



OFFICE of INTELLIGENCE and ANALYSIS
INTELLIGENCE IN BRIEF

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PUBLIC SAFETY & SECURITY

(U//FOUO) Recent Violence in Portland Emblematic of Historic Clashes in the Region

(U//FOUO) We assess that sustained violence against government personnel and facilities in Portland, Oregon since May reflects the enduring threat environment in the region since at least 2015. Portland is among several metropolitan centers throughout the Pacific Northwest that have a longstanding history of violent clashes involving protestors and counter-protestors adhering to opposing ideologies. Historic clashes probably have contributed to violent opportunist perceptions that the region is permissive for such activity and have allowed violent actors to refine their tactical operations over time, contributing to higher-than-normal levels of both random and premediated violence.

- *(U//LES) The regularity of violence amidst lawful protests in Portland since 26 May contrasts with national trends, which reflect a steady decline in violence during the last two weeks. Several incidents in early July involved assaults against law enforcement officers, arson, and damage of government facilities, according to a Department of Justice press release and Department of Homeland Security reporting.*
- *(U//LES) Much of the recent violence against federal facilities and law enforcement probably has been committed by individuals affiliated with anarchist and anti-fascist ideologies, judging from tactics used to commit violence and self-identification as part of these movements. Violent opportunists have used coordinated communication protocols and organized into small groups responsible for various tasks intended to undermine law enforcement's response to protest activity, demonstrating protestors' familiarity with the operating environment and suggesting that some violent opportunists may be comprised of locally organized networks, judging from DHS reporting.*
- *(U) Since 2016, suspected anarchist extremists, including self-identified anti-fascists, and violent opportunists have engaged in violence against participants at Patriot Prayer^{USPER} or similar rallies, according to media reporting. Some Patriot Prayer members and probable supporters have provoked violence from counter-protestors at these rallies, according to media and nongovernmental organization reporting.*

(U) History of Opposing Movements Clashing Amidst Lawful Protests

(U//FOUO) Patriot Prayer has organized several First Amendment-protected events on the West Coast intended to "liberate the conservatives on the West Coast," according to press reporting quoting the organization's leader. While the organization does not explicitly advocate violence, several events have devolved into violence and reportedly attracted the attendance of likeminded individuals willing to engage in violence. Some anarchist extremists self-identifying as "ANTIFA" attend lawful competing counter-protests willing to engage in violence. "ANTIFA" is a moniker for anti-fascist that is also used by non-violent adherents and does not reference a single organization. Identifying with "ANTIFA" or using the term without engaging in violent extremism may also be constitutionally protected.



(U//FOUO) Violent Clashes and Related Incidents in the Pacific Northwest

(U//FOUO) Recent violence in Portland, Oregon is emblematic of clashes that have long occurred between ideological groups resulting in the targeting of law enforcement. Incidents since 2015 highlight the range of activity associated with this concern for how these incidents could lead to escalation.



Source, Reference, and Dissemination Information

Source Summary Statement	(U//FOUO) We have low confidence in our assessment that sustained violence against government personnel and facilities in Portland, Oregon, since May reflects the enduring threat environment in the region because we lack insight into the motives for the most recent attacks. We base this assessment on reporting from DHS, Department of Justice, and media organizations citing law enforcement officials and sources with firsthand access to the information throughout the course of conducting the investigation. Our confidence level could increase if we see more reports of violence or receive information regarding the motivation or organization of individuals involved.
Definitions	<p>(U//FOUO) Anarchist extremists: DHS I&A 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.</p> <p>(U//FOUO) Violent opportunists: DHS I&A defines violent opportunists as illicit actors who may or may not hold violent extremist ideological beliefs, but seek to exploit opportunities in non-violent protests to engage in unlawful violence against federal, state, or local government and law enforcement personnel or facilities, as well as other critical infrastructure, that either poses a danger to human life, threat of potential destruction of the critical infrastructure, or would be so disruptive as to endanger the minimal operations of state and local governments to respond. These actors may capitalize on violent extremist narratives often espoused by organized domestic terrorist movements, such as anarchist extremist or racially motivated violent extremists, to justify violent activities that may potentially destroy government critical infrastructure at the state, local, and federal levels, and may attempt to incite others to violence to provide cover for their own illicit activities. Their primary motivations may be influenced by a variety of criminal objectives and goals.</p> <p>(U//FOUO) White supremacist extremists: DHS I&A defines white supremacist extremists as groups or individuals who facilitate or engage in acts of unlawful violence directed at the federal government, ethnic minorities, or Jewish persons in support of their belief that Caucasians are intellectually and morally superior to other races and their perception that the government is controlled by Jewish persons.</p>
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