



July 23, 2020

The Honorable Max Rose
Chair
Homeland Security Subcommittee on Intelligence and Counterterrorism
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20015

The Honorable Mark Walker
Ranking Member
Homeland Security Subcommittee on Intelligence and Counterterrorism
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20015

Dear Chair Rose and Ranking Member Walker:

As part of the July 16 Subcommittee on Intelligence and Counterterrorism hearing on *Assessing the Threat from Accelerationists and Militia Extremists*, we write to provide the views of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) Action Fund. We would ask that this statement be included as part of the official hearing record.

The SPLC Action Fund is dedicated to fighting for racial justice alongside impacted communities in pursuit of equity and opportunity for all. We work primarily in the Southeast United States where we have offices in Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Washington, D.C. The SPLC Action Fund promotes policies and laws that will eliminate the structural racism and inequalities that fuel oppression of people of color, immigrants, young people, women, low-income people, and the LGBTQ+ community.

Today, the American far right is united by its extreme anti-government animus and violent apocalyptic ideations, epitomized by the current focus on an impending second civil war. These mentalities have long undergirded the far right, but they have now earned the movement's near single-minded attention. Far-right extremists are actively preparing for civil war by acquiring weapons, engaging in paramilitary training, and even committing acts of violence aimed at sparking large-scale civil unrest. Because it is viewed as the main impediment to erecting an ethnonationalist and fascist state, the U.S. government itself is now the primary enemy against which the far right positions itself.

Many factors play a role in the movement's turn against the state. One is the current political landscape, defined by polarization and feelings of political disempowerment. Over half of American are dissatisfied with democracy¹, a trend that has grown alongside a perceived distrust² of government and of other Americans. Not only have these conditions given rise to far-right and authoritarian populist political parties across the globe, they have also contributed to a growing acceptance of violence as a means of achieving political

¹ [Global Satisfaction with Democracy 2020](#), Center for the Future of Democracy, January 2020

² [Trust and Distrust in America](#), Lee Rainie, Scott Keeter, and Andrew Perrin, Pew Research Center, July 22, 2019

goals. Indeed, political scientist Lilliana Mason found³ that about 20% of American voters appeared willing to tolerate some form of violence in the nation's politics in polling she conducted in 2018.

The far right represents the most extreme version of the nation's growing anti-democratic tendencies – in other words, the movement is a reflection of American culture and not simply its unfortunate appendage.

The movement's own violence and militancy, then, also cannot be seen apart from the country's uniquely militarized culture and long history of state violence. Perhaps no other facet of American life demonstrates the acceptance and normalization of violence in everyday life as the country's militarized police forces. The far right has patterned its own paramilitarism after the nation's law enforcement agencies and military and, in an alarming number of cases, extremists have actually trained in the U.S. Armed Forces⁴ to increase their knowledge of weapons and their own capacity for violence.

Militarized policing has played an enormous role in shaping the far right because of the place it holds in the movement's imagination. The far right is mired in apocalyptic rhetoric and a belief that the government poses a threat to individual liberty and is intent upon disarming its citizens and imposing a tyrannical "One World Government" or "New World Order." White supremacists take these conspiracies one step further, arguing that state actions are dictated by Jews, people of color, or leftists they accuse of being "anti-white."

Law enforcement – including local police and members of federal agencies – are the primary way extremists interact with the state, and police are therefore most firmly associated with apocalyptic threats in the minds of the far right. Violence at the hands of the state, in the form of a highly militarized police force, therefore, helps to prop up far-right conspiracy theories. It creates a feedback loop: state suppression or violence intended to tamp down on far-right extremism emboldens and mobilizes the movement, thereby justifying more state violence.

In the United States, punishment and carceral solutions are almost universally viewed as the primary mechanism through which to address social and political problems. The expansion of the carceral state and the militarization of policing that began in earnest in the 1960s were not inevitable, but policies chosen over meaningful social reforms aimed at alleviating poverty and racial inequality. Today, the United States continues this pattern – one only needs to look at Portland, Oregon, where the Department of Homeland Security recently deployed federal troops against protesters aligned with the Black Lives Matter movement. Rather than address the legitimate protests raised over police brutality and racial injustice, the federal government sent in federal officers who have reportedly thrown demonstrators into unmarked vans⁵, sprayed them with tear gas⁶, and caused numerous injuries⁷.

