

Written Testimony of
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Congress of the United States
Select Committee to Investigate the
January 6th
Attack on the United States Capitol
Regarding
“The Role of the Proud Boys in the January 6th Capitol Attack and Beyond”
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Chairman Bennie Thompson and esteemed members of the select committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on the white supremacist Proud Boys and their role before, during, and after the January 6 insurrection. My name is Heidi Beirich. I hold a Ph.D. in political science from Purdue University and am the co-founder of the Global Project Against Hate and Extremism (GPAHE). I am an expert on white supremacist and far-right extremist movements, serving as an advisory board member of the International Network for Hate Studies, a co-founder and co-chair of the Change the Terms Coalition, which advocates for solutions to online extremism, and the author of numerous studies on extremism as well as co-editor of *Neo-Confederacy: A Critical Introduction*. My organization is a member of the Christchurch Call Advisory Network, an international body created by the governments of France and New Zealand after the 2019 Christchurch mosque attacks, which the U.S. joined last year, that advises on the handling of online terrorist content and activity and is also a member of President Biden’s Summit for Democracy Year of Action. My research has been cited in hundreds of academic pieces and news reports, including dozens of analyses of the Proud Boys. I am honored by your request for testimony on this group.

My expertise on the Proud Boys reaches back to the group’s founding in 2016, when I was serving as the director of the Southern Poverty Law Center’s (SPLC) Intelligence Project. We had immediate concerns about the ideology and potentially violent nature of the organization. My team and I closely monitored the Proud Boys and issued several reports about their hateful views and activities. Our concerns about violence were validated by a series of incidents, such as a 2018 street battle against protesters in Manhattan, for which ten Proud Boys members were charged with assault. Due to the group’s widely documented racist and bigoted nature, it was added to the SPLC’s 2017 hate group list. The SPLC defines a hate group as “an organization or collection of individuals that – based on its official statements or principles, the statements of its leaders, or its activities – has beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people,

typically for their immutable characteristics.” The organizations on the list “vilify others because of their race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity – prejudices that strike at the heart of our democratic values and fracture society along its most fragile fault lines.”¹ The Proud Boys remain on the list to this day.²

Since co-founding GPAHE in 2020, I have continued to monitor the organization and its activities. I also served as an expert witness in a civil suit against the Proud Boys, *Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church vs. Proud Boys International, L.L.C.; Enrique Tarrío, John Does #s1-8*.³ My testimony here will focus on four topics: the ideological belief system of the Proud Boys, and the role racism, other forms of bigotry, and white supremacy play in their views; how the organization’s activities prior to the January 6th attack laid the groundwork for their involvement in the insurrection; the group’s role in the events of January 6, 2021; and finally the impact of the events of January 6 on the organization.

Proud Boys Organization Promotes White Supremacist Beliefs

The Proud Boys are an organization that espouses racist, misogynistic, Islamophobic, anti-LGBTQ, and anti-immigrant beliefs. Members, including each of the group’s three leaders--Gavin McInnes, Jason Van Dyke and Enrique Tarrío--have promoted white supremacy and worked hand-in-hand with other white supremacist groups.⁴ When Gavin McInnes founded the group in 2016, he referred to it as a “pro-Western fraternity.” In an Op-Ed for *Taki’s Magazine*, McInnes announced the Proud Boys’ formation and described its members as “Western chauvinists who refuse to apologize for creating the modern world” and who “long for the days when ‘girls were girls and men were men.’”⁵ The term “Western chauvinism” is thinly veiled code for white supremacy and patriarchal misogyny. The term is employed to make the Proud Boys’ motives appear more palatable to mainstream audiences and to deflect charges of racism.

The choice of *Taki’s Magazine* as a launch for the group is noteworthy. The outlet has published many white supremacists including Richard Spencer,⁶ a leader in the August 2017 Charlottesville, Va., racist riots; Peter Brimelow, who has long argued immigrants are destroying America’s white culture;⁷ and Jared Taylor,⁸ who argues that Black and Brown people are inherently more violent than white people, and whose ideas inspired Dylann Roof, who killed nine people during a Bible study at Mother Emmanuel Church in Charleston, S.C. in 2015.⁹ The Op-Ed described the Proud Boys’ second meeting in New York City, which featured drinking and fighting as well as reading excerpts of Pat Buchanan’s book, *Death of the West: How Dying Populations and Immigrant Invasions Imperil Our Culture and Civilization*.¹⁰ Buchanan’s book

¹ <https://www.splcenter.org/20200318/frequently-asked-questions-about-hate-groups>

² <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/general-hate>

³ <https://www.lawyerscommittee.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Expert-Report-Default-Judgment-Motion-Filed.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.adl.org/proudboys>.

⁵ <https://www.adl.org/proudboys>.

⁶ <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/individual/richard-bertrand-spencer-0>

⁷ <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/individual/peter-brimelow>

⁸ <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/individual/jared-taylor>

⁹ <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2017/08/10/do-you-want-bigots-gavin-because-how-you-get-bigots>

¹⁰ https://www.takimag.com/article/introducing_the_proud_boys_gavin_mcinnes/

explicitly endorses white supremacist ideas about the United States and claims that non-white immigrants are destroying the country.¹¹ Buchanan argues that America, the “greatest civilization in history,” is heading towards becoming a “Third World” nation by 2050, approximately when the white population is slated by the Census Bureau to fall below 50 percent due primarily to non-white immigration. The original working title for Buchanan’s book was *The Death of Whitey*, which the publisher rejected.¹²

The Proud Boys creed, “The West is the Best,” is deeply telling of their bias against non-white ethnicities and non-Christian religions. At times, the Proud Boys use this coded language, like substituting “the West” or “Western civilization” for the racial category of whiteness, to give a wink and nod to white supremacy while trying to maintain plausible deniability that they are not racist.¹³ But this is a façade belied by an extensive track record of racist and bigoted comments by members as well as their extensive links to other white supremacist groups.

The bigotry of the organization is evident in its rites of membership. To join the Proud Boys, all prospective members must submit a video stating, “I’m a proud Western Chauvinist; I refuse to apologize for creating the modern world.” This is very close in wording and theme to the “14 Words,” a popular white supremacist slogan, which reads: “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for our white children.” The slogan was coined by David Lane, a member of the domestic terrorist group The Order, which engaged in several acts of violence in the 1980s including the assassination of Jewish Denver radio talk show host Alan Berg. It is the most widespread slogan in the white supremacist and neo-Nazi world, both in the U.S. and abroad. Recent white supremacist mass murderers, including Dylann Roof and the Pittsburgh Tree of Life synagogue shooter, Jason Bowers, have used its shorthand, just the number 14, in their writings. Often white supremacists post “1488,” which combines the 14 words with a reference to “Heil Hitler,” because “H” is the eighth letter in the alphabet. Both slogans emphasize the need to secure or preserve Western civilization, which in the view of the speakers means the dominance of whites, and McInnes is aware of this fact. In an episode of McInnes’ video show that featured white nationalist Emily Youcis, she asked him to say the 14 Words. McInnes mostly complied, replacing “white” with “Western.”¹⁴ Overall, the Proud Boys’ slogan about Western chauvinists creating the modern world cannot be disentangled from the idea that Western is a code word for “white people.”¹⁵

Leaders and Members Unapologetically Hateful

Each of the three leaders of the Proud Boys has a demonstrated record of bigotry. McInnes has a long history of publicly making racist, antisemitic, misogynistic, and other bigoted comments. He often equates whiteness with a superior culture, a fundamental tenet of white supremacy. In 2002, he said “We seem really racist and homophobic because we hang around with f*gs and

¹¹ <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2017/08/10/do-you-want-bigots-gavin-because-how-you-get-bigots>

¹² <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2002/citing-neo-nazi-and-racist-sources-buchanan-sounds-alarm>

¹³ <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/26/990274685/how-extremists-weaponize-irony-to-spread-hate>

¹⁴ Samantha Kutner, “Swiping Right: The Allure of Hyper Masculinity and Cryptofascism for Men Who Join the Proud Boys,” International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, May 2020.

