

# Patriot Front

## AT A GLANCE

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## HOW TO CITE

Mapping Militants Project (MMP). "Patriot Front." Last modified November 2022.

## SUMMARY

**Formed:** 2017

**Disbanded:** Group is active.

**First Attack: September 24, 2017:** 29 members of Patriot Front descended on an anarchist book fair in Houston.<sup>1</sup>

**Last Attack: September 3, 2022:** Over Labor Day weekend, approximately 75 members of Patriot Front marched in Indianapolis, Indiana.<sup>2</sup>

## OVERVIEW

Patriot Front is a Texas-based white supremacist group founded by Thomas Ryan Rousseau. The group formed as an offshoot of Vanguard America (VA) in the wake of the deadly "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017. The group espouses racist, anti-Semitic, and xenophobic ideologies and has the primary goal of establishing a white ethnostate within the United States.<sup>3</sup> Patriot Front masks such ideologies under the guise of patriotism and explicitly avoids using traditional "antisemitic and white supremacist language and symbols."<sup>4</sup> The group is highly active; it is estimated that PF members have been responsible for more than 80 percent of the white supremacist propaganda distribution activities in the United States since 2020.<sup>5</sup>

## NARRATIVE SUMMARY

Patriot Front (PF) formed as a splinter group in the aftermath of the "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, on August 12, 2017. During this rally, Thomas Rousseau, the founder of Patriot Front, led members of the white supremacist group

Vanguard America (VA). One of those VA members was James Alex Fields, Jr., the self-described neo-Nazi who drove his car into a group of counter-protesters, killing the demonstrator Heather Heyer and injuring more than 30 others.<sup>6</sup> The “PR nightmare” for VA that followed this incident pushed Rousseau to break off from VA and form a new organization, known as Patriot Front.<sup>7</sup>

The incident at the Unite the Right rally was not the first frustration that Rousseau had felt with VA. Before the rally in August, Rousseau had been engaged in a “months-long feud” with VA’s leader Dillon Ulysses Hopper, or Dillon Irizarry, a Marine Corps veteran from New Mexico.<sup>8</sup> In June 2017, tensions had emerged between Rousseau and Irizarry, as evidenced by the following message posted to Twitter by Irizarry:

On June 20th, Thomas [Rousseau] underhandedly and deceitfully exiled me from all of the Vanguard discord servers that HE controlled due to "security reasons". ... I logged off of discord and when I got back on an hour later I was banned from every single server, including the women's server. It was a literal coup with the guise that I left to handle family matters...Thomas is a traitor and should be regarded as such.<sup>9</sup>

Eighteen days after the Unite the Right rally, on August 30, 2017, Rousseau formally broke with Vanguard America and founded Patriot Front.<sup>10</sup> Rousseau described his decision in an announcement posted on the group chat app Discord: “Due to the unwillingness to meet any semblance of a compromise to resolve ongoing disputes with disagreeing parties, we are rebranding and reorganizing as a new entity. Vanguard America, as you know it, will now be the ‘Patriots Front.’ Our focus will remain much the same, as will our overall [sic] goals...”<sup>11</sup> Rousseau emphasized in his message that the split with VA was “aesthetic, not ideological.”<sup>12</sup> Such rebranding was part of larger trend among far-right hate groups in the United States, which sought to avoid the negative perception and increased “law enforcement scrutiny” of groups labeled neo-Nazi and white supremacist.<sup>13</sup>

Following the split, Vanguard America continued to exist, and Dillon Hopper remained the group’s leader. However, the group’s membership and activity diminished significantly as Patriot Front “slowly siphoned away VA members from other parts of the country.”<sup>14</sup> Notably, in October 2017, Hopper spoke at a “White Lives Matter” rally in Shelbyville, Tennessee, where he was accompanied by only seven VA members.<sup>15</sup> In January 2018, VA was further reduced when more infighting caused the creation of a second splinter group, the Nationalist Socialist Legion, a neo-Nazi organization.<sup>16</sup> As of 2022, VA no longer appears to be active, and its former leader Dillon Hopper “has all but disappeared.”<sup>17</sup>