³ [The Democracy Domsayers Consider 2020](#), Nicolas Casey, *New York Times*, November 16, 2019.

⁴ [Testimony of Lecia Brooks](#), Southern Poverty Law Center, hearings before the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Military Personnel, February 11, 2020.

⁵ Jonathan Levinson and Conrad Wilson, [Federal Law Enforcement Use Unmarked Vehicles To Grab Protesters Off Portland Streets](#), Oregon Public Broadcasting, July 16, 2020.

⁶ Caroline Linton, [Federal officers Again Tear-Gas Protesters in Portland, Oregon](#), CBS News, July 20, 2020

⁷ Marissa J. Lang, [A Navy vet asked federal officers in Portland to remember their oaths. Then they broke his hand](#), *Washington Post*, July 20, 2020.

As a result of this political myopia, the influence of militarized policing on far-right extremism is one the United States government is profoundly unprepared to address. But the history of the American far right, as well as the recent rapid growth and militancy of the present-day white power and anti-government movements, demonstrates that militarized policing does nothing but inflame extremists. Countering surging far-right extremism thus requires not only demilitarizing our law enforcement agencies but looking beyond policing as a solution to social and political problems.

Accelerationism and Apocalypticism

The prevalence of apocalyptic thinking within far-right extremist circles is evidenced by a growing interest in “accelerationism,” which has now widely permeated the far right and informs the tenor and aims of both the white power and antigovernment extremist movements. It is not ideology but a strategy, premised on the belief that society is so deeply broken that “the system” itself must be torn down. This, accelerationism’s adherents believe, can only be achieved through violence aimed at both the state or social groups perceived as enemies, inviting a repressive response that will eventually help extremists win enough support to mount an insurrection.

Accelerationists are united in their belief that “there is no political solution.” “We advocate political terror and murder against jews and politicians among other things. We have accepted that the (((system))) cannot be saved, rather it must be destroyed,” one white supremacist accelerationist posted in a Telegram channel in February 2020. While the idea of an impending race war has recently been gaining currency within the white power movement, this is a renewal in interest rather than a fundamental shift. This kind of apocalypticism has helped fuel organized white supremacy since the 1970s, as evidenced by the centrality of propaganda like *The Turner Diaries*. The 1978 novel tells the story of an underground white power organization that commits violent attacks against the state, eventually prompting a political revolution in which all non-whites are murdered. Material like *The Turner Diaries* has long circulated widely in anti-government and white power spaces, online and offline. Today, a new generation of white power adherents share it among a widespread network on Telegram that has labelled itself “Terrorgram.”

Platforms like Telegram have played an incalculable role in helping bring accelerationism to the fore of the white power movement. The platform offers anonymous, encrypted peer-to-peer networking. This allows extremists to form clandestine terror cells patterned after Klansman Louis Beam’s “leaderless resistance” strategy – one that is designed specifically to create “an intelligence nightmare for the government” because each cell operates independently rather than under the direction of a formal leader. On Telegram, users find themselves in extremist echo chambers where an unceasing stream of content tells them that a race war is looming, and they need to actively prepare to fight. Extremism expert J.M. Berger calls this mechanism⁸ “temporal compression,” leading consumers of extremism online content to feel as if “prophesied events preceding or accompanying the end of history are imminent or already underway, and that the clock is literally running out.”

Within the white power movement, accelerationism’s influence is made grimly clear by the numerous terrorist attacks carried out in the name of white supremacy, including those at

⁸ J. M. Berger, [The Metronome of Apocalyptic Time: Social Media as Carrier Wave for Millenarian Contagion](#), *Perspectives on Terrorism*, [Vol 9, No 4 \(2015\)](#)

synagogues in Pittsburgh, PA and Poway, CA and in a Walmart in El Paso, Texas. It has also been demonstrated by the growth of groups organized into clandestine terror cells like The Base, whose members currently face charges ranging from firearms violations to conspiracy to murder.

Notably, this is not the first time in recent history in which the white power movement has turned against the state. Though the origins of violent right-wing extremism can be traced back centuries, it was particularly prevalent in the 1990s, a decade during which police militarization proliferated and antigovernment extremism flourished.

