

in association with the *World Affairs Forum* presents

**Gregory J Thwaite, Attorney-at-Law**

**Public Address: *The Role of Criminal Trials in Illuminating the January Putsch in Washington DC***



**Synopsis**

The events of the week 4 to 8 January 2021 constitute a watershed for the body politic of the United States. The paralysis of its Congress by a riotous mob is unique. The Capitol in Washington DC fell into British hands in the War of 1812, but was successfully defended during the American Civil War, and against protestors during the Depression and the Vietnam War.

A nation as proud of its democracy as the United States will reflect on the events as long as it endures. However, an

immediate focus of the US Government is the arrest and prosecution of persons involved in the Putsch.

Primarily a criminal trial focuses on the accused. Yet, determination of guilt will likely involve a precise analysis of the circumstances of the riot. Further, sentencing of those convicted may involve deep consideration of the reaction of a severely divided citizenry. Thereafter, the President will need to consider whether to exercise the power to pardon. The address will analyse the criminal procedure, to see how decisions are reached, to identify areas where the conduct of the United States Government may be analysed, and to ponder how strict legality and political influence interact in influencing the trial and subsequent sentencing.

**Speaker**

Gregory J Thwaite is an Attorney-at-Law, qualified in the State of California. He is also admitted before the US Supreme Court, which has its seat within view of the Capitol in Washington.

For four years he practised law in Los Angeles, California. He has appeared as counsel in civil litigation in both State and federal courts in California, including *Yamaha Motor Corp., U.S.A., Petitioner v. The Superior Court Of Santa Clara County (Barbic)* (1987) 195 Cal. App. 3d 654. Outside the USA he has appeared as counsel in all levels of the New Zealand Court system, before the Privy Council in London, and in the Court of Appeal of Samoa.

Mr Thwaite holds a B.A. degree (Greek and Latin) and a LL.B. (Hons) degree from the University of Auckland, and an LL.M. degree from the Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Massachusetts. He has lectured part-time at the University of Auckland, and at the Johann Wolfgang von Goethe University, Frankfurt, Germany. An aficionado of US politics, he was in Washington for the first Inauguration of each of Presidents Clinton (1993), Obama (2009), and Trump (2017).

**Gregory J Thwaite**

**Thursday 28 January 2021  
6:00pm – 7:30pm**

Lecture Theatre 039  
Old Arts Building  
(Clock Tower)  
University of Auckland  
Princes Street  
Auckland CBD

**Informal Meet-Up:**  
None (owing to virus)

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**Non-Foot Transport:**  
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