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White House rewrites January 6 history and blames police for deadly attack on 5-year anniversary

3 HR AGO

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The White House rolled out **a new website** Tuesday with a full-blown recast of the historical record of January 6, 2021, hailing the pro-Trump mob who stormed the US Capitol five years ago as “peaceful protesters” who were provoked by law enforcement.

The **new site** baselessly claims the violence on January 6, 2021, was instigated by law enforcement and then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. It recasts the rioters as the

victims that day, and depicts President Donald Trump as a hero for granting sweeping pardons for the nearly 1,600 people charged in connection with the deadly attack.



For years, Trump has whitewashed the history of January 6, when thousands of his supporters violently stormed the Capitol in hopes of preventing Congress from certifying President-elect Joe Biden's victory. But the new site notably goes further than Trump's past rhetoric, and gives an official White House platform to his long-debunked claims.

One overarching theme on the new site is Trump's long-running — but completely false — claim that the 2020 election was stolen. His repeated lies about mass voter fraud were the reason why he and his supporters wanted to stop Congress from certifying the results on January 6.

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White House communications director Steven Cheung suggested in an **X post** that the webpage was a “trap” to spark outrage from the media. CNN has **previously reported** on how the Trump administration is using the official White House website to troll its opponents.

Cherry-picked ‘timeline’

A cherry-picked “timeline” on the website characterizes Trump’s **January 6 speech** at the Ellipse as “detailing evidence of election fraud,” and urging the crowd to march to the Capitol to peacefully protest and show “strength and determination.” His claims of fraud were **debunked** weeks before January 6, and the timeline omits the portions of Trump’s address where he twice said his supporters should “fight like hell.”

The timeline overlooks details of rioters breaking windows to breach the Capitol and assaulting police. Instead, the timeline claims the rally that day was “orderly and spirited, with flags, signs, and chants supporting President Trump.”

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The website baselessly accused the US Capitol Police of “deliberately escalating tensions” that day when throngs of Trump supporters swarmed the complex. It said officers’ “provocative tactics,” like firing tear gas into the crowd, “turned a peaceful demonstration into chaos,” even though there is extensive video footage showing rioters attacking police first.

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CNN has reached out to the US Capitol Police for comment.

Also, the White House claimed that Trump supporters who died outside the Capitol of natural causes – a heart attack and a stroke – were “killed” that day.

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The website includes a disputed assertion that “zero law enforcement officers lost their lives.”

US Capitol Police Officer Brian Sicknick, died from strokes one day after being assaulted while defending the Capitol, and the DC medical examiner said “all that transpired” on January 6 influenced his death. Four other officers who responded to the Capitol died of suicide in the months after the assault. (The White House

website also doesn't mention that 140 other officers were **injured** that day, some requiring hospitalization, and many later **suffered** from PTSD.)

Blaming Pence and Pelosi

The website champions Trump's controversial claim that then-Vice President Mike Pence "had the opportunity to return disputed electoral slates to state legislatures for review and decertification," during the joint session of Congress that day, but chose not to "in an act of cowardice and sabotage."

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Pence himself, legal scholars from across the **political spectrum**, and many of Trump's aides and advisers, including Secretary of State **Marco Rubio**, have said it would be would have been blatantly unconstitutional for the then-vice president to refuse to certify the 2020 election.

Casting Pelosi, then the Democratic House speaker, as a primary villain of January 6, the White House site seized on comments she made in an HBO documentary, where she said, of security at the Capitol: "I take responsibility for not having them just prepare for more."

"They clearly didn't know, and I take responsibility for not having them just prepare for more," Pelosi said in the clip.

That remark doesn't prove Trump's oft-repeated claim, which he **said again** in a speech Tuesday, that Pelosi turned down his supposed offer for an advance

deployment of 10,000 National Guard troops. Pelosi has always denied having received such an offer, and the president – not the House speaker – is in charge of the DC National Guard.

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“January 6th was not an aberration and it was not spontaneous. It was the culmination of a sustained assault on truth, on the rule of law, and one of the most sacred principles of our democracy: the peaceful transfer of power,” Pelosi said in a **statement** Tuesday, where she called January 6 an “attempted coup” incited by Trump to overturn the 2020 election.

The White House website also cast Trump as a victim who was subsequently “silenced” on social media platforms and debanked by financial institutions, like JPMorgan Chase and Bank of America.

The White House argues that Trump “corrected a historic wrong” by **pardoning thousands** of those charged or convicted in the Capitol attack. On his first day in office last year, Trump pardoned nearly all 1,600 charged rioters and commuted the sentences of the leaders of right-wing extremist groups like the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers.

The site labels all of the 1,600 pardon recipients as “patriotic Americans.” That group includes members of far-right militias, people convicted of beating police, alleged **Nazi sympathizers** and others who **brought weapons** to the Capitol.

CNN’s Daniel Dale and Annie Grayer contributed to this report.



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