The conclusion of the Cold War played a decisive role in domestic militarization. As perceived international threats receded, military surpluses from the Cold War were made available to local law enforcement agencies as part of the so-called War on Drugs under section 1033 of the 1997 National Defense Authorization Act. The United States has since witnessed equipment requisitioned under the guise of drug interdiction turned loose on American communities. While this escalation of state violence had a disproportionate impact on Black Americans and other people of color, it also rankled right-wing extremists who feared state oppression and readied themselves to fight back.

As historian Kathleen Belew noted in her book *Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America*, the moments that most galvanized the movement were a direct consequence of recklessly militarized policing. “Within and beyond the white power movement, the siege at Ruby Ridge — along with the 1992 Los Angeles riots that preceded it and the fiery catastrophic end to the Waco standoff that followed in 1993 — inflamed a renewed apocalyptic imaginary,” she wrote, “a worldview characterized by intensifying urgency that would eventually lead to the 1995 bombing of Oklahoma City.” Ruby Ridge and Waco, in particular, “reaffirmed the state as inherently evil, supplanting communism as an irredeemable enemy and giving rise to a surge of militia organizing.” These events are perennial justifications, even today, for far-right terror. The lionization of the victims of state violence at Ruby Ridge and Waco, as well as the perpetrator⁹ of the Oklahoma City bombing, persist as far-right extremists once again center their ire on the state.

The Boogaloo Movement

The core tenet of accelerationism – that widespread violence is necessary to overthrow the country’s corrupt, tyrannical government – is not contained to the white power movement. This year, a new widespread subculture calling itself the “boogaloo boys” has emerged and embraced the idea that the only way to correct the nation’s wayward path is through a second civil war. The members of the boogaloo movement do not have a singular ideology, but range from libertarian gun enthusiasts to white supremacists. They are defined by a troublingly casual acceptance of violence, evidenced by their online discussions in which memes about killing members of law enforcement, building explosives, and creating untraceable “ghost guns” create a foundation for a shared culture and self-referential jokes.

One of the factors that helped the Boogaloo movement congeal in the early part of this year was the death of 21-year-old Duncan Lemp at the hands of police during a March no-knock raid in Maryland. According to police, Lemp was legally barred from purchasing

⁹ [McVeigh Worship: The New Extremist Trend](#), Southern Poverty Law Center, June 27, 2017.

weapons in Maryland until he was 30, but they received a tip that he had guns in his possession. Police obtained a warrant to conduct a “no-knock raid” – a practice that has grown dramatically as police have become more militarized, growing from¹⁰ about 1,500 annually in the early 1980s to 45,000 in 2010 alone. Police shot and killed Lemp during the raid, but the circumstances remain disputed. Lemp’s parents say he was shot while asleep in his bed, while police contend that he refused to follow their orders and was “found to be in possession of a rifle.”

Lemp was apparently active in antigovernment online circles and the boogaloo boys quickly raised him up as a martyr. Lemp’s death helped provide a figure around which to orient themselves and avenge. Members of the movement view his death as the product of a militarized, overzealous police force operating at the hands of a tyrannical state. The state and its authorities needed to be stopped – by the use of force, they noted explicitly – in order to prevent further infringement on people’s rights or threats to their lives. Boogaloo boys should challenge the state’s monopoly on violence, some adherents insisted.

Lemp’s death coincided with the beginning of anti-lockdown protests around the country. The demonstrations attracted boogaloo members who saw state social distancing orders as more evidence of government overreach.

But it was the historic protests that arose across the country in the wake of George Floyd’s death at the hands of Minneapolis police officers that attracted even larger crowds of boogaloo boys. Police at the George Floyd protests have been much more inclined to use force than at the anti-lockdown demonstrations, presenting boogaloo boys with an opportunity to engage in confrontations with law enforcement. Though some boogaloo boys have expressed an apparent sense of accord with Black Lives Matter protesters, their alignment with the movement seems to end at their shared distrust of police. For the boogaloo movement, protests are not a space to build solidarity, but an opportunity to capitalize on political tensions in order to sow further discontent and even spark violence that could ignite a civil war.