¹⁵ <https://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/inside-miami-alt-right-and-proud-boys-chapter-10945821>

n****rs so much. It just becomes part of our vernacular.”¹⁶ That same year, when he was asked by a reporter what he thought about his neighbors in New York City’s Williamsburg neighborhood, McInnes said, “Well, at least they’re not n****rs or Puerto Ricans. At least they’re white.”¹⁷ In 2003, he said, “I love being white and I think it’s something to be very proud of. I don’t want our culture diluted. We need to close the borders now and let everyone assimilate to a Western, white, English-speaking way of life.”¹⁸

There is substantial additional evidence of McInnes’ racism. In 2016, McInnes called Jada Pinkett Smith, who is Black, a “monkey actress.”¹⁹ He has also said that it is fair to describe him as an “Islamophobe.”²⁰ On a November 2016 episode of “The Gavin McInnes Show,” he repeatedly yelled “Heil Hitler” and gave the Nazi salute.²¹ In March 2017, McInnes was accused of antisemitism for posting a video on the far-right, anti-Muslim Rebel Media platform called “Ten Things I Hate about Jews,” which was later retitled “Ten Things I Hate About Israel.”²² McInnes would later tweet, “10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT THE GODDAMN MOTHERFUCKING JEWS!” He has also justified discrimination against Jews, saying that historically, perhaps Jews “were ostracized for a good reason.”²³ On January 17, 2018, McInnes referred to Senator Cory Booker as a “Sambo” on his podcast.²⁴ On his Conservative Review Television (CRTV) show on April 24, 2018, McInnes said, “Muslims have a problem with inbreeding. They tend to marry their first cousins...When you have mentally damaged inbreds... and you have a hate book called the Koran...you end up with a perfect recipe for mass murder.”²⁵ In an undated YouTube video from “The Gavin McInnes Show,” which ran from 2015-2017, in which he interviewed right-wing author Ann Coulter, McInnes told Coulter that the economically successful countries she was discussing, in terms of their cultural and religious aspects, were “just a fancy way of saying white.”²⁶ She disagreed.

McInnes has also endorsed the racist “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory, which argues that white populations are being purposely displaced by people of color, particularly immigrants, in Western countries. Jews are often blamed for this “plot.” On June 26, 2017, he posted to Twitter an endorsement of this idea. McInnes’ tweet read, “This attitude + immigration = white genocide in the West (South Africa’s version is much more intense).”²⁷ The attitude McInnes was referring to was an allegation by the conspiratorial website InfoWars that white women were encouraged by feminists to abort babies, thus shrinking the white population.²⁸

¹⁶ <https://www.adl.org/proudboys>

¹⁷ <https://www.snopes.com/news/2020/10/07/proud-boys-explained/>

¹⁸ <https://www.adl.org/proudboys>

¹⁹ <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/09/985104612/conspiracy-charges-bring-proud-boys-history-of-violence-into-spotlight>

²⁰ <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/proud-boys>

²¹ <https://www.adl.org/proudboys>

²² <https://web.archive.org/web/20190822004848/https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/proud-boys>

²³ <https://www.vox.com/2018/10/15/17978358/proud-boys-trump-biden-debate-violence>

²⁴ <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/proud-boys>

²⁵ <https://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/inside-miami-alt-right-and-proud-boys-chapter-10945821>

²⁶ <https://youtu.be/uiSQdDtCQ9E>

²⁷ <https://www.baltimoresun.com/citypaper/bcp-102517-dic-proud-boys-20171025-story.html>

²⁸ <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2017/08/10/do-you-want-bigots-gavin-because-how-you-get-bigots>

McInnes is also unapologetically misogynistic. He has written extensively on how women want to be “downright abused” and that he had to stop “playing nice” and begin “totally defiling the women I slept with” to get more women to have sex with him.²⁹ On June 28, 2017, on “The Gavin McInnes Show,” he called women “dumb” and said they do not excel in areas “like writing.”³⁰

The individual who briefly replaced McInnes as leader in November 2018, Texas lawyer Jason Van Dyke, exposed similarly racist views. Van Dyke was a member of the Proud Boys’ Dallas-Fort Worth chapter who had previously served as the group’s attorney. Van Dyke has a long history of involvement in hate groups,³¹ and he is deeply racist. In 2014, Van Dyke tweeted a photo of a noose at a Black man and wrote, “Look good and hard at this picture you fucking n***er. It’s where I am going to put your neck.”³² In 2018, after his personal cell phone number was posted on Twitter and a number of anonymous users sent him mocking text messages, Van Dyke responded to many of the messages with photos of guns. He texted “fuck off f***ot” to one person and “fuck off dumb n****rs” to another.³³ Van Dyke was removed as leader of the Proud Boys after he released the Proud Boys’ bylaws and revealed the names of the group’s elders, but has continued to associate with members.³⁴ For example, Oak Point, Texas, police allege in criminal case reports that Van Dyke worked with the Arizona chapter of the Proud Boys to conduct surveillance on a Phoenix man as part of a plot to either injure or murder him in late 2018.³⁵

Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrío, who was appointed in November 2018 and served as the Florida state director of Latinos for Trump in 2020, has his own history of racist and bigoted comments. (Tarrío began his association with the group in 2017, one year after the Proud Boys was founded, and in June 2021, indicated he may step down soon).³⁶ In one of Tarrío’s first posts on the unregulated social media site, Minds, he wrote, “This [website] needs to get filled up with Proud Boys, not no f***ot ass photogs!” He followed the post with, “Bitch n***er f***ot tranny. Stress test 3.” Tarrío has called Islam a “shitstain religion.”³⁷ On his personal social media accounts, Tarrío denigrates transgender people and said the comic and actor Leslie Jones looked like a gorilla.³⁸ In 2018, his Twitter profile was suspended.³⁹ On his Telegram channel, Enrique’s House of Propaganda, he has posted many bigoted items. On November 25, 2020, one post read,

²⁹ <https://www.vox.com/2018/10/15/17978358/proud-boys-trump-biden-debate-violence>

³⁰ <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/proud-boys>

³¹ <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2007/neo-nazi-preston-wiginton-joins-forces-young-americans-freedom-michigan-state-university>

³² <https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2020/4/19/1938272/-Proud-Boys-ex-attorney-used-his-comrades-to-spy-on-man-he-wanted-to-kill-police-say>

³³ <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/proud-boys>

³⁴ <https://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/inside-miami-alt-right-and-proud-boys-chapter-10945821>

³⁵ <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2020/04/15/police-proud-boys-used-surveillance-part-violent-plot>

³⁶ <https://www.france24.com/en/americas/20210106-who-exactly-is-enrique-tarrio-leader-of-the-us-s-far-right-proud-boys-organisation>; <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2022/01/14/proud-boy-leader-enrique-tarrio-released-jail/6527199001/>

³⁷ <https://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/inside-miami-alt-right-and-proud-boys-chapter-10945821>

³⁸ <https://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/inside-miami-alt-right-and-proud-boys-chapter-10945821>

³⁹ <https://www.france24.com/en/americas/20210106-who-exactly-is-enrique-tarrio-leader-of-the-us-s-far-right-proud-boys-organisation>

“N***as that smoke hookah suck dick.” In a November 2020 interview, Tarrío admitted that the Proud Boys attracted members who had white supremacist views.⁴⁰

Other prominent members of the group have also publicly posted their racist, misogynist, and homophobic beliefs. For example, Joseph Randall “Joe” Biggs, a Proud Boys organizer from Florida who has been indicted for conspiracy for his role in the January 6 Capitol attack,⁴¹ wrote “Make Zimbabwe Rhodesia again” – a call that is commonly made by white nationalists for the return of a white colonialist government in the African nation.⁴² According to Media Matters, Biggs “has repeatedly tweeted his approval of date rape and sexual violence.”⁴³ His tweets include, “I like to reason with her (reason=chloroform) and then just drink a lot of beer and release” and “Every girl at this bar wants to fuck me. They don’t know it yet because the drugs haven’t kicked in.” Biggs has also written incendiary anti-LGBTQ tweets. He told his followers, “tranny’s eat kittens, and that’s just not cool man. Punch a tranny save a pussy” and attacked those who disagree with him by calling them “f*gs.”⁴⁴

Leaders of the Proud Boys repeatedly have made light of hateful beliefs spread or shared by members or tried to brush off such comments as pushing boundaries or as forms of humor. Asked about the private posts glorifying hatred against women and Jewish people that other Proud Boys made on the social media site Minds, Tarrío admitted they were offensive. But he downplayed the situation by arguing that members of the group were simply seeing what they could get away with after many of their accounts were banned from mainstream social media platforms in October 2018. Tarrío told a reporter that hateful posts were not a reflection of posts in private groups, which he declined to reveal, describing them as mainly about beer and “trannies.”⁴⁵

There is ample, additional evidence of white supremacist beliefs among the ranks of the Proud Boys. Members often use signs and slogans associated with white supremacy. For example, the Proud Boys, including its leaders,⁴⁶ often flash the “OK” hand symbol, which has ties to white supremacist ideology.⁴⁷ The symbol’s adoption in this way was best exemplified in March 2019 when Brenton Tarrant, the white supremacist who plead guilty to murdering 51 people in back-to-back mass shootings at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, smiled and flashed the sign to reporters at a court hearing on his case.⁴⁸

⁴⁰ <https://www.insider.com/ousted-proud-boys-underling-attempts-white-supremacist-coup-2020-11>

⁴¹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/legal-issues/joseph-biggs-arrested-capitol-riot/2021/01/20/1def0990-5b75-11eb-aaad-93988621dd28_story.html

⁴² <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2020/12/16/proud-boys-destroy-churches-black-lives-matter-signs-during-protest-washington-dc>

⁴³ <https://www.mediamatters.org/right-side-broadcasting/new-host-unofficial-version-trump-tv-encouraged-date-rape-and-punching>

