



By: Tomorrow's Affairs Staff

Trump could repeat January 6 - if the US allows it



Violence in the US Congress on January 6 2021 cannot happen again if it is related only to physical security in the building and the equipment of its members. Although the chances are small, it could possibly be repeated if it concerns synchronising the work of the intelligence services, the flow of information, and in particular actions based on that information.

The congressional violence of January 6 does have a strong chance of repeating itself, if the truth and consequences of that unprecedented event in American history fails to reach every voter in a divided America as an attempted violent takeover. In Congress or elsewhere, January 6 has a particularly high chance of a rerun, if Donald Trump remains on the political scene, and particularly if he runs for president again. Due to the horrific experiences of January 2021, internal security on Capitol Hill has been beefed up, better equipped and given new powers, to help repel attacks if they occur on the critical date of January 6. After one year, every Capitol Police member has received a special telephone which enables them to send a real-time emergency alert.

They also got significantly more non-lethal equipment, so that they could control potential riots. A law has also been passed allowing the head of the Capitol Police unilateral authority to seek National Guard assistance, eliminating a hurdle that delayed a request for help on January 6, 2021. The US Congress seems safe from any new turmoil similar to that of 2021. Regarding the cooperation of the intelligence services, the US committee that investigated the events of January 6, 2021 stated in its final report that the intelligence agencies had detected the possibility of violence, to a limited extent, but that on the other hand they did not take action based on that information.

Despite the good "flow" of information between the agencies, including warnings about possible violence ahead of January 6, there has been no exchange or full understanding between intelligence and law enforcement entities regarding the role

President Trump himself could play in critical events.

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Therefore, even the final report on the investigation on January 6 provides no reason to believe that the intelligence services will work faster and more efficiently in any future similar situations, or that everyone will have all the necessary information, and that they will lead an action based on that information. What remains the biggest risk for a rerun of January 6 is keeping in the game all those who, even after two years, are still convinced that the elections for president of the US were stolen, and that the attack on the US Congress was a justified revolt. Donald Trump remained at their head, announcing that he will run for office in 2024, which is by far the biggest risk for a rerun.

According to a report by the Department of Justice, in the past 23 months since the attack on Congress, 900 people have been arrested, in almost all 50 federal states, for various crimes, and more than half (470) have pleaded guilty to violating various federal regulations. And as the climax of this great action, the Committee that investigated the events of January 6 has recommended charges against former president Donald Trump on the basis of four criminal acts - obstruction of an official proceeding of Congress, conspiracy to defraud the United States, conspiracy to make a false statement, and insurrection.

Only 28% Americans believe Trump would actually face trial on charges

Certainly, America sent a very clear message that it faced an attack on its constitutional order and democracy unprecedented in history, and that it had found and charged

those responsible. Will it have an effect and is it enough to permanently dispel the fear that something like this will never happen again, a wish we have heard expressed countless times over the past two years? Half of Americans, according to a PBS's poll from last July, expected such a decision by the Committee, supporting the position that Trump should face charges for his participation in the attack on Congress.

But despite that, only 28% said Trump would actually face trial on these charges. Whilst a majority of Americans overall blame Trump for what happened that day, public opinion remains divided down party lines, according to PBS's poll. Nearly all Democrats – 92 percent – and a majority of independents but only about one in five Republicans agree.

The confusion about the true role of Donald Trump in the violent attack on the constitutional order is also bolstered by his announcement that he will run for president again. Even if he is prosecuted and convicted, it would not disqualify him from the running in the presidential race. “Would an indictment – or even a felony conviction – prevent a presidential candidate from running or serving in office? The short answer is no”, wrote Stefanie Lindquist, Professor of Law and Political Science at Arizona State University, commenting on the final report of the Committee investigating the January 6 attack on Congress.

Trump's role in the violence on January 6 was central and decisive

She noted that the US Constitution provides only three conditions that must be fulfilled by someone running for the presidential cabinet: natural-born citizenship, age and residency. Trump meets all these conditions, but Lindquist draws attention to the last accusation against him – insurrection.

Namely, the Constitution disqualifies any person from holding federal office “who, having previously taken an oath ... to support

the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof.”

Whether January 6 2021 will happen again in the Congress or somewhere else depends principally on whether the law and the judiciary will succeed in preventing the possibility of Donald Trump to ever again be in a position to make decisions at any level of government. Particularly the highest one. His role in the violence on January 6 was central and decisive. "President Trump lit the flame, he poured gasoline on the fire and sat by in the White House dining room for hours watching the fire.

And today still continues to fan those flames”, Representative Elaine Luria said. "If we are to survive as a nation of laws and democracy, this can never happen again”, Representative Bennie Thompson, the select committee's chairperson, said at the meeting. Trump could repeat January 6, and probably would, if he is allowed to do so.