Since the founding of Patriot Front, Thomas Rousseau has exerted tight control over the group.<sup>18</sup> The only other PF members who hold leadership positions are the Network Directors, who preside over the group’s regional chapters, and the Lieutenants, who manage certain aspects of the group, such as recruitment.<sup>19</sup> This rigid, top-down structure

has contributed to PF's success.<sup>20</sup> The group is based in Texas, although it has chapters in 40 states.<sup>21</sup>

Much of Patriot Front's activity concentrates on distributing propaganda in cities and college campuses across the United States. Since 2019, the group has been responsible for the "vast majority" of white supremacist propaganda distribution in the U.S.<sup>22</sup> The Anti-Defamation League reported that Patriot Front was behind 80% of white supremacist propaganda incidents nationally in 2020.<sup>23</sup> That figure rose to 82% in 2021.<sup>24</sup> While many of its propaganda activities are considered "legal exercises of free speech," over the past few years, several PF members, including Rousseau, have been arrested in various U.S. cities for acts of vandalism.<sup>25</sup>

PF members have also been arrested for their participation in demonstrations. Most recently, on June 11, 2022, 31 members of Patriot Front were arrested in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, for planning to "violently disrupt" a Pride event.<sup>26</sup> Traveling from at least ten outside states, the men were arrested after a witness reported seeing what appeared to be a "little army" of men piling into the back of a U-Haul truck.<sup>27</sup> Approximately ten minutes later, the truck was pulled over by law enforcement. Inside, police found the 31 PF members, who were "armed with shields, shin guards, and other riot gear with them, including at least one smoke grenade."<sup>28</sup> According to documents obtained by the police, Patriot Front planned to form a column that would disengage once "an appropriate amount of confrontational dynamic had been established."<sup>29</sup> All 31 men were charged with conspiracy to riot, a misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in prison, as well as a \$5,000 fine and up to two years of probation.<sup>30</sup> Each of the men have pleaded not guilty.<sup>31</sup>

The group is also very active online, using a variety of messaging platforms, including RocketChat, Mumble, Gab, Telegram, BitChute and Mind, to facilitate communication between members and spread its ideology.<sup>32</sup> The extent of PF's online activity was revealed on January 21, 2022, when Unicorn Riot, a left-wing nonprofit media organization, released more than 400 gigabytes of videos, photos, and direct messages from Patriot Front's chat servers.<sup>33</sup> The leaked data also reveal PF's attempts to avoid being labeled as a Nazi group by prohibiting members from "using slurs and gestures 'that may be suggestive or otherwise morally degrading.'"<sup>34</sup> Despite such attempts, private messages show that members "frequently use [racist and anti-Semitic] slurs and brag about IRL [in real life] racist harassment."<sup>35</sup>

According to Pete Simi, an expert on extremist groups, and the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, Patriot Front poses a substantial threat to democracy, racial justice, and LGBTQ rights.<sup>36</sup> The group has generally exhibited more success than similar far-right groups—particularly those left in disarray following the 2017 Unite the Right rally—due to its "emphasis on professionalism, publicity, and growth" and its avoidance of overt white supremacy, which has allowed it to move into the mainstream.<sup>37</sup> Still, according to Jon Lewis, a research fellow at George Washington University, because Patriot Front focuses more on propaganda distribution than direct action, it is not as dangerous "as more overtly domestic terrorist neo-Nazi groups."<sup>38</sup>

In September 2022, Task Force Butler, a veterans organization founded by U.S. Army veteran Kristofer Goldsmith, released a 238-page report called “Project Blacklisted” that details Patriot Front activity.<sup>39</sup> Task Force Butler has sent the report to various local and state law enforcement officials with the goal of “hold[ing] Patriot Front legally accountable for their politically and racially-motivated harassment of vulnerable minority communities, their terrorizing of local residents in cities and towns throughout the United States, their acts of violence, and their use of American cities as backdrops to showcase for the media and the nation the ethno-nationalist agenda.”<sup>40</sup>

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

### A. LEADERSHIP

Thomas Rousseau has served as the leader of Patriot Front since he formed the group in 2017. Apart from Rousseau, the other members of Patriot Front who hold leadership positions are the Network Directors and the Lieutenants. The Network Directors include 15 individuals who preside over the group’s 40 regional chapters, run meetings, and organize activities.<sup>41</sup> The Lieutenants are responsible for managing the group’s various departments, including “media production, recruitment and online security.”<sup>42</sup>

