



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on January 4, 2022

Special Forces With Shoot-to-kill Authority Deployed at Capitol on January 6

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and other federal agencies, including the military, had special-operations units with “shoot-to-kill authority” at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, according to a [Newsweek exclusive report](#).

“Right after the New Year,” wrote William Arkin, “Jeffrey A. Rosen, the acting Attorney General on January 6, approved implementation of long-standing contingency plans dealing with the most extreme possibilities: an attack on President Donald Trump or Vice President Mike Pence, a terrorist attack involving a weapon of mass destruction, and a declaration of measures to implement continuity of government, requiring protection and movement of presidential successors.”



AP Images

In other words, Rosen knew something was coming. Oddly, however, no one outside the Justice Department seems to have anticipated anything. “Rosen made a unilateral decision to take the preparatory steps to deploy Justice Department and so-called ‘national’ forces,” Arkin reported. “There was no formal request from the U.S. Capitol Police, the Secret Service, or the Metropolitan Police Department — in fact, no external request from any agency.”

Rosen called a January 3 meeting of the heads of various special-operations teams in Quantico, Virginia. Those units “included the FBI’s Hostage Rescue Team, the FBI’s national ‘Render Safe’ team, an FBI SWAT team from the Baltimore Field Office, Special Response Teams from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and the U.S. Marshals Service Special Operations Group,” penned Arkin.

“All of these assets were “pre-deployed” and ready to go over the weekend of January 2-3,” he continued. “The activation of the catastrophic response units ... entailed an automatic green light allowing federal responders to take the initiative and spare no resources, including shoot-to-kill authority, to deal with this most extraordinary condition.

The units were deployed to downtown Washington on January 6 to protect possible targets including the Capitol. A tactical unit of the Hostage Rescue Team was among the first to enter the Capitol after its doors were breached.

Arkin concluded:

The presence of these extraordinary forces under the control of the Attorney General — and mostly operating under contingency plans that Congress and the U.S. Capitol Police were



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not privy to — added an additional layer of highly armed responders. The role that the military played in this highly classified operation is still unknown, though FBI sources tell *Newsweek* that military operators seconded to the FBI, and those on alert as part of the National Mission Force [an FBI rapid-response team], were present in the metropolitan area. The lingering question is: What was it that the Justice Department saw that provoked it to see January 6 as an extraordinary event, something that the other agencies evidently missed.

Indeed, this is the question many asked long before *Newsweek*, especially given evidence that the FBI [may have played a role](#) in the events of January 6.

One who made that inquiry is journalist Steve Baker, who is now being [threatened with federal prosecution](#) for “interstate racketeering” after he covered the Capitol riot and [suggested](#) on his blog in February that Special Forces and U.S. Marshals were deployed among the crowd to prevent violence while allowing events to proceed as certain officials, seeking political advantage, desired.

In a [post](#) hailing his belated vindication by *Newsweek*, Baker pointed out that the FBI has changed its story over time, first saying it had no foreknowledge of the events of January 6, then leaking a document to the *Washington Post* claiming it had “explicit warning” of potential “violence and ‘war,’” and months later telling Reuters it had no information suggesting anyone had organized the riot, which would make foreknowledge of it impossible. Now the FBI admits to knowing something bad was likely to happen on January 6 — bad enough to deploy Special Forces with shoot-to-kill authority — though it neither heard from nor informed any other agencies about the anticipated events or countermeasures.

Baker thinks his own investigation into the matter of government complicity is why he’s being targeted for prosecution: “Maybe my earliest revelation is why the FBI waited nine and [a] half months to contact me? Waiting until they figured out which of their own stories they were going to stand by, or which of [House Speaker Nancy] Pelosi’s narratives she intends to ‘establish and preserve’?”



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