⁴⁴ <https://www.mediamatters.org/right-side-broadcasting/new-host-unofficial-version-trump-tv-encouraged-date-rape-and-punching>

⁴⁵ <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/inside-miami-alt-right-and-proud-boys-chapter-10945821>

⁴⁶ <https://www.lawyerscommittee.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Expert-Report-Default-Judgment-Motion-Filed.pdf>

⁴⁷ [https://www.adl.org/hatesymbols?cat_id\[153\]=153&utm_source=PANTHEON_STRIPPED&utm_medium=PANTHEON_STRIPPED&utm_campaign=PANTHEON_STRIPPED&gclid=EA1aIQobChMI4rXLmP-v8AIVCWpvBB05UgZWEAMYASAAEgJcAPD_BwE](https://www.adl.org/hatesymbols?cat_id[153]=153&utm_source=PANTHEON_STRIPPED&utm_medium=PANTHEON_STRIPPED&utm_campaign=PANTHEON_STRIPPED&gclid=EA1aIQobChMI4rXLmP-v8AIVCWpvBB05UgZWEAMYASAAEgJcAPD_BwE)

⁴⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/15/us/ok-sign-white-power.html>

The number of racist, antisemitic, or otherwise bigoted comments and posts made by Proud Boys is extensive. Here are just a few examples. In a Proud Boys private Minds group, a post by Proud Boy Adam Richard read, “Zuckerberg is a N***er-f***er!” The next day, another member, “Joey the Rhodie” posted a photo of a Hasidic Jewish man dancing captioned, “When the UN adds another million to the Holocaust death toll.” On November 2, 2018, “KaiserW” shared a photo of Elliot Rodger, a violent misogynist who shot six people in Isla Vista, Calif., in a 2014 rampage. The post was captioned, “Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything.”⁴⁹ In addition, the Proud Boys’ Telegram channels are filled with racist and bigoted material. Dozens and dozens of posts share hate content from white supremacist websites such as Vdare.com. Posts regularly express the racist “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory. A September 7, 2020, post read: “The true minority in this world ARE whites. White children are less than 3% of the worlds [sic] population. I think since white majority countries are on a pathway to extinction we should correctly refer to non whites by their true names. Worldwide majority.”⁵⁰

Additional evidence of the white supremacist nature of the Proud Boys comes from members and leaders’ willingness to work in concert with other white supremacists. The Proud Boys participated in the 2017 protests at the University of California, Berkeley, alongside a variety of white supremacist groups, including the neo-Nazi Rise Above Movement (RAM), the white supremacist Identity Evropa (IE), and the neo-Nazi Traditionalist Worker Party (TWP). Similarly, members of Identity Evropa and TWP have joined with the Proud Boys at a series of protests in Portland, Ore. Members also attended the violent “Unite the Right” white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Va. in August 2017, which ended in the murder of antiracist activist Heather Heyer by a white supremacist. The event was organized by Jason Kessler, a Proud Boy at the time, who invited numerous white supremacist groups to participate.⁵¹ White supremacist leaders including Richard Spencer, David Duke (former head of a Ku Klux Klan group) and others participated. White supremacist groups including the League of the South, Identity Evropa, and the Traditionalist Workers Party were also on hand. Alex Michael Ramos, one of the men convicted of assaulting a Black man with metal pipes in a parking garage during the protests, claimed he joined the Proud Boys after Charlottesville.⁵² Enrique Tarrío was among the participants in Charlottesville, serving as part of the militia security for the rally.⁵³

Glorification of Violence Central to Beliefs

Many of the events Proud Boys have participated in have ultimately led to violence. This is not surprising as the glorification of violence is core to the group’s beliefs. The Proud Boys have a clear history of inciting, supporting, and praising violence under the guise of self-defense, saying “responding to small slights with brutal force is key to the Proud Boys’ strategy.”⁵⁴ The group’s

⁴⁹ <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/inside-miami-alt-right-and-proud-boys-chapter-10945821>

⁵⁰ <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/proud-boys>.

⁵¹ <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/proud-boys>

⁵² <https://www.ajc.com/news/crime--law/georgia-man-gets-six-years-for-charlottesville-beating/ETG6StFvbV3Kq2MghoXtbL/>

⁵³ <https://t.co/2ffkbqE7ar> <https://t.co/sSIxPP6C8t>

https://twitter.com/UR_Ninja/status/1311387031923298304?s=20

⁵⁴ <https://www.niot.org/blog/proud-boys-president-trump-message-violent-hate-group-stand-by>

members often declare, “We don’t start fights, we finish them.”⁵⁵ Another common slogan is “FAFO,” meaning “fuck around and find out.”⁵⁶

Proud Boys’ violence has parallels to dangerous historical periods as was recently described in a report by the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, which compared the Proud Boys to fascist groups from the 1930s, in particular Nazi leader Adolf Hitler’s Sturmabteilung (SA), better known as the Stormtroopers. The SA “provided protection for Nazi rallies and assemblies, disrupted the meetings of opposing parties, [fought] against the paramilitary units of the opposing parties, and intimidated marginalized communities.”⁵⁷ Incidents attributed to the Proud Boys show that the group has mirrored the SA by providing protection to far-right speakers and provocateurs; disrupting events by democratic socialists on campuses and women’s marches, among other entities they oppose; and by intimidating marginalized communities through rallying, stalking, violence, and other harassment campaigns. During the 2018 sentencing of two Proud Boys found guilty of gang assault, assault, and riot charges, New York Supreme Court Justice Mark Dwyer said, “I know enough about history to know what happened in Europe in the Thirties. We don’t want that to happen in New York, especially at this time in the country when people are so divided.”⁵⁸ A constitutional law professor made this same comparison while recounting his experience during the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry lockdown, which happened due to a Proud Boys rally. He recalled the comments of his friend, Justice Hans Linde, who escaped Nazi Germany and relocated with his family to Portland. Linde once confided in him that, “His first clear memory was of watching from the family apartment while Nazis in brown shirts brawled with communists on the [Berlin thoroughfare] Kurfürstendamm below.”⁵⁹

McInnes has also regularly endorsed the use of violence. In a June 2016 episode of “The Gavin McInnes Show,” he said, “We will kill you. That’s the Proud Boys in a nutshell. We will kill you. We look nice, we seem soft, we have boys in our name...we will assassinate you.”⁶⁰ In 2017, he said in an interview that violence “is a really effective way to solve problems.”⁶¹ McInnes declared in 2018: “I want violence, I want punching in the face. I’m disappointed in Trump supporters for not punching enough.”⁶²

One of the group’s hazing rituals, required to move up in the organization to the third degree, includes calling out the names of cereal brands while being punched in the face.⁶³ Being punched, meaning an act of violence, is part of the group’s indoctrination procedures. In addition, to be accepted as a fourth degree Proud Boy, the highest level of official membership

⁵⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/19/nyregion/proud-boys-verdict-trial.html>

⁵⁶ <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2021/08/25/proud-boys-are-still-violent-despite-legal-woes>

⁵⁷ Samantha Kutner, “Swiping Right: The Allure of Hyper Masculinity and Cryptofascism for Men Who Join the Proud Boys,” International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, May 2020.

⁵⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/22/nyregion/proud-boys-antifa-sentence.html>

⁵⁹ Samantha Kutner, “Swiping Right: The Allure of Hyper Masculinity and Cryptofascism for Men Who Join the Proud Boys,” International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, May 2020.

⁶⁰ <https://www.lawyerscommittee.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Expert-Report-Default-Judgment-Motion-Filed.pdf>

⁶¹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20190822004848/https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/proud-boys>

⁶² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SJGSrYLWxQ&t=3s>

⁶³ <https://www.thedailybeast.com/new-proud-boy-rules-less-fighting-less-wanking>

within the group, one suggested task is to physically assault an antifascist activist.⁶⁴ Tarrío completed the fourth stage for becoming a Proud Boy by punching someone he believed to be an antifascist activist in June 2018.⁶⁵

Joe Biggs, one of the men charged with conspiracy during the Capitol insurrection, joined the Proud Boys in 2018 and became an organizer for the group. Biggs has compared planning for Proud Boys events to “planning to go into a combat zone.”⁶⁶ He has often demonstrated support for violence. For example, Biggs recorded a video of himself holding an American-flag-themed bat with spikes on the end, saying he was preparing to “bust some heads.” He also wore a T-shirt with the phrase “Training to Throw Communists Out of Helicopters” emblazoned on the front⁶⁷ (This refers to the practice of Chilean death squads under the government of former President Pinochet who killed political opponents by throwing them out of helicopters). In January 2019, Proud Boy Reggie Axtell threatened Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler, saying that his days are “fucking numbered.” “I promise you this, Ted Wheeler: I’m coming for you, you little punk. And all your little antifa bastards.”⁶⁸ On a December 2020 episode of War Boys, a livestreamed Proud Boys show which aired after the election, Biggs described government officials as “evil scum” who “deserved to die a traitor’s death.” Ethan Nordean, a Proud Boys Elder also charged with conspiracy for January 6, replied, “Yup, Day of the Rope.”⁶⁹ The phrase “Day of the Rope” refers to a scene in *The Turner Diaries*, one of the most influential texts among far-right extremist and white supremacist communities, where white supremacist rebels carry out mass lynchings of those they perceive to have betrayed the white race.⁷⁰

Connections to Allies of Former President Donald Trump

The Trump advisor with the closest ties to the Proud Boys is Roger Stone, who lives in South Florida as does Tarrío. The earliest evidence of their relationship came from Facebook, according to the *Washington Post*. A network of fake accounts and pages shared information about politics and about Stone during a period ranging from 2015 to 2017. When Facebook shuttered the network in 2020, it wrote that it “first started looking into this network as part of our investigation into the Proud Boys’ attempts to return to Facebook after we had designated and banned them from the platform” in 2018. “... Our investigation linked this network to Roger

⁶⁴ Marc-Andre Argentino, Blyth Crawford, Florence Keen and Hannah Rose, “Far From Gone: The Evolution of Extremism in the First 100 Days of the Biden Administration,” The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, 2021.