**Thomas Ryan Rousseau (2017 – present):** Thomas Ryan Rousseau was born in 1998 and grew up in the suburbs of Dallas, Texas.<sup>43</sup> Rousseau attended Coppell High School, where he served on the school’s student newspaper *The Sidekick* as a cartoonist.<sup>44</sup> It was there where, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center, Rousseau “cultivated the propaganda production skills that propelled his rapid ascension into leadership on the racist right, first with Vanguard America and later with his founding of Patriot Front.”<sup>45</sup> During high school, Rousseau was a strong supporter of former President Donald Trump, celebrating his victory over Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election with an article titled “Trump: The silent majority no longer silent.”<sup>46</sup> The *Texas Observer* reported that “Rousseau was on the FBI’s radar as early as May 2017...when he was still a student at Coppell High School” because of his distribution of “propaganda posters” on college campuses in the Dallas area.<sup>47</sup> Rousseau served as “Vice Commander” of Vanguard America before formally breaking with the group to found Patriot Front.<sup>48</sup> As the sole founder and leader of Patriot Front, Rousseau exerts “tight control” over the group.<sup>49</sup> Rousseau has been arrested numerous times while participating in Patriot Front activities. His most recent arrest occurred in June 2022 in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho.<sup>50</sup> On August 29, 2022, Rousseau pled not guilty to a misdemeanor charge of conspiracy to riot.<sup>51</sup>

**Brent Gleason (unknown – 2022):** Brent Gleason served as Patriot Front’s primary legal counsel for over two years until he was replaced in 2022. Gleason was also a member of the group, participating in its internal chats as “Harrison TX.” In his most high-profile case for the group, Gleason represented Thomas Rousseau during his deposition in the civil suit *Sines v. Kessler* for his participation in the 2017 “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia.<sup>52</sup> On December 1, 2021, Rousseau removed Gleason from the

group's chat servers, after several members complained about his advocacy. Following his removal, several members replaced Gleason with another lawyer, Jason Lee Van Dyke.<sup>53</sup>

**Jason Lee Van Dyke (2022 – present):** Jason Lee Van Dyke replaced Brent Gleason as Patriot Front's "lawyer of choice" in 2022. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, he is also a member of the group, participating in its internal chats as "John TX."<sup>54</sup> Van Dyke also served as the primary legal counsel for the Proud Boys.<sup>55</sup> In May 2020, Van Dyke claimed he was no longer affiliated with the Proud Boys.<sup>56</sup>

## **B. NAME CHANGES**

Patriot Front formed as an offshoot of the group Vanguard America. Since breaking off from VA in the aftermath of the deadly "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017, Patriot Front has not changed its name.

## **C. SIZE ESTIMATES**

- 2019: 300 (ProPublica)<sup>57</sup>
- 2022: 250 (Task Force Butler)<sup>58</sup>

An investigation conducted by ProPublica in 2019 concluded that the group had about 300 members.<sup>59</sup> In 2022, Task Force Butler, an organization comprised of volunteer veterans, claimed to have identified at least 250 Patriot Front members across 44 U.S. states.<sup>60</sup> Leaked chats indicate that the group has struggled to increase its membership. In a post from December 2021, Rousseau wrote, "We are absolutely desperate for new people. We've been in the 220's to 230's membership rut for nearly a full year."<sup>61</sup>

According to the Middlebury Institute of International Studies, the "recruitment process is somewhat selective," with several candidates denied "for incompatible ideological views, presumed insincere white nationalist beliefs, suspicious or vague backgrounds, and lack of intelligence."<sup>62</sup> Patriot Front officially prohibits individuals with "any history of employment by law enforcement and recent charges of violent crimes" from joining. However, an investigation by the Southern Poverty Law Center suggests that over 20% of the group's applicants hold either "current or former ties to the US military."<sup>63</sup> Moreover, while members are officially required to be at least 17 ½ years of age to join, leaked chats reveal that some members are below that age.<sup>64</sup> According to Chris Schiano and Dan Feidt, journalists from Unicorn Riot, Patriot Front "suffers from high turnover"; as such, most of the group's membership is "relatively new."<sup>65</sup>

