



JOINT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



18 July 2016

(U) Law Enforcement Vigilance and Caution Urged during Public and Political Events

(U) Scope

(U//FOUO) This *Joint Intelligence Bulletin (JIB)* is intended to provide situational awareness concerning the domestic extremist threat to national public and political events.* This *JIB* is provided by the FBI and DHS to support law enforcement in their respective activities and to assist federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government counterterrorism and law enforcement officials and private sector security partners in deterring, preventing, or disrupting terrorist attacks against the United States.

* (U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS define **domestic extremists** as individuals based and operating entirely within the United States or its territories without direction or inspiration from a foreign terrorist group or other foreign power who seek to further political or social goals, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

IA-0167-16

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(U) Domestic Extremists Pose Persistent Threat to Public and Political Events

(U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS assess the domestic extremist threat to public and political events will persist due to the ongoing nature of many of the drivers of extremist violence, including the upcoming presidential national conventions, racial tensions, and the perceived abuse of power by government authorities. Some domestic extremist movements have previously exploited First Amendment protected activities such as public or political gatherings—without the knowledge or support of the organizers of these events—in order to facilitate or commit violent acts. A recent example of this exploitation occurred at a 26 June 2016 white supremacist rally that resulted in violence in Sacramento, California. The presidential national conventions could present such an opportunity for exploitation. The FBI and DHS urge law enforcement officers to be vigilant and cautious during all public and political events, as these situations could be used to mask or promote violent extremist activity.

(U) The following are examples of domestic extremist movements that have exploited public and political events to commit or incite violence and other criminal acts.

- » (U//FOUO) Black separatist extremists (BSEs) have targeted law enforcement for violence in response to the historical mistreatment of African Americans and their perception of an unjust judicial system.* The FBI and DHS judge on the basis of threat reporting and previous BSE responses to police-involved incidents and outcomes of legal proceedings that perceived police brutality targeting African Americans will likely continue to serve as a catalyst for retaliatory violence by BSEs. BSEs have been known to attempt to incite violence at large crowds against perceived enemies such as law enforcement. Traditionally, they aim to recruit young people and individuals with the propensity for violence, which have also included gang members.
- » (U//FOUO) White supremacist extremists (WSEs) and their ideological opponents—including some anarchist extremists—have violently clashed at First Amendment protected events.†‡ WSEs have historically targeted for violence racial, ethnic, and religious minorities, the federal government, and those perceived to detract from the purity of the white race— to include sex offenders, drug abusers, the homeless, and “race traitors” (i.e. whites perceived as disloyal to their race). WSEs can be motivated by religious or political beliefs.
- » (U//FOUO) Militia extremists use force or violence against those whom they perceive as infringing upon their Constitutional rights, including law enforcement officers.§ Militia extremists may possess and use

* (U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS define **black separatist extremists** as individuals who seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, to attain separation from the non-black US population. This separation includes, but is not limited to, physical separation, political separation, or social separation as demonstrated by separate communities, political institutions, or social organizations. This desire for separation is typically based on either a religious or political belief system, which is sometimes formed around or includes a belief in racial superiority or supremacy. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

† (U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS define **white supremacist extremists** as individuals who seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, to support their belief in the intellectual and moral superiority of the white race over other races. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

‡ (U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS define **anarchist extremists** as individuals who seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, to further their opposition to all forms of capitalism, corporate globalization, and governing institutions, which they perceive as harmful to society. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

§ (U//FOUO) The FBI and DHS define **militia extremists** as individuals who seek, wholly or in part through unlawful acts of force or violence, based on their belief that the US government is purposely exceeding its Constitutional authority and is attempting to establish a totalitarian regime. Consequently, these individuals oppose many federal and state laws and regulations, particularly those related to firearms ownership. Militia extremists take overt steps to violently resist or facilitate the overthrow of the US government. The mere

firearms, demonstrate a familiarity with explosive devices, conduct paramilitary training, and engage in operational security to avoid law enforcement detection or scrutiny in an effort to advance their ideological objectives. Since the April 2014 armed standoff in Bunkerville, Nevada, militia extremists have demonstrated an increasingly aggressive posture to engage law enforcement in armed conflict. Militia extremists have also shown the intent to serve as security or peacekeepers at rallies and protests—which may incite violence from their ideological opponents.

- » (U//FOUO) Anarchist extremists have committed violence against law enforcement officers as perceived symbols of authority and oppression. Some anarchist extremists are also ideologically opposed to racism and may be motivated to commit violence against law enforcement in response to actions they view as racially-motivated. Anarchist extremists in the past have exploited lawful protected events to conduct criminal activity, a trend, which we assess, will continue. Anarchist extremists have physically assaulted and injured law enforcement officers, most often in association with political and economic events. During such confrontations, anarchist extremists have used improvised weapons against law enforcement officers, such as bricks, rocks, pipes, and sticks, and, in at least one incident, threw an incendiary device at a line of officers, injuring one police officer.

(U) Implications

(U//FOUO) We anticipate the majority of individuals protesting at the upcoming public and political events will act lawfully and non-violently, although domestic extremist violence is possible. Based on recent violence by domestic extremists at lawful protests and their historical willingness to travel across the country to commit or incite violence at these events, we assess some domestic extremists will likely continue to exploit lawful protests to facilitate criminal activity at future upcoming events such as the political conventions.

