



Written by [Ron Paul](#) on September 29, 2025

The Real Jan. 6th Coup

In my first column after the events of Jan. 6th, 2021, I criticized those who called the protest a “coup,” pointing out that, “Some of the same politicians and bureaucrats denouncing the ridiculous farce at the Capitol as if it were the equivalent of 9/11 have been involved for decades in planning and executing real coups overseas. In their real coups, many thousands of civilians have died.”

The media at the time played up the violence committed by a relative few at the protest to stoke a national outcry and demands for “justice.” More than 1,500 Americans were charged over the incident and nearly 500 were imprisoned, including outrageous prison sentences for relatively minor crimes like entering the Capitol building through doors opened by the police, and filming the event.

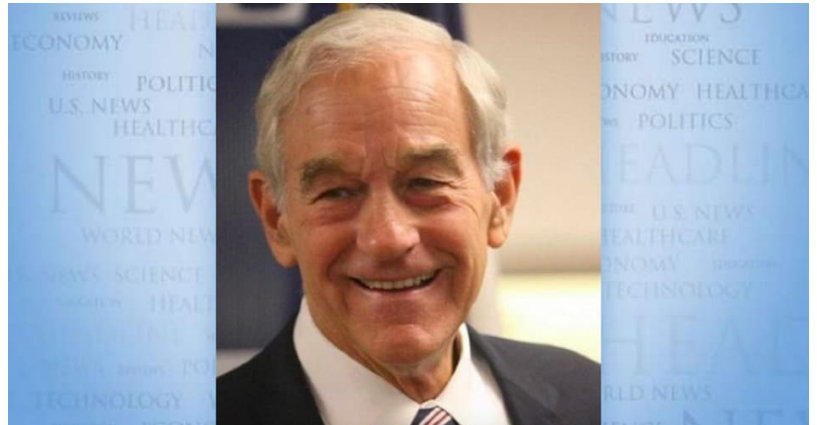
While most Democrats and Republicans in Congress harshly denounced the January 6th “insurrectionists,” a few Members displayed the appropriate skepticism over accepted government narratives. Rep. Thomas Massie, for example, was relentless in his search for answers to a simple but critically important question: How many of the “insurrectionists” were actually undercover FBI agents and other law enforcement officers and what role might they have played in inciting the violence.

Massie grilled then-Attorney General Merrick Garland several times, but Garland would not budge. He refused to say whether there had been any undercover federal agents in the crowd, though of course he must have known.

Last week we learned a little more of the truth. With the release of the FBI’s long lost “after action” report, we now know that more than 250 undercover agents were in the crowd. According to the report, they were given roles including crowd control that they were not suited for. Some agents cited in the report complained of political biases in the Bureau against conservatives. What other tasks might have been given to a “politicized” FBI undercover team?

In addition to the undercover agents, there were more than two dozen paid informants in the Jan. 6th crowd. Rep. Barry Loudermilk (R-Ga.), who chairs the subcommittee investigating the matter, asks an important question: “With that many paid informants being in the crowd, we want to know how many were in the crowd, how many were in the building, but I also want to know, were they paid to inform or instigate?”

Were they paid to inform, or to instigate? That is a good question. We do know that the event was used by the incoming Biden Administration to demonize and persecute the political opposition. There is no telling how many Americans would have liked to use their First Amendment guarantee of free speech to



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criticize the Biden Administration but were silenced by fear of persecution, or worse. It's easy to conclude, seeing so many arrested and handed long sentences for non-violent "crimes," that it's better to keep quiet. At the time, the US was still in the grip of Covid tyranny, where speaking out against "the Science" could get you "cancelled" or worse. This was another way to silence people who were not "going along with the program."

In the end, January 6th, 2021, was a coup of sorts. It was a coup against the First Amendment. The lesson for all of us is that if we do not regularly but peacefully exercise our First Amendment guarantees we will definitely lose them, regardless of who is in power.

Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This [article](#) originally appeared at the Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity and is reprinted here with permission.



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