## **D. RESOURCES**

Patriot Front is highly active online, using various social media platforms, including Gab, Telegram, BitChute, and Mind, to facilitate communication between members and spread its ideology.<sup>66</sup>

Thomas Rousseau supports himself at least partially by requiring members to purchase propaganda materials, such as posters and stickers, directly from him and at a premium.<sup>67</sup> According to Jeff Tischauser, a senior researcher at the Southern Poverty Law Center, this requirement makes Patriot Front “close to a white nationalist pyramid scheme.”<sup>68</sup> Leaked internal chats show members complaining about the price of these items. In response to these complaints, Rousseau wrote on the group’s chat server in July 2021, “If any of the prices seem above market rate, it’s because it also goes toward paying for our servers, our digital accounts and subscriptions, and the food I can afford to eat.”<sup>69</sup>

## E. GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS

**Disclaimer:** This is a partial list of where the militant organization has bases and where it operates. This does not include information on where the group conducts major attacks or has external influences.

Patriot Front has chapters in 40 states.<sup>70</sup> Each chapter “has a ‘Network Director’ chosen by Rousseau.”<sup>71</sup> Its most active chapter is located in Texas, Rousseau’s home state.<sup>72</sup> Since its inception in 2017, Patriot Front has distributed propaganda materials in every U.S. state except Hawaii and Alaska.<sup>73</sup> In 2021, its propaganda activities were primarily concentrated in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Massachusetts, Texas, and Maryland.<sup>74</sup>

## STRATEGY

### A. IDEOLOGY AND GOALS

Patriot Front’s ideology incorporates racist, anti-Semitic, and xenophobic views. According to its manifesto, its mission is “a hard reset on the nation we see today— a return to the traditions and virtues of our forefathers.”<sup>75</sup> More concretely, the group seeks the creation of a white ethnostate from which “people of color are explicitly excluded.”<sup>76</sup> Such exclusion is made clear in Patriot Front’s manifesto: “An African, for example, may have lived, worked and even been classed as a citizen in America for centuries, yet he is not American. He is, as he likely prefers to be labelled, an African in America. The same rule applies to other who are not of the founding stock of our people as well as those who do not share the common unconscious that permeates throughout our greater civilization, and the European diaspora.”<sup>77</sup>

The group is also highly anti-Semitic, frequently praising historical neo-Nazi fascist leaders, such as “Mussolini, Oswald Mosley, and American Nazi Party founder George Lincoln Rockwell, as well as contemporary Nazi and fascist groups such as the Nordic Resistance Movement in Sweden and Casa Pound in Italy.”<sup>78</sup> Moreover, according to Unicorn Riot, “[m]embers sometimes address each other with Nazi titles and others reportedly hung swastika Christmas decorations or displayed the Nazi *sonnenrad* ‘black sun’ symbol on their home.”<sup>79</sup>

Additionally, the group is staunchly xenophobic, championing what is known as the “great replacement” theory, which holds that the white, Christian population in the United States is being displaced by nonwhite, non-Christian immigrants.<sup>80</sup> According to PF, “The nation will see the thin veneer of civilization begin to wane as resources are diverted from them to the replacement population.”<sup>81</sup> The group has targeted immigrant populations in its propaganda distribution activities, using fliers and stickers that read “Keep America American” and that call undocumented immigrants criminals.<sup>82</sup>

Importantly, Patriot Front masks its racist and white supremacist ideologies behind a cloak of patriotism. In its propaganda materials and manifesto, the group frequently uses patriotic symbols, including the American flag and images of George Washington, George Patton, Robert E. Lee, Andrew Jackson, and Henry Ford, as well as ambiguous language, such as “America First” and “Reclaim America.”<sup>83</sup>

Leaked private messages and videos show that members frequently use “racist, anti-Semitic language and gestures,” suggesting “that the careful outward branding does not necessarily reflect the group’s inward sentiments.”<sup>84</sup> For example, in one video leaked by Unicorn Riot, a PF member can be seen giving a Nazi salute and saying, “Sieg f\*\*\*ing Heil.”<sup>85</sup>

## **B. POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

There are no recorded political activities for this group. The group’s manifesto explicitly rejects politics, stating, “[p]olitics have played a large part in destroying this nation, and it will not be politics that will save us.”<sup>86</sup>

