

U.S. intelligence report affirms racist extremists most dangerous

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Washington, March 18 (RHC)-- A joint report by several branches of the United States intelligence community concludes “that racially or ethnically motivated violent extremists” are the “most likely to conduct mass-casualty” attacks against civilians.

Alongside racially-motivated violence, militia violence “present the most lethal [domestic violent extremism] threat” to “law enforcement and government personnel and facilities.”

The report, declassified on Tuesday, was conducted “in consultation with the Attorney General and Secretary of Homeland Security”, the National Counterterrorism Center, the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security. The CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency contributed.

The report defines “racially-motivated extremists” as those with “ideological agendas bias, often related to race or ethnicity.” “Militia extremists” are those who “take overt steps to violently resist or facilitate the overthrow of the US Government” because they believe it to be “purposefully” taking steps to establish a “totalitarian regime.”

Those designated by the intelligence community as “militia extremists” often oppose federal and state laws and regulations, especially in relationship to gun ownership.

The declassified report comes in the wake of the January 6 riot at the US Capitol, an attempt by far-right groups to stop a joint session of Congress from certifying President Joe Biden’s electoral victory. Alleged members of the Oath Keepers and Three Percenters, two of the most prominent militias in the U.S., have also been charged in relation to the riot.

Five people died after the riot, including one US Capitol Police officer.

The Biden administration promised to take steps to address white nationalist violence, which grew under the previous administration. Murders determined to be motivated by bias reached a record high in 2019, with 51 deaths, according to FBI statistics.

Almost half the deaths came from a shooting at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, that was meant to target Latinos. The alleged attacker, Patrick Wood Crusius, posted a hate-filled manifesto before the shooting, according to authorities.

Biden ordered a review of violent domestic groups in January. White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said at the time the administration wants “fact-based analysis, upon which we can shape policy.”

The report concluded that “escalating support from persons in the United States or abroad, growing perceptions of government overreach related to legal or policy changes and disruptions, and high-profile attacks spurring follow-on attacks” could cause the threat of violence to increase in 2021 and beyond.

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