More than a dozen men associated with the boogaloo movement have been arrested since May, many in relations to the George Floyd protests. One Ohio man planned to lure police¹¹ to a national park and ambush them. Three men in Las Vegas made plans to blow up¹² a substation or ranger station, and were eventually arrested while on their way to a Black Lives Matter protest while in possession of Molotov cocktails they planned to use to escalate violence at the demonstration. In Oakland, California, one man shot and killed a security officer¹³ outside of a federal courthouse from a van driven by an accomplice. Protests were taking place blocks away – something the alleged shooter hoped would act as cover. When police attempted to arrest him at his home, the suspect allegedly killed another member of law enforcement. Police found bomb-making equipment and ammunition in his car, along with messages scrawled in blood, including “boog” and “I became unreasonable.”

¹⁰ Dylan Lovan, Michael Kunzelman, Adrian Sainz, [Police raid fuels call to end ‘no knock’ warrants](#), Associated Press, June 1, 2020

¹¹ David Neiwert, [FBI arrests an Ohio ‘Boogaloo Boi’ for plotting ambush of police officers at national](#), [Daily Kos](#), May 13, 2020.

¹²Michelle L. Price, Scott Sonner, [Prosecutors: 3 men plotted to terrorize Vegas protests](#), Associated Press.

¹³ Katie Shepherd, [An officer was gunned down. The killer was a ‘boogaloo boy’ using nearby peaceful protests as cover, feds say](#). [Washington Post](#), June 17, 2020.

Even if not all members of the boogaloo movement are white supremacists, they nevertheless represent an extremist, authoritarian movement that wants to use anti-democratic action to achieve their political vision. That includes inciting violence at demonstrations and making threats against their political enemies, who include leftists, journalists, government officials, and members of law enforcement.

A History of Punishment

The dramatic militarization of law enforcement, which accelerated after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, has contributed to far-right extremists' mistrust of federal and local law enforcement – particularly as white supremacists have been identified as a national threat priority¹⁴ by the FBI. According to the Defense Logistics Agency¹⁵, 8,200 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies from 49 states and four U.S. territories were participating in the program as of June 2020. Although record-keeping on these equipment transfers is poor, an estimated \$7.4 billion¹⁶ in materials has been transferred via the program since 1990.

For decades, the United States has favored carceral and militant solutions to social ills, whether they be racism, poverty, or extremism. Stuart Schrader, a lecturer and researcher at Johns Hopkins University and author of *Badges Without Borders: How Global Counterinsurgency Transformed American Policing*, noted this recently in the Washington Post. “After the destructive rebellions¹⁷ in U.S. cities in 1967, almost always spurred by incidents of police brutality,” he wrote, “President Lyndon Johnson convened the Kerner Commission, which recommended¹⁸ spending billions to improve housing, education and employment prospects for African Americans.” But rather than expand the War on Poverty and infuse resources into the nation’s underdeveloped social welfare state, “Johnson balked at those expensive solutions,” instead adopting “the commission’s suggestions for riot preparedness with alacrity. Our contemporary situation — police and soldiers outfitted with seemingly endless supplies of tear gas grenades confronting a perpetually underemployed class of young people — is the legacy.”

That legacy was further outlined in a 2014 ACLU report titled *War Comes Home: The Excessive Militarization of American Policing*¹⁹. Militarized domestic policing is “by no means free of cost for communities. Instead, the use of hyper-aggressive tools and tactics results in tragedy for civilians and police officers, escalates the risk of needless violence, destroys property, and undermines individual liberties.”

The escalation of militarization is exacerbating problems in policing, including necessary efforts to curb the threat of the far right.

¹⁴ Erin Donaghue, Racially-motivated violent extremists elevated to "national threat priority," FBI director says, CBS News, February 5, 2020.

¹⁵ Defense Logistics Agency, [1033 Program FAQs](#), June 2020.

¹⁶ James Hohman, [The Daily 202: 'Demilitarizing' the police could be a more fruitful rallying cry for reformers than 'defunding'](#), June 9, 2020.

¹⁷ Stuart Schrader, [When police treat protesters like insurgents, sending in troops seems logical](#), June 4, 2020.

¹⁸ Elizabeth Hinton, [George Floyd's Death Is a Failure of Generations of Leadership](#), *New York Times*, June 2, 2020.

¹⁹ ACLU, *War Comes Home: The Excessive Militarization of American Policing*, 2014

Policy Recommendations

End the 1033 Program.

