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ETHICAL ADVOCACY—WHAT’S THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM?

The Proud Boys

In this excerpt, we will examine a group known as the Proud Boys and their disruptive insidious behavior towards our country and its democracy. 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 on the attack of the Capitol in Washington, DC. I argue that the right way to see the issue of the proud boys and their unruly antics is to ultimately designate them as terrorists as this perspective protects African Americans, the LGBTQ+ community, and other POC who are the most vulnerable stakeholders. Formerly designating them as terrorists will be the most ethical solution to this problem. With the most recent attack on the Capitol coherently being America’s wake up call, it leaves the question; Should the “Proud Boys” be considered a terrorist group?

Ultimately displaying what the definition of terrorist proclaims, the Proud Boys inflict terror among the states and use unlawful violence and intimidation in the pursuit of their political aims. These political claims are put in place by the group's leader Enrique Terrio to instill fear predominantly in the African American, LGBTQ+, and other POC communities. 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)* The members of this group constantly participate in rallies purposely to draw those in and incite war. Every event that they've been in has turned violent and resulted in numerous casualties. For example, the attack on the Capitol. The members of this group barged and clawed through the doors with armed weapons, smoke bombs, and flags towards the congress hall to let those elected know how they felt when it came to their "biased favoritism" of those who looked differently than them. To not want people to share the same luxuries as you as simple equality and receiving humane treatment everywhere is beyond me. This group also goes further than just having a physically daunting presence. They amplify this hate on social media platforms as well. Platforms where not just their targeted audiences take part of, but children of all ages. Author Candyce mentions the use of this form 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. *(Kelshall)*

Furthermore, 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)* defines this group's meaning. With designating the Proud Boys an official terrorist organization, it not only will give those targeted by this group a sense of protection and peace, but the people of the United States itself.

In the continued boasting of how the group's members will kill you, leader Torrio continues to state 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*) 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*) 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.

To implement this plan, the process is fairly simple. That’s another pro to giving this group the attention they deserve. It wouldn’t take away from or add on to the strenuous job of those in charge. If anything, this will actually take a load off of our congress so that we can focus on the issues that really matter. Of course, the initial protocol and/or course it takes to designate someone or an entity as a terrorist will be followed. Then after this procedure is completed, the leader and co-founders of this riotous organization should be reprimanded immediately as they do other organizations they find threatening to our constitution and the safety of its people.

Next, I will explain how the designation of listing the organization as terrorists is beneficial to our country in both finances and the livelihood of its people. Those in Canada describe it being like a breath of fresh air. Like Canadians, Americans can continue living their everyday lives without the fear of or worry that a terrorist organization walks among them freely. Author N’dea Yancey-Briggs describes how Canadian government officials are able to put the money it would take to defend themselves and punish those involved back into their country.

With all that America has been going through and faced during this pandemic, I'm pretty sure we can all think of a million different ways the money it would take to rebuild what the Proud Boys could possibly destroy can aid towards. We'll be willingly putting ourselves in a bind if we don't nip this in the bud right now.

In addition to this, some of the most significant potential outcomes are the freezing, seizing and restraint of property of the organization itself and its individuals. Those willing to fund the Proud Boys and those found to actively pursue the organization in an attempt to join can carry a punishment as indictable offence (and liability to imprisonment for up to 10 years). (*Yancey-Bragg*) These tactics are in place to use as a deterrent from joining the organization; providing the public with the reassurance needed so our government can remain intact.

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. The neo-facists group engages in political violence and involves members that espouse misogynistic, Islamophobic, anti-Semitic, anti-immigrant and white supremacist ideologies. (*Davies and Wu*) 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?

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