## **C. TARGETS AND TACTICS**

A primary tactic of Patriot Front is the distribution of propaganda, which occurs primarily through the following activities: flyering, banner drops, “spray painting official Patriot Front stencils on public or private property, painting over racial justice murals, as well as stealing, defacing or destroying pro-diversity yard signs and flags from homes and businesses.”<sup>87</sup> Since 2019, the group has been responsible for the “vast majority” of white supremacist propaganda distribution.<sup>88</sup> The Anti-Defamation League reported that Patriot Front was behind 80% of all white supremacist propaganda incidents in the United States in 2020.<sup>89</sup> That figure rose to 82% in 2021.<sup>90</sup> Propaganda distribution is so important to the group’s strategy that members are “required to submit proof of weekly ‘activism’ tasks and are criticized, scolded and punished when they fail to meet their expected quotas.”<sup>91</sup> According to Amanda Milkovits, a reporter for *The Boston Globe*, this tactic of distributing propaganda serves as a “low-effort, low-risk way to get their bigoted messages out, intimidate communities, and try to attract new members.”<sup>92</sup>

The group also holds and attends demonstrations across the United States. Such demonstrations are typically what the Anti-Defamation League characterizes as “flash demonstrations,” or “privately planned and unannounced events that allow groups to

promote their beliefs while limiting the risk of individual exposure, negative media coverage, arrests and public backlash.”<sup>93</sup> In 2021, Patriot Front was responsible for organizing two of the largest white supremacist events, including a “July event in Philadelphia and a December demonstration at the National Mall in Washington, D.C.”<sup>94</sup> PF members are generally easy to identify because of the group’s uniform, which consists of dark blue shirts, khaki pants, tan hats and white masks.<sup>95</sup> Rousseau is usually the only member who does not cover his face.<sup>96</sup> Members have been seen wielding riot shields and using smoke bombs and signal flares.<sup>97</sup>

In addition to helping spread its beliefs, demonstrations also enable Patriot Front to produce promotional content. At these events, “several camera operators circulate and shoot video while members wear body-worn cameras.”<sup>98</sup> The footage is then edited by Patriot Front’s media team and turned into promotional videos designed to attract more followers, particularly younger ones.<sup>99</sup>

Because of Patriot Front’s emphasis on image, it has generally not engaged in violence. However, according to former FBI Deputy Assistant Director Peter Strzok, with far-right groups like Patriot Front, the following question always remains: “Is there a trigger point where their intention is to move from simply protesting to violence?”<sup>100</sup> The recent arrests of 31 members at a Pride parade in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, in June 2022 indicates that the group may be growing more comfortable with violence. Although the group was intercepted before they arrived at the parade, members showed up with shields, shin guards, and other riot gear, including one smoke grenade.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, documents obtained by the police show that Patriot Front planned to establish a “confrontational dynamic” and cause disorder.<sup>102</sup>

## **MAJOR ATTACKS**

**Disclaimer:** These are some selected major attacks in the militant organization's history. It is not a comprehensive listing but captures some of the most famous attacks or turning points during the campaign.

**September 24, 2017:** 29 members of Patriot Front harassed attendees of an anarchist book fair in Houston, Texas.<sup>103</sup> PF members and other white supremacist activists carried a banner proclaiming “For Race and Nation” as they tried to enter the community center housing the book fair. They lit flares outside the building and called for a fight. However, no physical confrontation took place.<sup>104</sup>

**July 28, 2018:** Members of Patriot Front invaded an “Occupy ICE” protest in San Antonio, Texas, where they partially tore down the protestor’s encampment and chanted, “Strong borders! Strong nations!”<sup>105</sup>

**February 13, 2019:** Patriot Front posted hundreds of anti-immigrant fliers in East Boston, an area with many immigrants. The fliers said, “Keep America American,” and called undocumented immigrants criminals.<sup>106</sup> Two days later, on February 15, three members of Patriot Front were arrested in connection with the flyers.<sup>107</sup>



**February 8, 2020:** Over 100 members of Patriot Front marched through Washington, D.C., while shouting “Reclaim America.” Police accompanied the group.<sup>108</sup> According to the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police, the demonstration “was peaceful with no incidents or arrests.”<sup>109</sup>