⁶⁵ <https://www.france24.com/en/americas/20210106-who-exactly-is-enrique-tarrio-leader-of-the-us-s-far-right-proud-boys-organisation>

⁶⁶ <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/09/985104612/conspiracy-charges-bring-proud-boys-history-of-violence-into-spotlight>

⁶⁷ <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/09/985104612/conspiracy-charges-bring-proud-boys-history-of-violence-into-spotlight>

⁶⁸ <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2019/01/25/proud-boy-threatens-portland-mayor-im-coming-you>

⁶⁹ Marc-Andre Argentino, Blyth Crawford, Florence Keen and Hannah Rose, “Far From Gone: The Evolution of Extremism in the First 100 Days of the Biden Administration,” The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, 2021.

⁷⁰ <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/09/how-the-turner-diaries-changed-white-nationalism/500039/>

Stone and his associates.”⁷¹ This network of more than a hundred Facebook and Instagram accounts spent over \$300,000 on ads to promote their posts and included false personas.⁷²

In May 2017, Stone posted a video on Facebook showing him undergoing a “low-level initiation” into the group.⁷³ As part of the initiation, Stone says, “Hi, I’m Roger Stone. I’m a Western chauvinist. I refuse to apologize for creating the modern world,” making him a “first-degree” member. Stone denies being a member of the group. In March 2018, ahead of an appearance at the annual Republican Dorchester Conference in Salem, Oregon, Stone sought out the Proud Boys to act as his “security” for the event; photos posted online showed Stone drinking with several Proud Boys.⁷⁴ Repeatedly in 2019, Stone posted photos of himself with Proud Boys, in May (alongside Fox News host Tucker Carlson) and July. In December, the Proud Boys posted a video on their website, showing Stone with Tarrío.⁷⁵

In late January 2019, when Stone was indicted on seven criminal counts in connection with the Mueller investigation into Trump’s links to Russia (Trump would later pardon Stone), Tarrío met Stone leaving a Florida courthouse. Wearing a “Roger Stone Did Nothing Wrong” T-shirt sold by his own company, Tarrío said that the indictment was nothing but “trumped-up charges” and was later seen visiting Stone’s house. In Washington, D.C. the following day, a small number of Proud Boys demonstrated outside the courthouse where Stone pleaded not guilty to the charges, carrying “Roger Stone did nothing wrong” signs. The Proud Boys got into an argument with anti-Stone hecklers.⁷⁶ When Stone posted an image on social media interpreted as a threat against the judge overseeing his case, he was forced to disclose where he had gotten the image. Stone said he had been sent photos by a several people including Tarrío and Proud Boys member Tyler Ziolkowski.⁷⁷

Even though Stone told a reporter in September 2020 that he had no connection to the Proud Boys, *The Washington Post* revealed that on November 5, 2020, after Stone told an aide to resurrect his “Stop the Steal” campaign, he directed aides to monitor a group chat on Signal titled “F.O.S.,” apparently meaning “Friends of Stone,” which included Tarrío.⁷⁸ By December 2020, they were openly working together on Stone’s “Stop the Steal” efforts to discredit the presidential election. On December 11, Stone joined Tarrío and another Proud Boys leader at a D.C. rally centered on claims that the election had been stolen. The next morning, before another pro-Trump rally in the city, Tarrío and others were given a tour of the White House.⁷⁹

⁷¹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/03/09/question-roger-stones-ties-extremist-groups-grows-more-salient/>

⁷² <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/08/tech/roger-stone-proud-boys-facebook/index.html>

⁷³ <https://twitter.com/willsommer/status/861050566788644864>

⁷⁴ <https://www.wweek.com/news/2018/03/07/right-wing-provocateur-roger-stone-asked-proud-boys-for-protection-at-dorchester-conference-last-weekend/>

⁷⁵ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/03/09/question-roger-stones-ties-extremist-groups-grows-more-salient/>

⁷⁶ <https://www.thedailybeast.com/how-the-proud-boys-became-roger-stones-personal-army-6>

⁷⁷ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/03/09/question-roger-stones-ties-extremist-groups-grows-more-salient/>

⁷⁸ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/interactive/2022/roger-stone-documentary-capitol-riot-trump-election/>

⁷⁹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/03/09/question-roger-stones-ties-extremist-groups-grows-more-salient/>

The connections between Stone and the Proud Boys were made more explicit in a February 2022 ruling by U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta that allowed lawsuits against Trump related to January 6 to move forward.⁸⁰ “Stone’s connections to both the President and these groups [Proud Boys and Oath Keepers] in the days leading up to January 6th is a well pleaded fact,” Mehta wrote. “Discovery might prove that connection to be an important one.” That assessment was the result of Mehta’s determination that Trump and the extremist groups were conceivably working in concert as part of a “civil conspiracy.”

There are other connections between the Proud Boys and the Trump orbit. For example, Tarrío was filmed behind Trump in February 2019, during a televised speech in Miami wearing a pro-Stone T-shirt.⁸¹ In 2020, Tarrío served as a state leader of Latinos for Trump.⁸² In an October 2020 interview, Tarrío said that he had “personally knocked on 40,000 doors for the President.” These comments came after Trump said in the September 29 presidential debate that the Proud Boys should “stand back and stand by,” which Tarrío described as a directive “to stand by him.”⁸³ Members of the Proud Boys were also involved in sending out links to poll watching sign-up sites and bolstering support for Trump at the polls.⁸⁴

Proud Boys have also been active in other GOP political circles in Florida. Proud Boys members have been featured in photos with high profile members of Florida’s Republican party, including Senator Rick Scott, and U.S. Representatives Mario Diaz-Balart and Matt Gaetz.⁸⁵ In August 2020, Proud Boy members were seen alongside Laura Loomer, a Florida congressional candidate, and Stone at a party celebrating Loomer’s primary victory (she lost in the general election). Loomer herself is a far-right figure who has been banned from social media sites for anti-Muslim hate speech.⁸⁶

Proud Boys Violence Increases in 2020

The Proud Boys have a history of involvement in violence that reaches back nearly to their founding. Generally, this violence has involved members of the Proud Boys confronting antifascist protesters and protests, though at times the protests were staged by the group itself. For example, Kyle Chapman, who founded the Proud Boys affiliated Fraternal Order of Alt-Knights, rose to fame on the far right after a video of him breaking a wooden stick over the head of an antifascist protester at a March 2017 “March 4 Trump” rally in Berkeley, Calif., went viral.⁸⁷ In September 2017, the far-right group Patriot Prayer, with Proud Boys members

⁸⁰ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/02/18/president-extremists-conspiracy-storm-capitol/>

⁸¹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/02/19/far-right-proud-boys-chairman-sat-behind-trump-his-latest-speech/>

⁸² <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/02/us/elections/the-florida-director-of-a-pro-trump-latino-group-is-the-chairman-of-the-proud-boys.html>

⁸³ <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/02/us/elections/the-florida-director-of-a-pro-trump-latino-group-is-the-chairman-of-the-proud-boys.html>

⁸⁴ <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/neo-nazi-proud-boys-groups-push-trump-campaign/story?id=73663331>

⁸⁵ <https://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/fl-ne-proud-boys-florida-connection-20201003-7hf65qpyzbexleedaxwzg7ceu4-story.html>

⁸⁶ <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/8/19/21375159/laura-loomer-congress-republican-florida-trump-explainer>

⁸⁷ <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2017/08/10/do-you-want-bigots-gavin-because-how-you-get-bigots>

participating, and the local anti-hate coalition “Portland Stands United Against Hate” held competing rallies on the same day in Portland. Several fights broke out and three people were arrested, one for speeding towards counterprotesters in a car. At other times, Proud Boys have been directly involved in major white supremacist events, including some members participating in the August 2017 Charlottesville, Virginia, white riots. And at other times, members have directly targeted those they opposed. On June 3, 2018, Donovan Flippo, a Proud Boy, and Allen Puckett of the rabidly anti-LGBTQ group, Hells Shaking Street Preachers, were filmed attacking a man outside of a parking garage.⁸⁸ In September 2018, Proud Boy Tusitala “Tiny” Toese tried to attack two Black men after a rally in Austin. Apparently angered by their Obama hats, Toese flew into a rage and shouted, “You won’t survive in my world, boy” and “I’ll blow through your fucking window!” while the men hid inside of a store. Police had to intervene.⁸⁹

2020 saw changes in the nature of the Proud Boys’ street activity, including an increase in involvement countering the racial justice protests that began after the murder of George Floyd in May 2020. According to the Armed Conflict and Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), the percentage of events with counterdemonstrators in which Proud Boys members participated was more than 10 times the rate at which others engaged with counterdemonstrators. After the racial justice protests and anti-lockdown protests began, in the second and third quarters of 2020, Proud Boys activity became even more prolific and confrontational in demonstrations calling for support for the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, defunding police, support for LGBTQ communities, support for the Abolish ICE movement, and opposition to anti-Asian attacks. After the presidential election, the Proud Boys shifted their support to more directly pro-Trump activities.

