquarters for the MAGA movement, rewarding President Trump’s fighters and immunizing the [paramilitary wing of the President’s political coalition](#). Meanwhile, career prosecutors and FBI agents have been sacked, and the public safety of the American people continues to be jeopardized by violent cop-beaters that President Trump has set free. In President Trump’s America, people loyal to President Trump—even violent criminals—have the Department of Justice on their side.