(U) Potential Threat Indicators

(U//FOUO) We are providing indicators to aid law enforcement and first responders in identifying and mitigating threats. The totality of behavioral indicators and other relevant circumstances should be evaluated when considering any law enforcement response or action. (Note: behaviors associated with the below indicators can include constitutionally protected activities. The FBI does not initiate any investigative activity based solely on the exercise of First Amendment activities or on the race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity of the subject, or a combination of only such factors.)

(U//FOUO) Possible indicators of planned criminal or violent domestic extremist activity during upcoming social or political events include:

- » (U//FOUO) Reports of pre-operational surveillance of government buildings, symbols of capitalism, or symbols of corporate globalization.
- » (U//FOUO) Reports of individuals pilfering construction sites or collecting sharp or heavy objects, such as bricks, pipes, or rocks to use as projectiles-possibly carried in backpacks.
- » (U//FOUO) Possession of spray paint for defacing signs and buildings.
- » (U//FOUO) Possession of nails or caltrops for use in disrupting traffic or law enforcement response.
- » (U//FOUO) Possession of fireworks, flares, or smoke devices during protests.

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- » (U//FOUO) Possession of home-made shields, sharp or blunt objects such as knives, machetes, tire irons, sticks, or hammers during protests.
- » (U//FOUO) Possession of bolt cutters to bypass security fences.
- » (U//FOUO) Possession of gas masks, Maalox or eye drops to remedy law enforcement use of tear gas.
- » (U//FOUO) Reports of protestor changing clothing to avoid law enforcement.
- » (U//FOUO) Reports of protestors flying anarchist flags, possessing anarchist signs, or clothing bear anarchist symbols, coupled with other factors reasonably indicative of plans or materials used to commit violence.
- » (U//FOUO) Reports of individuals acquiring materials to construct improvised incendiary devices or improvised explosive devices.
- » (U//FOUO) Pre-staging of bricks, rocks, or debris along protest routes for use in rioting.
- » (U//FOUO) Movement of newspaper containers and trashcans to create barricades- possibly lighting them on fire.

(U//FOUO) Possible indicators of pre-operational surveillance or attack planning include:

- » (U//FOUO) Unusual or prolonged interest in or attempts to gain sensitive information about security measures of personnel, entry points, peak days and hours of operation, and access controls such as alarms or locks.
- » (U//FOUO) Observation of security reaction drills or procedures; multiple false alarms or fictitious emergency calls to same locations or similar venues.
- » (U//FOUO) Discreet use of cameras or video recorders, sketching, or note-taking consistent with pre-operational surveillance.
- » (U//FOUO) Unusual or unexplained interest in speaking with building maintenance personnel.
- » (U//FOUO) Observation of or questions about facility security measures, including barriers, restricted areas, cameras, and intrusion detection systems.
- » (U//FOUO) Observations of or questions about facility air conditioning, heating, and ventilation systems.
- » (U//FOUO) Suspicious purchases of dual-use items that could be used to construct an explosive device, including hydrogen peroxide, acetone, gasoline, propane, or fertilizer.
- » (U//FOUO) Suspicious activities in storage facilities or other areas that could be used to construct an explosive device.
- » (U//FOUO) Attempted or unauthorized access to rooftops or other potentially sensitive areas.
- » (U//FOUO) Unusual or bulky clothing that is inconsistent with the weather.

- » (U//FOUO) Unusual weapon purchases and/or unusual requests for shooting lessons or range time
- » (U//FOUO) Theft of uniforms, particularly from security companies, law enforcement, fire personnel.

(U//FOUO) Please report suspicious activities associated with any of the indicators listed above to the contact information at the end of this document.

(U) Source Summary Statement

(U//FOUO) The information used in this JIB is drawn from FBI reporting and open sources. The open source information has been corroborated through other sources and is considered credible. We have **medium to high confidence** in source reliability, which extends to judgments and conclusions made in this product.

(U) Report Suspicious Activity

(U) To report suspicious activity, law enforcement, Fire-EMS, private security personnel, and emergency managers should follow established protocols; all other personnel should call 911 or contact local law enforcement. Suspicious activity reports (SARs) will be forwarded to the appropriate fusion center and FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force for further action. For more information on the Nationwide SAR Initiative, visit <http://nsi.ncirc.gov/resources.aspx>.

(U) Administrative Note: Law Enforcement Response

(U//FOUO) Information contained in this intelligence bulletin is for official use only. No portion of this bulletin should be released to the media, the general public, or over nonsecure Internet servers. Release of this material could adversely affect or jeopardize investigative activities.

(U) For comments or questions related to the content or dissemination of this document, please contact the FBI Counterterrorism Analysis Section by e-mail at FBI_CTAS@ic.fbi.gov or the I&A Production Branch by e-mail at IA.PM@hq.dhs.gov.

(U) Tracked by: HSEC-8.1, HSEC-8.2, HSEC-8.3, HSEC-8.6.2, HSEC-8.6.3, HSEC-8.10.1