

J. Connelley Bas 1/31/2023

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GENERAL MARK A. MILLEY - CHAIRMAN, U.S. JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

OPENING COMMENT - HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE
TO INVESTIGATE THE ATTACK ON THE U.S. CAPITOL

On November 17, 2021, Army General Mark A. Milley, the Chairman of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, was interviewed by the House Select Committee to Investigate the Attack of the U.S. Capitol. General Milley's opening statement is a clear-eyed affirmation of his oath to protect and defend the United States Constitution from all enemies. (Statement begins on page 7, line 20.)

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1 record, but we can arrange for a separate proceeding at which
2 that information can be provided. This is an unclassified
3 session.

4 And, again, if I don't ask a question clearly, just make
5 sure you understand it before you answer.

6 If you need a break at any time, up to you, just let us
7 know --

8 General Milley. Sure.

9 [REDACTED] -- and we can stop. If you want to confer
10 with counsel, completely your prerogative.

11 All right?

12 And I think Ms. Lofgren, I see, has joined us as well,
13 another member of the Select Committee.

14 Okay. So, with that, let's get started.

15 So you indicated at the beginning, General Milley, that
16 you had -- before we went on the record -- some general
17 thoughts about January 6th. If you have any opening
18 observations or comments that you want to make before we get
19 into the questions, we'd welcome those now.

20 General Milley. Yeah. So what I was saying off the
21 record, I'll say it on the record.

22 I think the events of January 6th, in my personal
23 opinion, were a horrific day, a tragic day in the history of
24 America. I think it was an assault on the Constitution of
25 the United States of America. And I swore an oath to support

1 and defend that Constitution against all enemies, foreign and
2 domestic.

3 And it's a very, very tragic thing that, as a result of
4 a series of events and outcomes of elections, et cetera, that
5 there was a direct assault on the Nation's Capitol to prevent
6 the certification of what I consider a lawfully elected
7 President.

8 So, you know, a lot of people have asked me, you know,
9 resign, all these other kind of things, and the role of the
10 military in all of this. The military doesn't have a role in
11 determining outcomes of elections. That is the prerogative
12 of the American people. That's the prerogative of voters, to
13 go to a polling station, and that's their right, and to vote
14 for whomever they want, and the military doesn't have a part
15 in that.

16 And then, if for whatever reason it's contested, it goes
17 to the courts. And that's what happened; it went to the
18 courts. And the courts, you know, judge one way or the
19 other. The military has no part in that.

20 And then, at the end of the day, it comes to the
21 legislature, it comes to Congress, to certify the electoral
22 votes, and then they pronounce who's the President.

23 That's the process. And at no point in that process,
24 zero, not a single part of that process includes the United
25 States military.

1 So my sworn responsibility is to protect and defend the
2 Constitution, and the Constitution doesn't have the military
3 as part of the election process, and nor should it ever be.

4 So what I saw unfold on the 6th was disturbing, to say
5 the least, and I think it was an incredible event. And I
6 want to make sure that whatever information I have -- and I
7 can help you determine facts, atmospherics, opinions,
8 whatever, determine lines of inquiry. In any manner, shape,
9 or form that I or the Joint Staff can help, I want to make
10 sure that we do that, because I think the role of the
11 committee is critical to prevent this from ever happening
12 again.

13 There's five people who gave their lives on that day,
14 either as a direct result or an indirect result, but five
15 people are dead because of what happened on that day. That,
16 in and of itself, is an incredible cost. But we have to look
17 to the future and set in a series of policies, procedures,
18 laws, and structures to prevent that from happening again if
19 this Constitution is going to live, you know, for the next
20 generation, so to speak.

21 And that's where I'm coming from. And I'm here
22 voluntarily. I want to speak honestly, transparently, and
23 answer whatever questions you might have. And if that's
24 helpful, great. I probably have a lot of information that's
25 not helpful for whatever you're doing, and that's okay too.

1 We also have -- and I want to make sure that you know
2 that we have and we'll provide it to you, the Joint Staff --
3 we have a boatload of documentary stuff. I think we provided
4 a bunch of emails, which is good. We have both classified
5 and unclassified stuff. And I will make sure that you get
6 whatever we have. And it's a lot. We have it in binders.

7 Immediately following the 6th, I knew the significance,
8 and I asked my staff, freeze all your records, collate them,
9 get them collected up. I had one of the staff, a J7, you
10 know, package it up, inventory it, put it all in binders and
11 all that kind of stuff. So we have that, and you're welcome
12 to all of it, classified and unclassified. And I want to
13 make sure that everything is properly done for the future.
14 That's very important to me.

15 The other thing, I don't know if you're going to ask
16 about it, but there seems to be a fair amount of confusion as
17 to the job and the role of the Chairman, and I'm happy to go
18 into that. Of course, it's governed by law, but I'm happy to
19 explain that, to the extent possible.

20 And there's a lot of other things that we can go into.
21 I've got timelines. Whatever direction you guys want to go
22 I'm willing to go, within the bounds of classification for
23 this session. And if it's classified, I'll let you know
24 that, and we'll take it to a classified session.

25 ██████████ Appreciate that.