ACLED found that 97 of the 152 demonstration events in 2020 in which Proud Boys participated were explicitly in support of then-President Trump. Over 90 percent of these pro-Trump demonstrations occurred after the former president called for the Proud Boys to “stand back and stand by” at the first presidential debate on September 29. Proud Boys’ participation in demonstrations increased significantly leading up to and immediately following the November 2020 presidential election, with 79 events, or over 60 percent of the group’s total protests that year, occurred during the fourth quarter of 2020. According to ACLED, “Proud Boys activity saw a massive spike when Trump officially lost the election to Joe Biden — a dynamic that once more invigorated the group’s involvement in violent demonstrations. Twenty-five of 37 violent demonstration events — or over two-thirds — in which the Proud Boys participated since the beginning of 2020 took place between the election on November 3, 2020, and President Biden’s inauguration on January 20, 2021.”⁹⁰ It is interesting to note that this increased activity happened even though the group lost access to its social media accounts in June 2020, when Facebook finally fully deplatformed them (Twitter removed them in 2018).⁹¹ The group rather seamlessly moved its activity to unregulated sites, in particular Parler, which shut down in January 2021, and Telegram.

⁸⁸ <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2018/08/02/facebooks-fight-club-how-proud-boys-use-social-media-platform-vet-their-fighters>

⁸⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/16/portland-proud-boys-alleged-attack-man-patriot-prayer-joe-gibson>

⁹⁰ <https://acleddata.com/2021/04/22/actor-profile-proud-boys/>

⁹¹ <https://abcnews.go.com/US/facebook-takes-proud-boys-american-guard-accounts-connected/story?id=71286604>

The worst of the violence before January 6 occurred over the weekend of December 12, 2020, when police said the Proud Boys amassed their largest gathering in D.C., where 39 people were arrested for protest-related actions. Four churches were vandalized, and members of the Proud Boys destroyed Black Lives Matter banners at two Black churches in the district. But the violence was more extensive than just those attacks. Members also punched a Black woman on K Street, attacked protesters in the middle of a crowd and repeatedly kicked them while they lay on the ground. They also attacked multiple bystanders with weapons and threw them to the ground. While dozens of Proud Boys members rallied outside Harry's Restaurant that night, Jeremy Bertino and a large crowd singled out and attacked a solitary Black bystander, Philip Johnson, trapping him against a wall and beating him until police intervened.⁹² Another member of the Proud Boys attacked a counterprotester while someone simultaneously screamed, "Fucking Jew."⁹³ Washington, D.C. Mayor Muriel E. Bowser said of the weekend, "These Proud Boys are avowed white nationalists and have been called to stand up against a fair and legal election. This is a symptom of the hateful rhetoric, anti-science noise and people who refuse to accept the result of a fair American election."⁹⁴

On January 4, 2021, Tarrío was arrested in Washington, D.C., on charges of destruction of property in relation to the events of December 12 and illegal possession of high-capacity firearms magazines.⁹⁵ He was banned from Washington, D.C.⁹⁶ and was not present during the storming of the Capitol on January 6. In her ruling banning Tarrío from Washington, D.C., Superior Court Magistrate Judge Renee Raymond pointed to Tarrío's social media postings, in which Tarrío appeared to threaten more destructive acts, as the reason for keeping him out of D.C.

Proud Boys Plan for the Insurrection

None of this slowed down the group's propensity for violence. A week before the January 6 Capitol insurrection, *Lawfare* reported that Tarrío issued an unusual message to his members. In a December 29, 2020, post on Parler, Tarrío requested members "turn out in record numbers" on January 6, but this time "with a twist." Changing tactics, Tarrío said, "We will not be wearing our traditional Black and Yellow. We will be incognito and we will be spread across downtown DC in smaller teams." Other members followed his lead. Joe Biggs, head of the Florida chapter, also on Parler, highlighted the importance of "blending in" on January 6. "You won't see us... We are going to smell like you, move like you, and look like you. The only thing we'll do that's us is think like us! Jan 6th is gonna be epic."⁹⁷

⁹² https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/enrique-tarrío-proud-boys-black-lives-matter-sign/2020/12/18/c056c05e-415a-11eb-8db8-395dedaaa036_story.html

⁹³ <https://www.adl.org/blog/proud-boys-bigotry-is-on-full-display>

⁹⁴ https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/trump-rally-violence-proud-boys/2020/12/14/bf2f5826-3e26-11eb-8bc0-ae155bee4aff_story.html

⁹⁵ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rachelsandler/2021/01/04/proud-boys-leader-enrique-tarrío-arrested-for-allegedly-burning-churches-black-lives-matter-flag/?sh=6a2156575d6d>

⁹⁶ https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/proud-boys-arrest-church-black-lives-matter/2021/01/05/18c58640-4f6a-11eb-83e3-322644d82356_story.html

⁹⁷ <https://www.lawfareblog.com/conspirators-proud-boys-and-oath-keepers-jan-6>

Evidence uncovered since January 6 and included in various court documents shows that members of the group spent months planning to invade the Capitol and that they worked with other extremist groups. Most notably, they worked with antigovernment organizations like the Oath Keepers, many of whose members have also been arrested for conspiracy, for the planning.⁹⁸ In previous court filings, prosecutors said that around Christmas 2020, Oath Keeper leader Stewart Rhodes' lieutenant in Florida, Kelly Meggs, reached out to Tarrío. According to prosecutors, Meggs authored a message in December reading, "I organized an alliance between Oath Keepers, Florida 3%ers, and Proud Boys."⁹⁹ Meggs later told other Oath Keeper members that the Proud Boys could act as a "force multiplier" on January 6.¹⁰⁰ On December 29, 2020, D.C.'s Hotel Harrington, a past gathering spot for Proud Boys that apparently was becoming concerned about their activities, announced closure from January 4–6, citing public safety. Harry's Pub, another Proud Boys hotspot, similarly announced a temporary closure.¹⁰¹

Though Tarrío was absent from Washington, D.C. that day, he played a key role in the days leading up to the events on January 6. Tarrío said on Parler that the Proud Boys would "turn out in record numbers on Jan 6th" referring to his members as "the most notorious group of extraordinary gentlemen."¹⁰² Tarrío and the Proud Boys' elders chapter were instrumental in what unfolded that day, according to allegations made by prosecutors. According to court documents, a new "Ministry of Self-Defense" was described by one Proud Boy as a "special chapter" of the organization that was dedicated to planning for January 6. On December 29, 2020, Tarrío announced the leadership and structure of the "Ministry of Self-Defense," which included himself, Ethan Nordean (also known as Rufio Panman, a Proud Boy organizer from Washington state and an elder in the group),¹⁰³ Joe Biggs (a Proud Boys organizer from Florida),¹⁰⁴ and Zach Rehl, (leader of the organization's Philadelphia chapter). Prosecutors allege the Ministry held a video call to prepare for January 6 and discussed how the upcoming event would differ from other recent Proud Boy rallies in Washington, D.C.¹⁰⁵

According to prosecutors, Proud Boys chats were filled with bellicose rhetoric hoping Trump supporters, referred to as "normies," would "burn that city to ash today." Another poster wrote "I will settle with seeing them smash some pigs to dust." At one point, one of the leaders wrote "Storming the Capitol now" and urged others in the chat to "get there," according to court filings. A Proud Boy and Queens resident, Eduard Florea, threatened to bring "three cars full of armed patriots" to Washington in early January. Florea was charged by federal authorities with stockpiling military-style combat knives and more than 1,000 rifle rounds in his New York home. He was also charged with possessing ammunition as a convicted felon and denied bail after the FBI searched his Queens home and interviewed him about a series of threats he made

⁹⁸ https://lawandcrime.com/u-s-capitol-siege/proud-boys-spent-weeks-planning-the-u-s-capitol-siege-leader-ethan-nordean-poses-a-serious-risk-of-flight-prosecutors/?utm_source=mostpopular

⁹⁹ <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2021/03/24/capitol-attack-oath-keepers-proud-boys-three-percenters-coordinated/6980128002/>

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/us/politics/enrique-tarrío-proud-boys-jan-6.html>

¹⁰¹ <https://wtop.com/dc/2020/12/2-downtown-dc-trump-supporter-hangouts-to-be-closed-for-jan-6-rally/>

¹⁰² <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-55540347>

¹⁰³ <https://twitter.com/AsherLangton/status/1067605372234551297>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/09/985104612/conspiracy-charges-bring-proud-boys-history-of-violence-into-spotlight>

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7edp3/proud-boys-chats-reveal-how-they-coordinated-during-the-capitol-riot>

on Parler at the time of the Capitol siege (he was not in Washington, D.C.). In his posts, Florea suggested staging attacks in New York, calling the area, “target rich.”¹⁰⁶ Florea continued posting during the Capitol storming, writing, “the time for peace and civility is over...guns cleaned and loaded...we are just waiting for the word.”

