

Prepared Statement by U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa)
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
Oversight of the Federal Bureau of Investigation:
The January 6 Insurrection, Domestic Terrorism, and Other Threats”
March 2, 2021

Director Wray, thank you for being here today.

We all agree that what happened at the Capitol was a desecration of our shared values. It was an attack on the seat of democracy. Those who engaged in violence disgraced our country.

At least seven people, including one U.S. Capitol Police Officer, died as a result of that day. Two officers committed suicide, and hundreds were injured. May God watch over them and their families.

Those who broke the law must be prosecuted, and Congress needs answers, especially about what happened to Officer Brian Sicknick.

In pursuit of the facts relating to January 6, Senator Durbin and I have sent oversight letters to the FBI and other agencies. To date, we haven't received any productions. It's difficult to hold a hearing like this without records. The FBI must fully respond to Congress.

However, I'm pleased to see that many investigative cases are progressing around the country. As I've noted before, the ultimate responsibility for this attack rests upon the shoulders of those who unlawfully entered the Capitol. I've also made clear that everyone involved must take responsibility for their actions that day, including the former president.

Now, in the wake of January 6, we must seriously examine the threat of domestic extremism. But, unfortunately, this threat isn't limited to the events of that terrible day. To fully address it, we must examine forms of domestic extremism that span the ideological spectrum.

A narrow review of these matters would be intellectually dishonest.

We're not serious about tackling domestic extremism if we tolerate mobs that attack some police officers but not others.

We're not serious about tackling domestic extremism if we care about some government buildings being attacked but not others.

We're not serious about tackling domestic extremism if we only focus on white supremacy movements, which isn't the only ideology that's responsible for murders and violence.

Yes, white supremacy movements may be considered the most dangerous at a given time, but it wasn't last summer, or won't be when the next foreign attack is attempted. We must call it out across the

board, left and right, every time. We must focus our resources to try to see as much of it coming as we possibly can.

It hardly registered in the media when Marshals and Secret Service officers defended courthouses and the White House. They were called “stormtroopers” by the Speaker of the House, like they aren’t even human beings. Vice President Harris, when she was a Senator, supported the Minnesota Freedom Fund, an organization that helped bail out violent rioters in Minnesota. 13 Biden staffers boasted on Twitter that they donated to the group. According to one news report, the group paid 75,000 dollars to get one man out of jail after he was charged with attempted murder for allegedly shooting at police during May protests.

One of the most upsetting aspects of the violence this summer has been the targeting of innocent law enforcement officers. More than 700 officers were injured between May 27, 2020, and June 8, 2020 alone.

Officers have been assaulted, slashed, struck with hammers and baseball bats, and blinded with lasers. Sixty Secret Service officers were injured during a three-day siege on the White House, which caused then-President Trump to be brought into a secure bunker. The church across the street was lit on fire as a part of that continued left-wing assault.

More than 300 people were charged federally for their roles in those months of violence. Eighty of those charges related to the use of arson and explosives. At least 14,000 people were arrested in 49 cities.

At least 25 people died in violence related to the riots.

There’s been 280 arrests as a result of the January 6 attack compared to more than 1,000 arrests as a result of riots just in Portland last year. It’s been estimated that the insurance losses from the summer’s civil unrest possibly exceed 2 billion dollars.

It’s been a relatively frequent sight at the summer’s violent events to see individuals acting in coordination, holding the “A” symbol of Antifa. An admitted Antifa adherent in Portland murdered a conservative protestor. Antifa supporters have been charged federally for promoting riots and using Molotov cocktails. Even after President Biden’s electoral victory, Antifa rioters attacked the Oregon Democratic Party headquarters on Inauguration Day.

Let’s not forget about the left-wing activist who opened fire on 24 Republican congressmen and hit a Capitol Police officer, a congressional aide, a lobbyist, and Rep. Steve Scalise at a baseball field in Alexandria, Virginia. Rep. Scalise had life-threatening injuries.

In light of these ever-present left-wing threats, I’m concerned about “resource shifting” talk among Congressional Democrats.

Let me say this clearly: we aren't going to defund the anarchist extremism program or any other domestic terrorism program. It can't be that the FBI needs a fully funded Art Theft program but can't afford to fight both right-wing and left-wing extremism.

We must examine the issue of domestic terrorism broadly, to include the left and right wing of the political spectrum. No serious oversight activity and no serious policy decisions can be done without doing so.

As we move forward, I encourage both houses of Congress to review not just the events of January 6, but also domestic violent extremism across the board and the threat that it brings to our families and communities. We need real answers on extremist involvement, on pre-planning and coordination, and on what happened to Officer Sicknick.

In closing, I want to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for law enforcement and in particular, the Capitol Police, for their efforts on the job and during the terrible events of January 6. You are heroes.