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SPCHU303

April 8, 2021

What's the most ethical position?

Should the “Proud Boys” be considered a terrorist group? With everything that’s been going on for the last 2 years, I chose to do my paper on the highly dense yet infamous “Proud Boys”. The proud boys began as a fictional group made up by former president Donald J. Trump in 2016, but became more prominent, while running for president for a second term in 2021. The “proud boys” title only began as an “innocent” term he used to describe his supporters, but quickly became a term associated with malicious dwellings and the face of his campaign. For the past two years, in his campaign speeches, former president Donald J. Trump used this Proud Boys term to indirectly instruct his supporters, who are conservatives, on ways to “uphold” his honor. Because of this, there has been an extreme incline on hate-crimes, political disturbances, and even what has now been referred to as a terrorist attack by this specific group. The most recent, and the most significant has been the attack on the United State’s Capitol. This attack deserves major insight because it’s now one of America’s most traumatic attacks on its own country and has greatly shifted the dynamic of the world we now live in today.

There are a lot of opinions on whether or not these proud boys should indeed be labeled terrorists or not. While there are some people that agree but feel as if there should be some stipulations to it, and some that don’t agree but feel as if they still deserve some sort of

punishment; there are others that just flat out believe that they do deserve that title regardless of the outcome and those that simply believe that they aren't. I for one, agree with the percentage of those that feel as if the Proud Boys should be designated a terrorist organization. The Proud Boys should be a terrorist organization because as the definition *terrorist* proclaims, the Proud Boys are infamously known for inflicting terror among the states, and using unlawful violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims.

By stating this, my ethical position on this topic stands with the percentage that ultimately just agrees that the Proud Boys should be considered terrorists no questions asked. This stance is supported by the claims from my initial source "*Designating the Proud Boys a Terrorist Organization Won't Stop Hate-fuelled Violence.*" written by author Candyce Kelshall.

In this excerpt, author Candyce Kelshall briefly describes in the article how as she puts it, designating the Proud Boys a terrorist organization won't stop the violence that continues to happen. She begins by introducing who and what the Proud Boys are, and how Canada refuses to tolerate their nonsense because it conflicts with Canadian values. Candyce mentions the use of soft violence in relating to what the general public uses when it comes to social media, clothing, memes, symbols, and things of that sort. Being that these things are generally what influences and shaped our world today, the Proud Boys take advantage of that. They use these methods to persuade and manipulate those, particularly of the adolescent age, to join their bandwagon of violence, hate, rage, and methods of piracy to practice their United States right to freedom of speech. She uses her knowledge of different extremist groups, research, and discussions of politicians to reason behind her claims.

In addition to this, I've also identified two new sources on why I agree the Proud Boys should be considered a terrorist organization. As referenced in an article written by Alexandra Hall, the Proud Boys not only incorporate themselves in birate behavior but in inflammatory language that can be seen or used as abusive and taken part in events that have come to be known as cereal beatings. (*Hall, 2020*) The members of this group constantly participates in rallies purposely to draw those in and incite war. Every event that they've been in attendance in has turned violent.

The second new source that I've included only amplifies this fact. Author Ewan Palmer goes onto to describe the different stances and goals the far right leader has established for the group. One of the things mentioned is a direct quote from the leader himself, telling his supporters and members of his group that "violence is a really effective way to solve problems." (*Palmer, 2020*) It also goes into other segments where he continues boasting how the group's members will kill you, states how they need more violence from the Trump people and his supporters violently stating "Choke a m*****r, choke a b***h, choke a t****y, get your fingers around a windpipe" (*Palmer, 2020*) and telling those who listen in on his podcast to get a gun and "get ready to blow someone's f*****g head off."(*Palmer, 2020*) Why would you want someone that has this mindset to *not* be considered a threat to society? At this point everyone who fits their "problem" criteria when it comes to those who look or act differently than they do are in extreme danger no matter your background in addition to the political and justice system itself. Allowing people like this to infiltrate these systems and ignite evil on our country will essentially do more harm than good.

On the contrary, as I stated before, there are those that take a different ethical approach on whether the Proud Boys should be designated a terrorist organization. First, for the percentage that agrees but feel as if there should be some stipulations to it, believe that designating the Proud Boys under a terrorist organization could be very hard if not impossible to pursue because of how threatening the group could be to those against them. (*Blazakis, 2021*) Next, for the percentage that just simply doesn't agree, believe that the Proud Boys have every right to do what they're doing and that the other extremist organizations is where the focus should be and lastly, for those that sort of straddle, they believe that these members act out of "expectation." They fear that if they don't act on what they signed up for, they would be looked at as those they deem inferior.

Although I agree that the Proud Boys should be designated terrorists no questions asked, I also can say that I agree with the "Yes, but" side of this as well. This consensus makes up of those that believe that designating the Proud Boys under a terrorist organization could be very hard if not impossible to pursue because of how threatening the group could be to those against them and that by just slapping that label terrorists on them, it wouldn't make a change to their ideological beliefs. As I mentioned before, my reasoning for aligning with the "Yes" census is because of the extremely vile moral compass this group chooses to amplify. As referenced in the article supporting this position of "Yes, but", author Jason M. Blazakis describes how the government tends to show favor towards the Proud Boys and how the Trump administration neglected to wield against the extreme far right. He explains how this take could essentially persuade readers to opt in on the fact that maybe the Proud Boys shouldn't be considered a terrorist group because they have just as

much a right to use their freedom of expression like everyone else. Some people are keen to think that just because the government sees something as a “go”, they should too. In describing how threatening the group could be against those who oppose them, he uses this to get readers to see the opposing side of why they actually should be called terrorists. *This would* be the only ethical position of why designating this group a terrorist organization may not be in the United State’s best benefit as of now.

In conclusion, my ethical position on this topic continues to reside with the fact being that the Proud Boys are the true definition of what the word *terrorist* proclaims. They are infamously known for inflicting terror among the states and using unlawful violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims. This affects not just those who oppose them but other POC, their families and friends who may have different beliefs but have to suffer the consequences because of association, and more importantly *specifically* the United States political and justice system. The constant riots, boasts of rifles and ammunition above legal limits, the insensitive commentary made on women and other POC, the violent threats, and the infamous insurgence on the Capitol, this group consecutively aligns with every other terrorist organization that has become known to man. The Proud Boys call themselves “proud Western chauvinists” who “refuse to apologize for creating the modern world.” Why should this one be any different?

Works Cited

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