



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hearing Statement of Oversight, Investigations & Accountability Subcommittee Ranking Member Glenn Ivey (D-MD)

Hearing on Republicans deflecting and refusing to discuss right wing violence

May 16, 2023

What is the value of a life? My Republican colleagues are using this hearing to discuss the cost of property damage associated with left-wing violence. And while I don't condone such violence or destruction, I must ask why we are focusing on left-wing violence when the data overwhelming shows that right-wing violence is significantly more likely to result in the loss of American lives.

Chairman Bishop, I know that during a Counterterrorism, Law Enforcement, and Intelligence Subcommittee hearing last month you mentioned that you've never been shown data to indicate the numbers behind the Domestic Violent Extremism threat. I'm happy to explore that data with you today.

The Anti-Defamation League's Center on Extremism tracks murders with ties to any extreme cause or movement. Of the 444 people killed at the hands of extremists over the past 10 years, 335 (or 75 percent) were killed by right-wing extremists. In the past five years alone, there have been 176 deaths linked to right wing extremists. Deaths linked to left wing extremists in the last five years totals no more than three. The loss of American lives is simply not comparable. From non-governmental organizations to academic researchers, to government organizations like the FBI or Government Accountability Office, there is no disagreement that far-right extremism is a far more deadly threat than left-wing violence.

While my Republican colleagues are fond of fearmongering about the Black Lives Matter movement and antifa, again the data just doesn't support their claims. The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project studied the Black Lives Matter protest movement in 2021 and found that approximately 94 percent of pro-BLM demonstrations have been peaceful, with only 6 percent resulting in reports of violence, clashes with the police, vandalism, or looting. In contrast, demonstrations involving right-wing militias have turned violent or destructive more than twice as often, nearly 14 percent of the time.

The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project also found that when far-right groups engage directly with pro-BLM demonstrations that risk of violence increases again, with 26 percent of demonstrations involving both groups turning violent or destructive. And anti-fascists, or antifa, have been linked to exactly one murder in the U.S. in the last 25 years, according to data from the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Have there been deadly, violent, and unacceptable attacks by far-left actors? Yes. But far-right violence is considerably more common, and far more lethal, than attacks from the far left.

This trend holds true when we examine police officers killed by domestic extremists. And make no mistake, police officers were specifically targeted by far-right extremists on January 6th. One post made on TheDonald.win site ahead of the insurrection stated: "Cops don't have 'standing' if they are laying on the ground in a pool of their own blood."

Members of the Republican Party have gone so far as to excuse or condone the violence at the Capitol on January 6th, which was one of the most organized, violent, and wide-scale attacks on law enforcement in recent memory. And while some of my Republican colleagues like to repeat disinformation about who was in that crowd, video evidence depicts that the overwhelming majority of those who participated were Trump supporters and right-wing militia groups intent on staging a violent and bloody coup at the expense of law enforcement lives.

For the remainder of my time, I'd like to commemorate the many victims of right-wing extremist attacks in recent years.

Just last week, on May 6th, nine people were killed and seven injured in a right-wing extremist attack on a shopping mall in Allen, Texas.

In November, five people were killed and 25 people were injured in a right-wing extremist attack on an LGBTQ nightclub in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

One year ago, on May 14th, 2022, 10 people were killed and three were injured in a right-wing extremist attack at a grocery store in Buffalo, New York.

In February of 2022, one person was murdered and four injured in a right-wing extremist attack at a park in Portland, Oregon.

On January 6, 2021, 5 people were killed and over 138 were injured in a right-wing extremist attack at the U.S. Capitol.

In August 2020, Kyle Rittenhouse fatally shot two people during a racial justice protest in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

And in May and June of 2020, two people were murdered and 4 injured in a right-wing extremist attack against security personnel and law enforcement officers in California.

These are just a handful of examples of violent and deadly attacks in recent years, where the perpetrator's motives were known and clearly connected to far-right movements. Unfortunately, I don't have the time today to go back further, but I'd ask for a moment of silence for the victims of this senseless and unacceptable violence.

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