**August 1, 2020:** Three members of Patriot Front, including Thomas Rousseau, were arrested in Weatherford, Texas, for plastering stickers on county property. The arrest report described one of the stickers as exhibiting the words “Reject Poison” together with “images of various drugs.”<sup>110</sup>

**May 21, 2021:** Two members of Patriot Front, Austin J. Amato and Tristan M. Yeager, hung a propaganda banner on Interstate 35 near Sanger, Texas. Police were dispatched to the scene after reports that the banner had caught fire and dropped into traffic. Amato and Yeager were subsequently arrested on deadly conduct charges.<sup>111</sup>

**July 3, 2021:** An estimated 150 to 200 members of Patriot Front marched through Philadelphia while chanting slogans such as “Reclaim America” and “The election was stolen.” PF members engaged both verbally and physically with onlookers and counter-protestors. Police reported no arrests or damage.<sup>112</sup>

**October 16, 2021:** Two Patriot Front members defaced a gay pride mural in Olympia, Washington. Leaked videos allowed the police to identify the vandals as Colton Michael Brown, who serves as PF’s Network Director for Washington and Oregon states, and Spencer Thomas Simpson. Both men were arrested on conspiracy to riot charges along with 29 other PF members during a June 2022 Pride event in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. They now face additional charges for aiding and abetting or complicity with graffiti.<sup>113</sup>

**October 20, 2021:** Patriot Front members vandalized a mural honoring the African American tennis legend and activist Arthur Ashe in Richmond, Virginia.<sup>114</sup> The media organization Unicorn Riot later identified two of the members as Nathaniel J. Noyce and Thomas Dail.<sup>115</sup> In October 2022, the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law filed a lawsuit against Patriot Front on behalf of two Richmond residents, claiming that the group’s act of vandalism violated their civil rights and created “anger, fear and intimidation” in their neighborhood.<sup>116</sup>

**December 4, 2021:** More than 100 members of Patriot Front held a rally in downtown Washington, D.C. Videos posted to Twitter show PF members marching outside the Lincoln Memorial while chanting “Reclaim America.” The men wore matching outfits, and many carried American flags or shields.<sup>117</sup>

**January 8, 2022:** Members of Patriot Front joined anti-abortion activists in a March for Life rally in Chicago. Members carried a large banner that read, “Strong families make strong nations.” Wearing a cowboy hat and no face covering, Thomas Rousseau walked at the front of the group.<sup>118</sup> March for Life activists heckled PF members, with one calling them an “embarrassment” and another yelling at them for “hijacking a pro-life movement.”<sup>119</sup>

**January 21, 2022:** Members of Patriot Front joined anti-abortion activists in a March for Life rally in Washington, D.C. Police reportedly “formed a barrier between about 40 members of Patriot Front and the rest of the protesters.”<sup>120</sup> In the wake of the demonstration, March for Life issued a statement condemning Patriot Front.<sup>121</sup>

**June 11, 2022:** Police arrested 31 members of Patriot Front near a pride event in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, on misdemeanor charges of conspiracy to riot. The men, who traveled to Idaho from at least ten states, were apprehended in the back of a U-Haul van, where authorities found “riot gear, one smoke grenade, shin guards, and shields.”<sup>122</sup> Among the arrestees was Thomas Rousseau.<sup>123</sup>

**July 2, 2022:** More than 100 members of Patriot Front marched through downtown Boston.<sup>124</sup> Charles Murrell, a black artist and activist, was allegedly assaulted by members of the group. Boston Mayor Michelle Wu denounced the demonstration and called Patriot Front “cowardly” and “disgusting.”<sup>125</sup>

**September 3, 2022:** Over Labor Day weekend, approximately 75 members of Patriot Front marched in Indianapolis, Indiana.<sup>126</sup> Videos posted to Twitter showed the group marching in the city’s downtown while beating drums, carrying signs, and chanting “Reclaim America.”<sup>127</sup> There were no reported confrontations.<sup>128</sup>

**September 24, 2022:** Members of Patriot Front and other far-right groups, including the Proud Boys, congregated at an LGBTQ-friendly church in Katy, Texas, to protest a drag queen bingo event being held there. The approximately 100 protesters were met by 100 counter-protesters, including antifascists. The opposing sides engaged in several minor confrontations.<sup>129</sup>

## **INTERACTIONS**

### **A. DESIGNATED/LISTED**

Patriot Front has not been designated as a terrorist organization by any major national government or international body.