Reuters reported in February 2022, that on January 5, the day before the insurrection, there was a meeting of about a half dozen far-right leaders in a parking garage in D.C., which the FBI is now investigating. In the garage were Tarrío, who was not in DC the following day, Stewart Rhodes, leader of the Oath Keepers antigovernment group who has now been indicted for seditious conspiracy, and other far-right figures. The meeting puts the heads of the nation’s two best-known pro-Trump extremist groups in immediate proximity to each other 24 hours before the breach of the Capitol. Also there was Bianca Gracia, who heads Latinos for Trump, a group Tarrío was involved in, and Kellye SoRelle, a lawyer for the Oath Keepers and Latinos for Trump. SoRelle told Reuters she was invited by Gracia to meet Tarrío and share information about criminal defense attorneys. She said her role in the meeting was brief and did not concern plans for the next day.¹⁰⁷

On March 8, 2022, Tarrío was arrested for conspiring with other Proud Boys leaders to disrupt the certification of the 2020 presidential election by helping to plan and launch the 2021 attack on the Capitol.¹⁰⁸ New evidence discloses Tarrío’s alleged role in discussions that preceded the violence at the Capitol. On Dec. 30 and 31, prosecutors charge, Tarrío exchanged messages with an individual who sent him a plan called “1776 Returns” to occupy “crucial buildings” in Washington, including House and Senate buildings, with “as many people as possible.” The intent was to “show our politicians We the People are in charge.” After sending the document, the individual allegedly messaged Tarrío that the “revolution is [sic] important than anything.” Tarrío allegedly replied: “That’s what every waking moment consists of ... I’m not playing games.”¹⁰⁹

The March 8 indictment further substantiates allegations of ties between Tarrío and Rhodes, noting that even after Tarrío was ordered by a court to leave Washington, he did not do so right away.¹¹⁰ It cites the parking garage meeting on January 5 and alleges that a participant referenced the Capitol. The indictment also charges that even after Tarrío’s arrest for destroying the BLM banners on December 12, he continued to communicate electronically in a message group with other Proud Boys leaders as they coordinated their actions on January 6. Prosecutors say at 3 p.m. on January 6, as the angry mob was ransacking the Capitol, Tarrío posted a social media message that said “1776” — a reference to the December 30 plan to occupy government buildings. The indictment alleges Tarrío continued to direct and encourage the Proud Boys despite being outside of D.C. that day and claimed credit for what had happened on social media and in an encrypted chatroom during and after the attack.

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/fbi-proud-boys-fan-stockpiled-ammo-knives-in-ny-home/2830111/>; <https://gothamist.com/news/aspiring-proud-boy-plotted-armed-attack-target-rich-nyc-feds-say>

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/exclusive-fbi-probes-pre-capitol-riot-meeting-far-right-groups-2022-02-08/>

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/us/politics/enrique-tarrío-proud-boys-jan-6.html>

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/03/08/enrique-tarrío-indicted-proud-boys/>

¹¹⁰ <https://www.justice.gov/usao-dc/pr/leader-proud-boys-indicted-federal-court-conspiracy-and-other-offenses-related-us-capitol>

Additional facts were brought to light by the March 8 indictment regarding the Proud Boys' planning for January 6. When Tarrío and about 60 other leaders and members organized the "Ministry of Self-Defense," they arranged to travel to Washington from cities around the country and used their private Telegram chat to make various statements "about attacking the Capitol." When one member of the group asked if the authorities would shoot if "1 million patriots stormed and took the capital [sic] building," the indictment said another member answered: "They would do nothing because they can do nothing."¹¹¹ Another member of the group allegedly posted a voice note on the Telegram group chat, saying that "the main operating theater" on January 6 should be "out in front of the House of Representatives." "That's where the vote is taking place and all of the objections," he said.¹¹²

The Proud Boys raised funds based on their plans for January 6. In addition to selling merchandise through their 1776shop.com, charging documents have revealed that Nordean messaged with an individual who offered to give \$1,000 to the Proud Boys "travel fund" to send a "combat veteran and a Marine [who] wants to get in the street and fight" to join group members on January 6.¹¹³ Reporting of a leak by *USA Today* revealed a huge influx of donations to the group from Chinese communities that started on December 17. In all, almost 1,000 people with Chinese surnames gave about \$86,000 to a fundraiser for the Proud Boys on the crowdfunding platform GiveSendGo. Their gifts made up more than 80 percent of the \$106,107 raised for medical costs for members of the Proud Boys who were stabbed during violent clashes in Washington in mid-December. According to *USA Today*, the Proud Boys enjoy significant support from a slice of the Chinese American community and the broader Chinese diaspora: "Some Chinese Americans have bought in to the rhetoric spread by the Proud Boys, conspiracy theorists such as Alex Jones and conservative commentators that America is under attack from communism."¹¹⁴

Crowdfunding sites were also used by Proud Boys after the insurrection to raise funds by portraying themselves as maligned American patriots, martyrs and "political prisoners."¹¹⁵

Proud Boys Played Key Role in Capitol Insurrection

It is unclear how many members of the Proud Boys participated in the attack on the Capitol building, but some members of the group appeared wearing orange hats¹¹⁶ and others wore all black clothing, rather than their usual black and yellow attire, as Tarrío had suggested earlier and which prosecutors said was an apparent reference to mimicking the appearance of antifa members.¹¹⁷ Other members of the group proudly displayed their patches and other insignia and

¹¹¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/us/politics/enrique-tarrío-proud-boys-jan-6.html>

¹¹² <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/us/politics/enrique-tarrío-proud-boys-jan-6.html>

¹¹³ <https://www.npr.org/2021/03/02/972895521/prosecutors-proud-boys-gave-leader-war-powers-planned-ahead-for-capitol-riot>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2021/05/04/proud-boys-chinese-americans-community-support-donations/7343111002/>

¹¹⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/dec/17/capitol-attack-insurrectionists-fundraising-defense-money>

¹¹⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/55572805>

¹¹⁷ https://lawandcrime.com/u-s-capitol-siege/proud-boys-spent-weeks-planning-the-u-s-capitol-siege-leader-ethan-nordean-poses-a-serious-risk-of-flight-prosecutors/?utm_source=mostpopular

many also divulged their involvement through selfies and other material they put in the public domain online.

The Proud Boys' actions related to January 6 have become clearer through court records. On the evening of January 5, participating Proud Boys were allegedly instructed to meet at the Washington Monument at 10:00 AM the following day to await further orders, wearing plain clothes and "no colors."¹¹⁸ Facts that are now in evidence show that at 10:58 AM, a Proud Boys contingent left the monument area and marched toward the Capitol.¹¹⁹ The contingent reached the west perimeter of the Capitol grounds, which was not heavily protected by police stationed in front of a temporary fence. Other Trump supporters arrived at the same location, forming a growing crowd. The mob, including Proud Boy Joey Biggs, rushed the fences and clashed with the police. By about 1:00 PM, rioters stormed through the barriers and onto the Capitol grounds for the first time, as police struggled to contain them.¹²⁰ An hour earlier, a Federal Protective Service briefing email stated that there were about 300 Proud Boys at the Capitol and warned that the Proud Boys were threatening to shut down the downtown water system.¹²¹ It is unclear if there were actually that many members of the group, but several have been charged for various offenses, most seriously conspiracy.

Just after the Capitol was breached, one Proud Boy messaged Tarrío, "I told you we should have rushed the police line on [December] 12th."¹²² Tarrío, who was not present, said in a text message that day at 2:30 PM, "Make no mistake... we did this."¹²³

The first indictment in February 2021 targeted four leaders of the Proud Boys for allegedly conspiring, including in discussions on encrypted messaging apps, to obstruct the certification of Biden's Electoral College victory. The indictment charged the defendants — Ethan Nordean, Joseph "Joe" Biggs, Zach Rehl, and Charles Donohoe — with six counts, including obstruction of an official proceeding, obstruction of law enforcement, destruction of government property, and conspiracy. The indictment lists Nordean as president of his local Proud Boy chapter in Washington state; Biggs as a Proud Boy member and organizer in Florida; Rehl as the president of a local chapter in Philadelphia; and Donohoe as the president of his local Proud Boy chapter in North Carolina.

