

FBI, DHS Officially Classify “Antifa” Activities as “Domestic Terrorist Violence”

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President Trump was crucified by the mainstream media a few weeks back after hosting an improvised press conference and saying there was “blame on both sides” for the violence in Charlottesville that resulted in the death of a counterprotester. The comments resulted in most of Trump’s advisory councils being disbanded, as CEO’s around the country pounced on the opportunity to distance themselves from the administration, and heightened calls from CNN for impeachment proceedings.

The problem is that while Trump’s delivery probably could have been a bit more artful, the underlying message seems to be proving more accurate with each passing day and each new outbreak of Antifa violence.

As [Politico](#) points out today, previously unreported FBI and Department of Homeland Security studies found that “anarchist extremist” group like Antifa have been the “primary instigators of violence at public rallies” going back to at least April 2016 when the reports were first published.

Federal authorities have been warning state and local officials since early 2016 that leftist extremists known as “antifa” had become increasingly confrontational and dangerous, so much so that the Department of Homeland Security formally classified their activities as “domestic terrorist violence,” according to interviews and confidential law enforcement documents obtained by POLITICO.

Since well before the Aug. 12 rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, turned deadly, DHS has been issuing warnings about the growing likelihood of lethal violence between the left-wing anarchists and right-wing white supremacist and nationalist groups.

Previously unreported documents disclose that by April 2016, authorities believed that “anarchist extremists” were the primary instigators of violence at public rallies against a range of targets. They were blamed by authorities for attacks on the police, government and political institutions, along with symbols of “the capitalist system,” racism, social injustice and fascism, according to a confidential 2016 joint intelligence assessment by DHS and the FBI.

Not surprisingly, law enforcement officials noted that the rise in Antifa violence overlapped perfectly with Trump’s campaign as they made appearances at rally after rally to incite

chaos...all the while making it seem as if violent, racist Trump supporters were to blame.

“It was in that period [as the Trump campaign emerged] that we really became aware of them,” said one senior law enforcement official tracking domestic extremists in a state that has become a front line in clashes between the groups. “These antifa guys were showing up with weapons, shields and bike helmets and just beating the shit out of people. ... They’re using Molotov cocktails, they’re starting fires, they’re throwing bombs and smashing windows.”

Almost immediately, the right-wing targets of the antifa attacks began fighting back, bringing more and larger weapons and launching unprovoked attacks of their own, the documents and interviews show. And the extremists on both sides have been using the confrontations, especially since Charlottesville, to recruit unprecedented numbers of new members, raise money and threaten more confrontations, they say.

“Everybody is wondering, ‘What are we gonna do? How are we gonna deal with this?’” said the senior state law enforcement official. “Every time they have one of these protests where both sides are bringing guns, there are sphincters tightening in my world. Emotions get high, and fingers get twitchy on the trigger.”

As you’ll likely recall, one such event came in June 2016 when Antifa showed up at a rally in Sacramento and began violently attacking protestors with canes and knives. Of course, with the whole thing caught on video, it’s pretty clear who the instigators of violence were (see our post [here](#)).

Some of the DHS and FBI intelligence reports began flagging the antifa protesters before the election. In one from last September, portions of which were read to POLITICO, DHS studied “recent violent clashes ... at lawfully organized white supremacist” events including a June 2016 rally at the California Capitol in Sacramento organized by the Traditionalist Workers Party and its affiliate, the Golden State Skinheads.

According to police, counter-protesters linked to antifa and affiliated groups like By Any Means Necessary attacked, causing a riot after which at least 10 people were hospitalized, some with stab wounds.

At the Sacramento rally, antifa protesters came looking for violence, and “engaged in several activities indicating proficiency in pre-operational planning, to include organizing carpools to travel from different locations, raising bail money in preparation for arrests, counter-surveilling law enforcement using three-man scout teams, using handheld radios for communication, and coordinating the event via social media,” the DHS report said.

Insane video. Crowd sees any signs of "Nazis" and they run&attack. A lot of people bleeding/getting maced. [@ABC10 pic.twitter.com/PoFhlfZ95](#)

— Frances Wang (@FrancesWangTV) [June 26, 2016](#)

Of course, it’s not just California. As the FBI and DHS note, the Antifa group operates much like terrorist cells with disconnected groups all over the country.

Even before Charlottesville, dozens and, in some cases, hundreds of people on both sides showed up at events in Texas, California, Oregon and elsewhere, carrying weapons and looking for a fight. In the Texas capital of Austin, armed antifa protesters attacked Trump supporters and white groups at several recent rallies, and then swarmed police in a successful effort to stop them from making arrests.

California has become another battleground, with violent confrontations in Berkeley, Sacramento and Orange County leading to numerous injuries. And antifa counter-protesters initiated attacks in two previous clashes in Charlottesville, according to the law enforcement reports and interviews.

More recently, the antifa groups, which some describe as the Anti-Fascist Action Network, have evolved out of the leftist anti-government groups like "Black bloc," protesters clad in black and wearing masks that caused violence at events like the 1999 Seattle World Trade Organization protests. They claim to have no leader and no hierarchy, but authorities following them believe they are organized via decentralized networks of cells that coordinate with each other. Often, they spend weeks planning for violence at upcoming events, according to the April 2016 DHS and FBI report entitled "Baseline Comparison of US and Foreign Anarchist Extremist Movements."

Dozens of armed anti-fascist groups have emerged, including Redneck Revolt and the Red Guards, according to the reports and interviews. One report from New Jersey authorities said self-described antifa groups have been established in cities including New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and San Francisco.

Meanwhile, even by the spring of 2016, the FBI had already grown concerned enough about Antifa that they began investigating overseas trips by activists out of concerns that they were coordinating with European anarchists to stage large bombings in the U.S.

By the spring of 2016, the anarchist groups had become so aggressive, including making armed attacks on individuals and small groups of perceived enemies, that federal officials launched a global investigation with the help of the U.S. intelligence community, according to the DHS and FBI assessment.

The purpose of the investigation, according to the April 2016 assessment: To determine whether the U.S.-based anarchists might start committing terrorist bombings like their counterparts in "foreign anarchist extremist movements" in Greece, Italy and Mexico, possibly at the Republican and Democratic conventions that summer.

Some of the antifa activists have gone overseas to train and fight with fellow anarchist organizations, including two Turkey-based groups fighting the Islamic State, according to interviews and internet postings.

Alas, we suspect you'll hear precisely nothing about any of this on CNN.

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