Since it was established in the 1997 FY National Defense Authorization Act, the 1033 Program has facilitated the transfer of more than \$7.4 billion in surplus military equipment to local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) have both received military equipment from the program, which is particularly concerning as we watch these agencies and others deploy to American cities in response to protests sparked by the murder of George Floyd. This program does not protect our communities, but has instead encouraged some police officers to treat our cities like war zones. Congress should end the Department of Defense 1033 Program.

Promote anti-bias education programs that help steer individuals away from hate and extremism.

The law is a blunt instrument to confront hate and extremism; it is much better to prevent these criminal acts in the first place. Since it is not possible to legislate, regulate, or tabulate racism or hatred out of existence, we need federal and state government leadership to promote anti-bias, anti-hate, and democracy-building education programs – like SPLC’s Teaching Tolerance resources – in our nation’s schools. Especially in these divided and polarized times, every elementary and secondary school should promote an inclusive school climate and activities that celebrate our nation’s diversity.

Programs and processes that intervene ethically in the lives of individuals – often called “deradicalization” efforts – should also be promoted. More than 70 million children and young adults, for example, have been learning primarily at home or experiencing a summer vacation with no camps, employment, or other structured activities. Extremists and hate groups see this as an ideal time to exploit youth grievances about their lack of agency, their families’ economic distress, and their intense sense of disorientation, confusion, fear and anxiety. In the absence of their usual social support systems and networks of trusted adults and peers, young people can become targets for the far-right, who promise easy answers online about who they can blame for their plight.

Last month, SPLC and American University’s Polarization and Extremism Research and Innovation Lab (PERIL) released a guide to help parents and caregivers understand how extremists are exploiting this time of uncertainty and unrest by targeting children and young adults with propaganda. The guide, *Building Resilience & Confronting Risk in the COVID-19 Era*²⁰, is designed for caregivers, parents, educators and others who are on the front lines of recognizing and responding to radicalization in the COVID-19 era. Our new SPLC/PERIL guide provides parents and caregivers with tangible steps to confront and counter this threat.

Speak out against hate.

Words matter. It is impossible to overstate the importance of civic and military leaders using their public platforms and bully pulpits to condemn hate and extremism. Failure to do so emboldens extremists. In words and deed, President Trump and his administration have, to date, fallen far short of what we have come to expect – what the nation actually

²⁰ Southern Poverty Law Center and American University Polarization & Extremism Research Innovation Lab, *Building Resilience & Confronting Risk in the COVID-19 Era*, June, 2020

needs – from our leaders. In fact, the President’s divisive, polarizing rhetoric and executive actions have, too frequently, made things worse, elevating the urgent need for Governors, Mayors, police executives, and federal, state, and local legislators to speak out against hate and extremist acts.

Investigate and prosecute the violent criminal activities of The Base and other racist extremist groups. The arrests and federal charges filed in January in Maryland and Georgia against several members of The Base for, among other things, explosives and firearms-related charges, was an important demonstration that federal officials are working to prevent and punish their criminal activities. In addition, members of The Base have conducted paramilitary training to advance their violent, accelerationist goals. In more than two dozen states such training is unlawful, when it is in preparation for criminal acts or a civil disorder. In those states, illegal paramilitary training by members of The Base should be investigated and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Provide sufficient resources to meet the threat.

Until recently, the administration and federal law enforcement officials had failed to adequately track the threat from white supremacist and other extremist groups – focusing, instead, almost exclusively, on violence inspired by radical interpretations of Islam. The FBI and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have now taken more active steps to confront crimes connected to domestic terrorism, but more must be done. Congress should pass the **Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act (DTPA)**. This legislation, approved last March by the House Judiciary Committee by an overwhelming bipartisan margin, would improve coordinated response, require expanded data collection and reporting, and highlight best practices to combat domestic terrorism.

Any legislation in this arena must focus on specific criminal acts and not punish First Amendment-protected expression. The DTPA does not create new federal crimes. Indeed, SPLC believes strongly a new federal criminal domestic terrorism statute is utterly unnecessary – and would result in furthering our nation’s disturbing history of racial profiling and targeting of minorities and political activists in the name of national security.

In addition, although in recent days President Trump has threatened to designate antifa as a domestic terrorist group, a list of designated domestic terrorist organizations does not exist – and it should not. However odious the ideology and beliefs of The Base and other extremist groups, First Amendment-protected speech and association rights preclude designating them or any other domestic groups.

Restrict online fundraising opportunities.