### **B. COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

Patriot Front has not cultivated close relations with local communities.

### **C. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER GROUPS**

According to Unicorn Riot, Patriot Front explicitly forbids forming relationships with other groups, or “parallel organizing.”<sup>130</sup> Despite this prohibition, the group’s leaked chats “show connections to several other groups in both the neo-Nazi movements and the far-right more broadly.”<sup>131</sup>

### **Proud Boys**

The Proud Boys is an all-male, far-right extremist organization formed in the United States in 2016. The group is Islamophobic, anti-Semitic, homophobic, transphobic, misogynistic, and xenophobic. Most of the group's public activity involves protesting or attending political rallies and events, typically with the intent to provoke violence.<sup>132</sup> According to Unicorn Riot, "[s]everal Patriot Front members and potential recruits are former Proud Boys, and others in the group professed to have good relations with Proud Boys in their area."<sup>133</sup> One such member is Casey James Knuteson (aka Leo OR), a former Portland Proud Boy.<sup>134</sup>

### **National Justice Party (NJP)**

There is evidence that Patriot Front has a relationship with the National Justice Party, a neo-Nazi group founded in 2020 by Mike "Enoch" Peinovich.<sup>135</sup> Peinovich is also the founder of "The Right Stuff," a racist, podcast-based website that has served as a platform for Holocaust denial and other antisemitic conspiracy theories since 2012.<sup>136</sup> Although NJP refers to itself as a "party," it is not registered with the Federal Election Commission.<sup>137</sup> Members of Patriot Front have been present at several NJP events.<sup>138</sup> For example, on November 27, 2021, Thomas Rousseau and at least one other PF member attended an NJP rally outside the Waukesha, Wisconsin County Courthouse.<sup>139</sup> There, the protesters demanded that hate crime charges be brought against Darrell Edward Brooks Jr., the man responsible for a deadly car-ramming incident at a Christmas parade in Waukesha on November 21.<sup>140</sup> According to leaked chats, PF members have also "posted about distributing NJP materials alongside Patriot Front's official propaganda."<sup>141</sup>

### **Rise Above Movement (RAM)**

Some Patriot Front members have shown support for the Rise Above Movement, a white supremacist organization based in southern California.<sup>142</sup> In one leaked chat, a PF member from Tennessee wrote, "Gotta love RAM. I hope they see us as 100 percent allies."<sup>143</sup> Patriot Front has also "aligned itself and trained alongside" RAM-affiliated "Active Clubs," which are white supremacist "fight clubs" that have emerged across the United States in recent years.<sup>144</sup> According to the Middlebury Institute of International Studies, Patriot Front's support for these Active Clubs "suggests violence from within PF may not be as unlikely as in the past."<sup>145</sup>

## **D. STATE SPONSORS AND EXTERNAL INFLUENCES**

There are no identifiable external influences for this group.

### **MAPS**

- Global Right-Wing Extremism

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<sup>1</sup> "Patriot Front." *Southern Poverty Law Center*. Accessed November 1, 2022. <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/patriot-front>.

<sup>2</sup> Johnson, Luther. "No advanced notice was given: Indy mayor asked about Patriot Front march." *FOX59*. September 6, 2022. <https://fox59.com/news/no-advanced-notice-was-given-indy-mayor-asked-about-patriot-front-march/>.

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- <sup>4</sup> "Patriot Front." *Anti-Defamation League*. May 3, 2022. <https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/patriot-front>.
- <sup>5</sup> Dean, Jeff. "Distribution of white supremacist propaganda increasingly coordinated, ADL says." *NPR*. March 3, 2022. <https://www.npr.org/2022/03/03/1084159020/white-supremacists-propaganda-adl>.
- <sup>6</sup> Wamsley, Laura and Bobby Allyn. "Neo-Nazi Who Killed Charlottesville Protester is Sentenced To Life In Prison." *NPR*. June 28, 2019. <https://www.npr.org/2019/06/28/736915323/neo-nazi-who-killed-charlottesville-protester-is-sentenced-to-life-in-prison>.
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