

(U//FOUO) Potential Indicators of Violent Activity by Anarchist Extremists at Events and Protests in the Homeland

(U//FOUO) There are a number of behaviors and potential indicators of anarchist extremist planning to engage in violent activities during legal protest events. Some of these behavioral indicators may involve constitutionally protected activities, and should be supported by additional facts before increased suspicions are justified. Most single behavioral indicators should not be the sole basis for law enforcement action. These indicators, therefore, only support a reasonable suspicion of violent activity when considered in conjunction with additional supporting facts. Independently, each indicator may represent legitimate recreational or commercial activities; however, the presence of multiple indicators could suggest a heightened threat.

Event Build-up



Planning of criminal or violent activities related to protest activity or events often occurs through internet chat rooms, social networking sites, message boards, phone apps, and poster campaigns covering areas near the event. Potential indicators of planned violence at an event could include:

- Public "calls to arms" or attempts to recruit members through social media, coupled with more explicit calls for violence via encrypted messaging applications;
- Posts on social media sites by groups for carpooling from other regions to violently confront opponents at public events;
- Solicitation of funds for legal fees and/or medical costs associated with upcoming public events because of anticipated violence;
- Individuals conducting surveillance of areas around planned events, such as parking areas, marching routes, or rallying points, with the aim of identifying places to hide weapons and/or supplies, or the best possible locations for rapid egress and/or hiding from law enforcement;
- Reports of pilfered construction sites for potential projectiles, such as rocks, batteries, canned food, and pipes; and
- Recovery of weapons caches comprised of projectiles like rocks, bricks, or other easily thrown debris near event or protest routes.

Attire



Violent anarchist extremists may "black bloc" tactics—in which large groups dress in all-black clothing and face masks—in order to conduct criminal activity while remaining anonymous and indistinguishable. (Note: Not all anarchist extremists will be easily identifiable, nor will all individuals dressed in black attire necessarily be affiliated with the anarchist extremist movement.) Potential observable indicators could also include:

- Black and red clothing covering most of a person's body to mask their identity;
- Individuals wearing masks, helmets, ski or gas masks, or bandanas;
- Participants wearing layers of clothing when weather conditions make such behavior unusual;
- Individuals wearing insignia indicating affiliation with violent groups; and
- Participants covering faces with scarves, homemade gas masks, or wearing "Guy Fawkes" type masks.

Weaponry



Participants intending to engage in violence and criminal activity may employ rudimentary improvised incendiary devices, edged weapons, blunt objects, rocks, poles, and other self-fashioned weapons or re-purposed items. Potential indicators of planned violence by individuals at an event could include:

- Possession of rocks, sharpened objects, martial-arts-type weapons, bottles, or heavy objects that could be used as projectiles;
- Possession of balloons, which have been used to throw feces, urine, chemicals, and other unidentified substances at law enforcement and other individuals at events;
- Possession of home-made shields in preparation for engaging in criminal or violent activity against law enforcement;
- Possession of chemical sprays like pepper spray or "bear repellent" spray;
- Possession of fireworks, flares, or smoke devices;
- Possession of bike locks, sling shots, or flag poles (including modified poles containing sharp objects like nails affixed to the ends) are other miscellaneous items potentially indicating violence.

Symbols Sometimes Associated with Anarchist Extremists



(U) Anti-Fascist Flag Symbol



(U) Anti-Fascist Downward Arrow Symbol



(U) Anti-Racist Action Symbol



(U) ANTIFA LOST Rights Flag



(U) Trans/Queer ANTIFA Arrows

These symbols are not themselves indicators of violent activity, but when viewed in conjunction with additional facts may support a reasonable suspicion of violent activity.

Obscuring Tactics and Investigative Insights



Violence associated with anarchist extremists may involve criminal actions, ranging from vandalism, arson, and other forms of property destruction against symbols of capitalism, to rioting and assaults on law enforcement officers or ideological opponents. As such, familiarity with potential tactics used by anarchist extremists to commit criminal acts during events could assist in developing mitigation strategies to deter violence. Possible observable behaviors or indicators of violent activity by anarchist extremists during an event could include:

- Vandalism of vehicles, businesses, and other property;
- Use of black-bloc-style clothing by participants to reduce the risk of identification;
- Small groups splintering from larger lawful protest group to engage in criminal or violent activity;
- Blending into a large group of lawful protestors, exploiting their constitutionally protected activities to shield criminal offenders from law enforcement view;
- Use of public transportation or parking lots located significant distances from the protest event to prevent law enforcement from obtaining personally identifiable information from license plates and vehicle descriptions; and
- Obscuring license plates by congregating at the rear or in front of vehicles when identified law enforcement vehicles are nearby.

SOURCE: Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

*Note: DHS defines **anarchist extremists** as groups or individuals who facilitate or engage in acts of unlawful violence as a means of changing the government and society in support of the belief that all forms of capitalism and corporate globalization should be opposed and that governing institutions are unnecessary and harmful to society.