Members of The Base are using restricted-access social media platforms like Telegram to communicate and organize. SPLC has notified Telegram that far-right extremists were using their platform to call for acts of terrorism, but have received no response. Social media companies should not provide a safe haven for extremists. In addition, to the greatest extent possible, social media platforms and online payment service providers should act to disrupt the funding of hate online, to prevent their services from helping to incubate and bankroll terrorists.

Restrict access to firearms for extremists.

Our research documents that 59% of domestic terrorist attacks carried out between April 1, 2009 and February 1, 2015 were perpetrated with a gun. As previously noted, members of The Base have been arrested on federal weapons stockpiling charges. Federal and

state officials should adopt reasonable gun violence prevention initiatives to help prevent violent extremists from acquiring weapons.

Improve hate crime training and data collection.

Data drives policy. We cannot address a problem if we are not effectively tracking and measuring it. The FBI has been tracking hate crimes and preparing an annual report on reports they receive from state and local law enforcement officials since 1991. Like all FBI crime reporting, it is voluntary – and it is clearly incomplete. In 2018, the most current data are available, more than 1,500 federal and local police agencies *did not report any data to the FBI* – including eight cities with populations of more than 100,000. Another 77 cities with populations of more than 100,000 affirmatively reported zero (0) hate crimes to the FBI, a statistic that strains credibility.

Because of the special impact of hate violence on communities, Congress should make hate crime reporting mandatory. While working to make reporting mandatory, however, Congress should pass the **Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer National Opposition to Hate, Assault, and Threats to Equality (NO HATE) Act**, which would authorize grants to promote hate crime training, prevention, best practices, and data collection initiatives – and to develop state hate crime reporting hotlines to refer individuals to local law enforcement and support services. We were pleased to see that, earlier this week, the House Appropriations Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee included eight million dollars to expand and promote hate crime training for state, local, and tribal law enforcement officials.

Enforce hate crime laws, train law enforcement officials, and build community capacity.

Federal and state governments should provide law enforcement officials with the tools and training they need to prevent and effectively respond to hate violence. Law enforcement should be trained in de-escalation techniques, community policing best practices, including trauma-informed comfort and assistance to individual victims and community members. When hate crimes do occur, law enforcement officials must be prepared to take prompt, strong action to investigate every incident – and to hold perpetrators accountable. But enforcement actions must be coupled with sustained and significant investment in communities, including evidenced-based diversion and alternative sentencing programs.

Policing and punishment should not be our primary means of seeking to address social problems. Police officers are not educators, social workers, substance use counselors, or mental health experts and we should not ask them to play those roles. Communities will thrive if we invest in education, health care, housing, parks and recreation programs, job training programs, and community-based services, including trauma-informed and culturally appropriate substance and mental health treatment.

Prevent white supremacists and other extremists from serving in the US Armed Forces.

Several members of The Base have been identified as veterans or active-duty servicemen. As SPLC testified²¹ before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel in February, the Department of Defense must move past a “zero tolerance” response to the presence of white supremacism in the military and invest in programs that steer individuals away from extremism and deradicalize those who have

²¹ [Statement of Lecia Brooks, Southern Poverty Law Center](#), House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Military Personnel, February 11, 2020.

adopted extremist beliefs or joined hate groups. We support the creation of evidence-informed trainings intended to inoculate against radicalization at entry, through one's military career, and reentry into civilian life.

We support a congressionally-mandated annual climate survey on extremism and an annual report from military leadership that includes an audit of all investigations and prevention measures taken regarding white supremacist activity within the ranks of the military. These reports should, to the largest degree possible, be made public so that they can inform the military's response to this problem going forward.

In addition, SPLC supports provisions included recently in the House-approved FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act to create a new Special Inspector General to investigate the causes of underrepresentation of minorities within the officer corps and higher ranks of enlisted servicemembers, the overrepresentation of servicemembers of color in military justice proceedings, the Department of Defense's diversity and inclusion efforts, and the extent of white supremacy within the military. That Special IG should report to Congress and share its findings and recommendations to address these longstanding and pervasive problems.

Thank you for holding this important hearing and for your continued leadership in working to address violent hate and extremism in a constitutional and effective manner. We look forward to working with you as you continue to focus your urgent attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cassie Miller".

Cassie Miller, PhD
Senior Research Analyst, Intelligence Project