

Geri Haim Talks Defining Domestic Terrorism to Better Hone Counter-Terrorism Measures

Geri Haim on Defining Domestic Terrorism to Better Hone Counter-Terrorism Measures

MIAMI, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, October 23, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The definition of domestic terrorism shapes government response, says <u>Geri Haim</u>. Once defined, the government can research and author a set of mitigatory responses to a threat such as domestic terrorism.

Defining Domestic Terrorism

A broad definition creates roadblocks to honing a set of responses to eradicate the problem while a too-strict definition can miss facets of the threat, <u>Geri Haim explained</u>. This increases the importance of the problem definition because by honing the problem definition, we enumerate its important facets. Agreement on terminology across government branches and agencies simplifies communication and streamlines threat responses. Adhering to the definition assists individuals in looking beyond their preconceived notions. Misuse of the forming of a definition can occur when politicians use it for a spin, while improper applications of the definition can subjugate ethnicities, religion practitioners, and/or other minority groups.

In the US, Congress defined domestic terrorism in a statute as "any act dangerous to human life that violates U.S. criminal laws and appears to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion, or affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping."

Domestic Terrorism Response Foci

This official definition includes groups and individuals. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) works on issues of domestic terrorism. The Bureau laser focuses on lone offenders also referred to as lone wolves who use firearms, <u>Geri Haim said</u>. These individuals may act independently with no group guidance or affiliation.

The Bureau divides domestic terrorism threats into four categories:

abortion extremists, animal rights/environmental extremists, anti-government/anti-authority extremists, racially motivated violent extremists.

The motivating factors for joining these movements or converting to this way of thinking include socio-political conditions, perceptions of overreaching by the government or law enforcement, and reactions to Congressional or Supreme Court actions or Presidential orders, Geri Haim says. Although other types of domestic terrorism exist, these are the four areas the FBI focuses on most intently.

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