The indictment indicates that the government believes it has sufficient evidence of close coordination among Proud Boys during the insurrection. The government's motion to revoke Nordean's pretrial release, described a high level of coordination: "Defendant and co-conspirators Joseph Biggs and Zack Rehl were at the head of the pack, as they led the group from the Washington Monument to the U.S. Capitol with the purpose of interfering with the

¹¹⁸ <https://www.npr.org/2021/03/02/972895521/prosecutors-proud-boys-gave-leader-war-powers-planned-ahead-for-capitol-riot>

¹¹⁹ "How the Proud Boys led the assault – and who was in the pro-Trump mob," Video in: Zurcher, Anthony (February 13, 2021)

¹²⁰ "How the Proud Boys led the assault – and who was in the pro-Trump mob," Video in: Zurcher, Anthony (February 13, 2021)

¹²¹ <https://apnews.com/article/docs-expose-depth-january-6-capitol-siege-chaos-fd3204574c11e453be8fb4e3c81258c3>

¹²² <https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7edp3/proud-boys-chats-reveal-how-they-coordinated-during-the-capitol-riot>

¹²³ <https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7edp3/proud-boys-chats-reveal-how-they-coordinated-during-the-capitol-riot>

Electoral College certification. Defendant’s leadership role in the surge forward and the group’s coordinated action to dismantle metal barriers reflects the results of the plan that he and the co-conspirators drew up. The photos and videos clearly show a series of intentional actions made without hesitation or regret – including video footage of Nordean personally dismantling a metal barrier that separated the crowd from Capitol Police officers and the Capitol itself.”¹²⁴

A magistrate judge in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia has described the attack as “terrorism.” During a court hearing for Charles Donohue, U.S. Magistrate Judge G. Michael Harvey said, “The acts alleged in the indictment would meet, in my view, the statutory definition of a federal crime of terrorism,” adding that the attack “struck at the very heart of our democracy.”¹²⁵

Court documents have also raised questions about the relationship between top-ranking Proud Boys and Dominic Pezzola, a.k.a. Spazzo, a Proud Boy from Rochester, New York. Pezzola is facing conspiracy charges and was allegedly responsible for the first breach of the Capitol when he smashed through a window. On March 8, 2022, a new indictment charged Pezzola as being part of an alleged Proud Boys conspiracy involving Tarrío and others.¹²⁶ Investigators said in January that they found a thumb drive full of bomb making instructions when they searched his home. Proud Boy leaders have denied having anything to do with him. But Proud Boys “Ministry of Self-Defense” Telegram chats, which he was a member of, suggest otherwise.¹²⁷

As of March 2022, more than three dozen people charged in the Capitol siege have been identified by federal authorities as Proud Boys leaders, members, or associates, including at least 18 defendants charged with conspiracy.¹²⁸ Of the total of 40 conspiracy defendants, the vast majority are either Oath Keepers or Proud Boys.¹²⁹ In late December 2021, *Lawfare* reported that Proud Boys prosecutions are more numerous, splintered and harder to count definitively, a result perhaps of Tarrío’s instructions that members remain “incognito” and act in “smaller teams.”

The Fallout from January 6

After the Capitol attack, some members of the Proud Boys celebrated the events. “I’m proud as f**k at what we accomplished yesterday,” Rehl wrote, according to prosecutors.¹³⁰ In a poll on January 11, just days of the insurrection, on the Proud Boys Uncensored Telegram channel, 75 percent of more than 10,000 supporters of the group voted that they now wanted “total war.”¹³¹

In late January, it became public that Tarrío was an informant for both federal and local law enforcement agencies between 2012 and 2014.¹³² After January 6, Tarrío was apparently also

¹²⁴ <https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7edp3/proud-boys-chats-reveal-how-they-coordinated-during-the-capitol-riot>; motion posted here: <https://www.justice.gov/usao-dc/case-multi-defendant/file/1377586/download>

¹²⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/least-100-more-arrests-coming-us-capitol-riot-probe-prosecutors-2021-04-22/>

¹²⁶ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/03/08/enrique-tarrío-indicted-proud-boys/>

¹²⁷ <https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7edp3/proud-boys-chats-reveal-how-they-coordinated-during-the-capitol-riot>

¹²⁸ <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/proud-boys-leaders-jan-6-charges-upheld-rcna10296>

¹²⁹ <https://www.lawfareblog.com/conspirators-proud-boys-and-oath-keepers-jan-6>

¹³⁰ <https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7edp3/proud-boys-chats-reveal-how-they-coordinated-during-the-capitol-riot>

¹³¹ <https://www.joemygod.com/2021/01/proud-boys-followers-vote-for-total-war-in-poll/>

¹³² <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-proudboys-leader-exclusive-idUSKBN29W1PE>

financially strapped and had resorted to selling Black Lives Matter T-shirts as his product sales dried up and payment processors dropped him.¹³³ Inside the group, Tarrío's informant work and looming prosecutions led to schisms. The Alabama Proud Boys chapter officially disavowed him on Telegram and "all chapters that choose to associate with him." The St. Louis branch announced: "This group needs new leadership and a new direction... The fame we've attained hasn't been worth it." One participant in the chat wrote: "Traitors are everywhere, everywhere."¹³⁴ The group's Canadian chapters shut down after they were listed as a "terrorist entity" by that country's government in February 2021.¹³⁵ The Canadian government determined that the group was fundamentally violent and "fueled by white supremacy."¹³⁶

Shortly after the Capitol attack, Tarrío ordered a nationwide three-month standdown that angered Nordean. "They're coming for you no matter what," Nordean said in a chat. "Wake the hell up. I'm not gonna be sitting on my ass waiting for the end." Regardless of the standdown, Nordean helped coordinate a cabin trip for top-level Proud Boys after January 6 and wrote in a Telegram post that they would discuss changing their traditional uniform and other matters including six-month and one-year plans, secure vetting for prospective members, bulk armor deals, and the Ministry of Self-Defense.¹³⁷ The national leadership was reportedly disbanded, but local chapters continue to function.

Not all chapters complied with the stand down, but *VICE* found "that there was a relative lull in Proud Boy activity between January and March 2021—just nine uniformed appearances in total during those three months, in four different states—compared to the rest of the year. After that three-month hiatus, scattered Proud Boy activity began popping up around popular right-wing issues like gun rights and mask mandates—as well as more nebulous causes, like 'freedom.'"¹³⁸ Tarrío also remained at the head of the organization, saying in June 2021 that he would step down the following September to concentrate on his local chapter.¹³⁹ His position currently remains unclear.

The Proud Boys are facing additional challenges. In April 2021, ten House democrats including House Judiciary Committee chair Representative Jerrold Nadler signed onto a NAACP civil suit against former President Donald Trump, Rudy Giuliani, the Proud Boys, and the Oath Keepers over their involvement with the January 6 attack, alleging the ex-president and his allies illegally violated the Ku Klux Klan Act by inciting the riot.¹⁴⁰ The suit alleges the defendants "acted in

¹³³ <https://globalextrémism.org/post/six-months-after-jan-6-the-far-right-is-far-from-down-and-out/>

¹³⁴ <https://www.thedailybeast.com/proud-boys-infighting-revealed-by-leaked-telegram-messages-claiming-traitors-are-everywhere>

¹³⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/proud-boys-canada-dissolves-itself-says-it-was-never-white-supremacy-group-2021-05-02/>

¹³⁶ <https://apnews.com/article/canada-proud-boys-terrorist-group-510b8cd8286f1207a726904f61e63e4d;https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-who-are-proud-boys-far-right-group-terrorist-entity-canada-7176421/>

¹³⁷ <https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7edp3/proud-boys-chats-reveal-how-they-coordinated-during-the-capitol-riot>

¹³⁸ <https://www.vice.com/en/article/z3n338/what-the-proud-boys-did-after-jan-6>

¹³⁹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jemimamcevoy/2021/06/29/proud-boys-leader-to-step-down-as-embattled-group-plans-pivot-to-local-politics/?sh=79c266c61ace>

¹⁴⁰ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alisondurkee/2021/04/07/nadler-and-9-house-dems-join-lawsuit-against-trump-giuliani-and-proud-boys-over-capitol-attack/?sh=3ab107545346>

concert to incite and then carry out a riot at the Capitol” in order to stop Congress from certifying the election results. The Klan Act is a Reconstruction-era statute that bars Americans from conspiring to “to prevent, by force, intimidation, or threat, any person from accepting or holding any office, trust, or place of confidence under the United States” or “discharging any duties thereof.”¹⁴¹

