

Justice Department Inspector General report confirms FBI had over 2 dozen informants in militia groups during January 6 attack

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Last week, nearly four years after hundreds of Trump supporters stormed the US Capitol in an attempt to stop the certification of Joe Biden's election victory, the Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) released an 88-page report focused on the the Federal Bureau of Investigation's "direction and handling of its confidential human sources in the lead-up to and on January 6."

The protracted delay in the release of the report speaks to the ongoing coverup by both big business parties of the complicity by sections of the military and intelligence establishment in the failed coup. There is nothing in the report that could not have been made public in the months following the attack.

Despite the delay, the report confirms, in direct contradiction to previous congressional testimony by FBI Director Christopher Wray and other FBI employees, that the federal domestic police intelligence agency had over two dozen informants in Washington D.C. during the attack on Congress. The informants provided detailed information about the coming attack that was either ignored or buried within the agency.

While the OIG's report found "no evidence... showing or suggesting that the FBI had undercover employees in the various protest crowds, or at the Capitol, on January 6," it did find that at least three confidential human sources (CHSs) had been "tasked by the FBI field offices... to travel to D.C. for the events of January 6 to report on domestic terrorism subjects who were possibly attending the event."

In addition to the three informants specifically tasked by the agency to attend the January 6 protest, the inspector general's report "found that 23 other FBI CHSs were in D.C. on January 6 in connection with events planned for

January 6." The inspector general claims that none of the 26 informants were "directed by the FBI to encourage others to commit illegal acts on January 6."

The report found that at least four informants "entered the Capitol during the riot; an additional 13 entered the restricted area around the Capitol... and 9 neither entered a restricted area nor entered the Capitol or otherwise engaged in illegal activity." None of the 17 informants who entered the Capitol grounds—in violation of federal law—have been prosecuted.

Despite having over two dozen informants, the OIG claims the FBI's Washington field office (WFO) was aware of only five of them, because "only 4 field offices had informed the WFO or FBI Headquarters that CHSs under the relevant field office's jurisdiction—5 CHSs in total— would be traveling to D.C. on January 6."

Exploding the false claims by the House January 6 Select Committee and the FBI itself, in the days and months after the attack, that a lack of intelligence or "failure to connect the dots" was the reason the attack was allowed to happen, informants provided the agency all the information it needed to thwart the assault on the Capitol.

The OIG report stated that "multiple" CHSs were in contact with the leadership of the Oath Keepers, including Elmer "Stewart" Rhodes, founder of the far-right militia group. Rhodes and four other members—Roberto Minuta, Joseph Hackett, David Moerschel, and Edward Vallejo—have been convicted of seditious conspiracy for their actions in furtherance of Trump's coup.

The OIG report states that the FBI had "CHSs in more than one field office who had provided reporting on Rhodes," including one "special agent" who reported having a CHS located "very close to the Oath Keepers"

and had “very good access.” The informant reporting to the agency was described as providing “highly sensitive” and “singular” intelligence.

On December 11, 2020, nearly a month before the coup, the high-level Oath Keeper informant reported to his handler that Rhodes would be flying to D.C. with an “individual” who would be “attending a White House engagement that night, and Rhodes wanted the individual to pass information to President Trump.” This information included that Trump “should invoke the Insurrection Act, declare Martial Law, and use the military to investigate or arrest perceived enemies who tainted the election.”

The informant said that Rhodes “intended to offer President Trump the support of Oath Keepers and other militia related groups to protect President Trump and/or engage in offensive operations and support President Trump should he refuse to leave the White House.” The informant said that Rhodes was “convinced a civil war, meaning an armed physical violent struggle, is coming.”

This information was shared with the US Secret Service. The agency confirmed that the individual with Rhodes did attend a White House event with Trump, but the individual did not, apparently, pass on Rhodes’ request to Trump. Four days later, on December 15, the same informant told his handler that Rhodes intended to travel to D.C. on January 6 and that he had been “Trying to attract Oath Keepers who are current law enforcement members to travel for events on that day so they can carry concealed firearms legally.”

This information was apparently not shared with the wider FBI Washington field office until after the coup.

In addition to the Oath Keepers, the OIG report found that the FBI had “several CHSs who reported on various chapters or members of the Proud Boys in the lead-up to the January 6th Electoral Certification, one of whom was in contact with [Henry “Enrique”] Tarrío in D.C. on the evening of January 6 and one of whom reported on another senior Proud Boys leader in advance of January 6.”

The report delved into only four of these informants, including “an active member of the Proud Boys” who had traveled “throughout the United States to take part in various Proud Boys related rallies.”

This informant told his handler on December 29, 2020 that he would be going to D.C. on January 6 with approximately 100 Proud Boys members, including Tarrío and “‘Tiny,’ a well known Proud Boys member and a target of ANTIFA.” In addition, the CHS reported that the

Proud Boys “will not be flying colors or wearing black and yellow clothing,” and were planning on going to the Capitol, although exactly where had not yet been determined.

Another “well placed” informant deep in the “Racially/Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremist” movement told his handlers on December 21 that a “bunch of Trump supporters are bringing guns to D.C. on the 6th.” The OIG noted that this source had been providing the FBI with information for “over 10 years” that “had been corroborated.”

In multiple reports and statements to Congress, FBI employees claimed that they had “canvassed” field offices for intelligence reports from informants prior to January 6. In a joint session of the House and Senate on March 2, 2021, Minnesota Democratic Senator Amy Klobuchar noted to Wray that at the time at least 20 members of the Proud Boys had been arrested for participating in the attack.

Providing cover for the FBI, Klobuchar asked Wray if there were “moments where you think, ‘If we would have known,’ if we could have infiltrated this group and found out what they were doing. Do you have those moments?”

Wray replied, “Absolutely, I will tell you senator, and this is something I feel passionately about, any time there is an attack, our standard at the FBI is we aim to bat 1,000... You can be darn tootin’ that we are focused very, very hard on how we can get better sources, better information, better analysis so that we can make sure that something that happened on January 6th never happens again.”

Far from “batting 1,000,” the OIG found that prior to January 6 the FBI instead turned a blind eye and “did not clearly direct field offices to canvass CHSs for information about the potential for violence on January 6.”



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