

Advisory Bulletin

(U) SCOPE: NCRIC bulletins provide real-time updates on incidents and situations of urgent interest to NCRIC partners including officer safety alerts, BOL requests, threat warnings and ongoing incidents. NCRIC bulletins may include raw reporting that has not been fully evaluated in order to provide timely situational awareness.

07 November 2017

(U//FOUO) ****UPDATE** Violent Tactics Showcased at Berkeley Riots Likely to be Used at Future Demonstrations**

(U//FOUO) This product updates the 21 August 2017 NCRIC Advisory Bulletin "(U//FOUO) Violent Tactics Showcased at Berkeley Riots Likely to be Used at Future Demonstrations." These updates include:

- (U) **New Tactics:** "Caching Weapons," "Swarming," "Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) Attacks," and "Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)"
- (U) **Tactic Revisions:** "Element of Surprise," "Makeshift and Improvised Weapons," and "Communication"
- (U) **Outlook**

(U//FOUO) Violent anti-fascist tactics showcased at events in Berkeley on 1 February, 4 March, and 15 April 2017 highlight their ability to exploit peaceful protests with coordinated violent demonstrations, attack law enforcement personnel, destroy property, and conduct information campaigns to advance their socio-political goals. This Advisory Bulletin is intended to inform law enforcement involved in operational planning and event safety at gatherings that violent anti-fascist elements may target.

(U) Identified Tactics

(U//FOUO) We assess that violent Anti-fascists (Antifa), including anarchist extremists, are likely to coordinate and drill tactics for use at organized events in the San Francisco Bay Area. Recently observed tactics suggest that some violent anti-fascists may have had access to limited military style training or knowledge, possibly from publicly accessible guerrilla warfare manuals, books, and online media content. Tactics witnessed at riots in Berkeley in 2017 include: ^{1,2,3,4}

- (U//FOUO) **"Black Blocs":**^{5,6,7} Violent anti-fascists have participated in "Black Blocs" where participants dress uniformly in black clothing including black ski masks and black scarves. They carry accessories such as backpacks to conceal weapons, carry new clothing, and first aid supplies along with other provisions. Uniformity aids in the concealment of participants' identities to evade arrest.
- (U//FOUO) **Improvised Incendiary Devices, Fireworks, and Other Explosives:**^{8,9,10} Violent anti-fascists have been observed employing both commercial and homemade pyrotechnics including suspected M-80's, roman candles, improvised incendiary devices, and smoke bombs.

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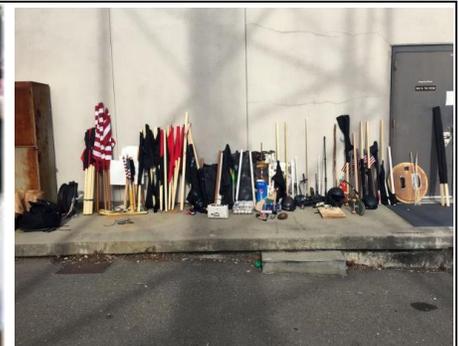
- **(U//FOUO) Makeshift and Improvised Weapons:**^{11,12,13,14} Violent anti-fascists have been observed using improvised weapons including, but not limited to pipes, bricks, hammers, bike locks, rocks, wooden dowels, bear spray, pepper spray, boards, dumpsters, soda cans, urine and paint filled water balloons, road and police barricades and bike racks.



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- **(U//FOUO) Swarming:**^{15,16} Large groups of violent anti-fascists have been observed engaging in collective attacks with high coordination, and with seemingly limited leadership or communication. Swarming results when individuals and groups overwhelm their targets by attacking en masse.
- **(U//FOUO) Caching Weapons:**^{17,18} At the 4 March and 15 April Berkeley rallies, authorities identified and seized weapons cached by violent anti-fascists near their targeted venues. Cache locations included construction sites, new stands, and other opportunistic sites.
- **(U//FOUO) Area Denial:**¹⁹ Violent anti-fascists have been observed gathering local materials to construct traffic obstacles such as roadblocks. They have constructed roadblocks from road-improvement site materials, dumpsters, trash cans, cinder blocks and other non-secure materials including garbage. Violent anti-fascists infrequently ignite these materials to divert first responder resources.²⁰ Roadblocks deny access points to first-responders by preventing traffic movement and tying up resources.
- **(U//FOUO) Human Shields:**^{21,22} Violent anti-fascists have been observed integrating into crowds of peaceful actors limiting law enforcement response options.