The Proud Boys are also facing another major civil suit brought by Washington, D.C., Attorney General Karl Racine in December 2021. Filed in federal court, the suit accuses 31 members of the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers of “conspiring to terrorize the District” on January 6, calling their actions “a coordinated act of domestic terrorism.” Racine is asking the court to find the Oath Keepers and Proud Boys liable for the millions of dollars that officials spent dispatching officers from the Metropolitan Police Department to the Capitol, along with the enormous expense of treating the injured officers and paying for their medical leave in the months after the attack. Three officers from the Capitol Police and Metropolitan Police departments died in the days after the attack, and more than 140 officers were injured.¹⁴²

The Proud Boys have been able to raise funds from the prosecutions. Leaders have created a Telegram channel called “Free the Boys” to raise money for arrested members. The channel directs visitors to crowdfunding pages on GiveSendGo and Our Freedom Funding, as well as the mobile payment service Cash App. A similar Telegram channel for other people facing charges related to the insurrection has amassed more than 14,000 subscribers.¹⁴³ By April 2021, a data leak analyzed by *The Guardian* showed that in “at least 11 crowdfunding campaigns associated with the Proud Boys, members of the group, including some now facing conspiracy charges related to the Capitol attack, raised over \$375,000.”¹⁴⁴ Some fundraisers netted large amounts of money in a short period. After Tarrío was arrested on January 4 for the December 12 vandalism at Black churches, a “fundraiser billed as a ‘defense fund’ made \$113,000 in just four days.”¹⁴⁵ Also, “a large proportion of that money came from a number of high-dollar donors who elected to be anonymous on the website, but whose identifying details were nevertheless preserved by GiveSendGo.”¹⁴⁶ Examples included \$1,000 from Gabe Carrera, a Florida-based personal injury lawyer. Another \$1,000 was associated with an email address belonging to Paul C. Gill, a Hawaiian Airlines employee who has previously donated to Trump’s campaigns. A Florida-based pharmacist, Gerardo G. Gonzalez, anonymously donated \$1,000 to Tarrío on January 7. GiveSendGo continues to host fundraisers for Proud Boys members.¹⁴⁷

Proud Boys Remain Highly Active

It is unclear if Tarrío remains head of the group as of early March 2022. Regardless of Tarrío’s imprisonment, the January 6 prosecutions, the civil suits, and other fallout from that day, the

¹⁴¹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alisondurkee/2021/04/07/nadler-and-9-house-dems-join-lawsuit-against-trump-giuliani-and-proud-boys-over-capitol-attack/?sh=3ab107545346>

¹⁴² <https://www.cnn.com/2021/12/14/politics/dc-proud-boys-oath-keepers-lawsuit/index.html>

¹⁴³ <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2021/08/25/proud-boys-are-still-violent-despite-legal-woes>

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/10/proud-boys-far-right-givesendgo-christian-fundraising-site>

¹⁴⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/10/proud-boys-far-right-givesendgo-christian-fundraising-site>

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/10/proud-boys-far-right-givesendgo-christian-fundraising-site>

¹⁴⁷ <https://givesendgo.com/GZAY>

Proud Boys have not collapsed. Far from it. They have active Telegram channels with tens of thousands of members.¹⁴⁸ Six months after January 6, on the group's Western Chauvinist channel, which is now explicitly white supremacist, posters were actively sharing racist conspiracy theories like the "Great Replacement."¹⁴⁹ There is substantial evidence that the Proud Boys have been growing in terms of chapters and activities, especially at the local level. In January 2022, a *VICE* analysis of Proud Boy Telegram channels found that the group claimed to have at least 157 active American chapters in every state but three and Washington, D.C. Their data suggested that there are at least thousands of members in the U.S.¹⁵⁰ Using a different metric than *VICE*, looking at on the ground activities, the Southern Poverty Law Center reported in March 2022 that the group's chapters rose by 29, from 43 in 2020 to 72 in 2021.¹⁵¹

Perhaps more striking is that in the six months after January 6, the Proud Boys held 20 different events, some of which turned violent.¹⁵² In the year after January 6, *VICE* found that Proud Boys made at least 114 uniformed appearances across 73 cities in 24 states.¹⁵³ The data most likely understates the Proud Boys' activities as the group has moved into new areas of protest, such as showing up at school board meetings. Thus, while post-January 6 pressure from law enforcement was sufficient to impact some Proud Boys chapters and the activities of individuals in specific areas, the group and its chapters continued planning a significant number of violent and intimidating activities in 2021.

Just like in the days prior to the insurrection, Proud Boys continue to confront left-wing demonstrators. On August 23, 2021, the Proud Boys held a rally in Portland, Oregon, where they clashed with antifa.¹⁵⁴ But they have broadened out their activities and interests and focused largely on the local level, shifting attention to local chapters and small communities. NPR reported in October 2021, that "Members of the group have attended anti-abortion 'prayer' events with conservative Christian organizations; they've protested the removal of Confederate monuments in North Carolina; in Washington state, they responded to a false rumor that a student would be arrested for not wearing a mask, prompting the lockdown of three schools."¹⁵⁵ The goal apparently is to amass more supporters in time to influence next year's midterm elections.

These changes have led members to appear at town council gatherings, school board presentations, and health department question-and-answer sessions across the country. Their presence at the events is part of a strategy shift by the organization toward a larger goal: to bring their brand of menacing politics to the local level.¹⁵⁶ And they have been clear about their new strategy. "The plan of attack if you want to make change is to get involved at the local level,"

¹⁴⁸ <https://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/ICSR-Report-Far-From-Gone-The-Evolution-of-Extremism-in-the-First-100-Days-of-the-Biden-Administration.pdf>

¹⁴⁹ <https://globalextrism.org/post/six-months-after-jan-6-the-far-right-is-far-from-down-and-out/>

¹⁵⁰ <https://www.vice.com/en/article/z3n338/what-the-proud-boys-did-after-jan-6>

¹⁵¹ <https://www.splcenter.org/live-event-year-hate-extremism-2021>

¹⁵² <https://www.vice.com/en/article/pkb377/all-the-terrible-things-proud-boys-have-done-since-storming-the-capitol>

¹⁵³ <https://www.vice.com/en/article/z3n338/what-the-proud-boys-did-after-jan-6>

¹⁵⁴ <https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2021/8/23/photos-protesters-clash-in-portland-after-opposing-gatherings>

¹⁵⁵ <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/29/1041121327/despite-arrests-and-setbacks-far-right-proud-boys-press-new-ambitions>

¹⁵⁶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/14/us/proud-boys-local-issues.html>

said Jeremy Bertino, a prominent member of the Proud Boys from North Carolina. Examples abound of these activities. Members showed up at school board building in Beloit, Wisconsin, to protest school masking requirements. They turned up at a school board meeting in New Hanover County, North Carolina, before a vote on a mask mandate. They attended a gathering in Downers Grove, Illinois, where parents were trying to remove a nonbinary author’s graphic novel from public school libraries. At some local meetings where the Proud Boys have shown up, they have spoken and threatened community leaders.¹⁵⁷ At others, they have simply stood silently, and menacingly, and watched events. On Telegram, some members have said they handed out cellphone numbers to potential recruits.

The new local focus is reflected in the Proud Boys’ online activity. On Telegram, the Proud Boys’ main group in the United States has barely budged in number — with about 31,000 followers — over the last year. But over a dozen new Telegram channels have emerged for local Proud Boys chapters in cities such as Seattle and Philadelphia over that same period, according to data collected by *The New York Times*. Those local Telegram groups have rapidly grown from dozens to hundreds of members.¹⁵⁸

Proud Boys have also been involved directly in politics at the local level. In Nevada, Proud Boys have tried to exert control over the local GOP. In Kansas City, Proud Boy Josh Wells, who is running for the school board, told undercover antifascists in April that he wants “white nationalism and/or a pro-Western Christian theocracy with a protected white majority status. Whichever one is more obtainable.” Luis Miguel, an underdog U.S. Senate candidate in Florida, declared in July his commitment to the far-right activists who attended his campaign events: “Proud Boys, Oathkeepers and Threeperceners have often been the only ones defending innocent Americans from violent Antifa commies. I am PROUD to stand with these patriots.”¹⁵⁹ Another person seeking local office is Joel Campbell, a former Proud Boy running for City Council in Topeka, Kan.¹⁶⁰ At the state level, a self-acknowledged member of the Proud Boys, is running for an assembly seat. The candidate, Jeffrey Erik Perrine, was expelled from the Sacramento County Republican Party.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷ <https://chapelboro.com/news/pre-k-12-education/proud-boys-presence-leads-to-metal-detectors-deputies-at-school-board-meetings>

¹⁵⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/14/us/proud-boys-local-issues.html>

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2021/08/25/proud-boys-are-still-violent-despite-legal-woes>

¹⁶⁰ <https://www.washingtonian.com/2021/09/07/guaranteed-disaster-proud-boys-discourage-members-from-attending-september-18-rally-in-dc/>

¹⁶¹ <https://www.adn.com/nation-world/2022/03/08/how-far-right-militia-groups-found-a-foothold-in-deep-blue-california/>