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- **(U//FOUO) Element of Surprise:**²³ Violent anti-fascists have avoided early detection at multiple events by assembling at off-site locations before collectively moving to a given venue, creating an element of surprise over responding authorities. However, on 27 August, violent anti-fascists were observed “masking up” while en route to an event.
- **(U//FOUO) Reconnaissance & Surveillance:**²⁴ Violent Anti-fascists have displayed evidence of pre-operational reconnaissance. Intelligence gleaned from surveillance provides criminal elements key knowledge about event security gaps and infiltration opportunities.
- **(U//FOUO) Communication and Anonymization:**^{25,26,27} Violent anti-fascists have been observed implementing multiple, overlapping, communication platforms including handheld radios, megaphones, encrypted phone apps such as Signal, rally markers (flags and ‘peace dove’), and command and response words allowing them to continuously coordinate their actions if one method is compromised or fails.
- **(U) Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) Attacks:**^{28,29,30} Anarchist-affiliated malicious cyber actors have previously launched distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks against law enforcement institutions, and are suspected to have carried out unattributed DDoS attacks against law enforcement agencies coinciding with anti-fascist and anti-capitalist demonstrations. These attacks can shut down websites or otherwise slow access to computer systems.
- **(U//FOUO) Graffiti:**^{31,32,33} Officers have reported seeing spray-painted messages on walls and other areas at violent events informing other participants to use particular communication platforms i.e. “Use Signal” as well as Signal room I.D.s. Authorities have also observed improvised devices designed to vandalize large areas with graffiti.



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- **(U//FOUO) Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs):** On 27 August, Youtube user, Horus Eye, *claiming a non-affiliated status* operated a camera mounted UAV recording much of one day’s events with a focus on anti-fascist organizers while frequently identifying officer locations, numbers, and formations.^{34, 35} UAVs have been used to record other similar events.³⁶

(U) Outlook

(U//FOUO) Law enforcement is likely to encounter similar violent tactics where peaceful protests are co-opted by violent anti-fascists in the future. Law enforcement may also face new or evolving techniques from violent anti-fascists and anarchist extremists, who have multiple online and offline resources available to draw upon. Violent anti-fascists may attempt to develop new tactics targeting law enforcement that could provoke responding officers into using

perceived excessive force against populations consisting of both violent and non-violent attendees.³⁷ If police are perceived to respond with excessive force against peaceful protestors, it could embolden violent anti-fascist calls to increase violence against law enforcement.

(U//FOUO) Increased law enforcement and temporary city ordinances on 14 September and from 24 – 27 September were likely responsible for decreased violent activity. Although multiple law enforcement agencies believed that events on 14 September, and from 24 – 27 September were very likely to be co-opted by violent anti-fascists, both events occurred with minimal to no violence. The city of Berkeley authorized emergency ordinances restricting the wearing of masks and face coverings, allowed for “no-warning” arrests, and banned specific items that could be used as weapons from being carried within several blocks of the organized events. Additionally, the city of Berkeley enlisted mutual-aid officers from adjacent counties to help enforce the ordinance. Strict enforcement greatly increased the likelihood of arrests amongst violent individuals, likely decreasing their desire to engage in criminal activity.

(U) Tracked by: HSEC 8.1, 8.8

(U//FOUO) On 16 November 2017, this product was distributed to the Joint Regional Intelligence Center with permission to disseminate to cleared partners at the FOUO level.

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