

*Know Your Assholes:*

# Fascist Street Gangs



**ROSE CITY ANTIFA**



# Introduction

Since the beginning of the Trump presidency, we have seen a massive uptick in fascist and right-wing organizing. This surge brought new groups into the fray, such as the Proud Boys and Patriot Prayer, who were wildly emboldened by Trump's rhetoric. Racism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, and ultranationalism drove these groups who said they were simply supporting the former President. The Proud Boys particularly have taken pride in their new role in the right wing world. They serve as the muscle for for the far-right, providing "security" for right wing rallies. The fraternity claims to be more of a drinking club than a political entity but their role in leading the attack on the US Senate, and their track record of violence against BIPOC and the queer community, proves otherwise. In the 4 years since they were founded, their eagerness to commit political violence has only increased exponentially and, left unchecked, the Proud Boys are on a dangerous trajectory.

In this zine we will discuss historical instances of fascist street gang violence and draw similarities between these groups and the Proud Boys. Groups like Mussolini's Black Shirts and Turkey's Grey Wolves started as small, fraternalistic gangs that went on to commit atrocities with the support of fascist governments. Because of the way that fascist street gangs have mobilized and enjoyed popular support in the past, we consider these historical examples to be cautionary tales. An attack on one is an attack on all. We are responsible for keeping our communities safe.



# Squadristo

AKA  
THE **Blackshirts**



*image: Blackshirts (squadristi) during the March on Rome, 1922*



**Location:** Italy

**Timeframe:** 1919-1926

**Founders:** Nationalist intellectuals, former army officers, young landowners who opposed labor unions.

**Ideology:** Overtly Fascist and ultranationalist, anti-socialist, anti-communist, anti-trade union, antisemitic, xenophobic.

**Activity:** Paramilitary wing of the National Fascist Party in Italy during Mussolini's uprising. Roamed in "action squads" to disrupt the Socialist uprising in local government. Disrupted meetings, committed violence against socialists, union organizers; destroyed newspaper offices, peasant leagues, co-ops, and chambers of labor. Committed late night attacks on the homes of known socialists and labor organizers and used the force-feeding of castor oil (sometimes laced with gasoline) to humiliate and dehumanize political dissidents.

**Membership:** WWI veterans, middle class farmers, young landowners and business owners who opposed the new rise in Socialism in their local governments and didn't want to pay taxes.







*top: Italian fascists demonstrating in 1921*

*bottom: Blackshirt team Squadra d'azione di Lucca, Italy, 1922*



## **Notable Events:**

**November 1920** - Fascist action squads attacked a celebration for a newly elected socialist mayor, killing ten socialists and injuring around 60 more in the Massacre of Palazzo D'Accursio.

**October 1922** - 60,000 fascists march on Rome and Mussolini demands the King hand over control of Italy to him. The Squadristi's political violence for the previous three years had effectively done away with all political dissent to fascism; Mussolini had the support of the military, the business class, and the right wing. Mussolini's coup in Italy established the world's first fascist government and was only possible because of the terror committed by the Squadristi.

**February 1923** - The Blackshirts are officially transformed into the MVSN or Volunteer Militia for National Security.



# Sturmabteilung

AKA  
THE **Brownshirts**



*image: Nazis march with a banner that reads "Death to Marxism"*





**Location:** Germany

**Timeframe:** 1920-1945

**Founders:** Semi-ad hoc and autonomous until 1920 when a small group of permanent members rallied around Emil Maurice. Ernst Rohm formally took leadership after the Beer Hall Putsch in 1923.

**Ideology:** Nazi, antisemitic, anti-communist, anti-social democratic.

**Activity:** Original paramilitary wing to the Nazi Party, meeting hall protection detachment for the German Worker's Party (GAP), ad hoc event security for Hitler's early speaking events. The SA's main roles were protection of high ranking Nazi's and their events as well as disrupting events of their political opponents.

**Membership:** WWI veterans of the German Army. The later, more official SA was formed by organizing and formalizing groups of ex-soldiers and beer hall brawlers.





*top: the Sturmabteilung marching in 1929  
bottom: member of the SA arresting Communists*



## **Notable Events:**

**February 24 1920** - Hitler calls for a mass meeting at Hofbrauhaus, a beer hall to announce his infamous Twenty Five Point Program. Protesters tried to disrupt the meeting, but Hitler's former army companions overpowered them. This event laid the groundwork for the SA to be formally assembled.

**August 2 1921** - Hitler starts describing the Sturmabteilung as a "Gymnastic and Sport Division" to avoid government attention and interference.

**1922** - Hitlerjugend (Hitler Youth) is formed and placed under the SA's command.

**November 1923** - Inspired by Mussolini's March on Rome, Hitler and 600+ SA members attempt a coup on the Weimar Republic. After the so-called Beer Hall Putsch fails to establish a fascist government, the participants and instigators were lightly punished but quickly returned to organizing.

**April 1924 - February 1925** - The SA are reorganized into a front organization called Frontbann to avoid Bavaria's bans on the Nazi party and its affiliates.



# **THE Silver Legion** **AKA THE Silvershirts**



*image: founder of the Silver Legion, William Dudley Pelley,  
poses in front of ranks of Silvershirts*



**Location:** United States of America

**Timeframe:** January 1933 - December 1941

**Founder:** William Dudley Pelley

**Ideology:** American nationalist, ultra-Christian conservative, fascist, antisemitic, anti-communist, Nazi, “down with the reds, out with the Jews.”

**Activity:** Paramilitary, arms stockpiling, disseminating fascist propaganda, created a bunker compound as their base, failed coup attempt.

**Membership:** Men-only group of Nazi sympathizers, ultra-Christian conservatives living on the west coast (white ethno state), struggling and retired middle class businessmen, trade workers who were also struggling post-Depression. Some overlap with KKK, friendly relationship with German American Bund. At its peak, the Silver Shirts movement had up to 15,000 members.







*top: Silver-shirts, an American fascist party formed in 1933  
bottom: Silver-shirts, wearing their 'L' logo, in front of a Swastika*



## **Notable Events:**

**January 31 1933** - The Silver Shirts are formed by William Dudley Pelley the day after Hitler is voted in as Chancellor of Germany.

**May 1934** - Silver Shirts plan to use a May Day celebration organized by leftists at San Diego city hall as a cover to "take" City Hall for themselves. The plot fails when the May Day celebration is called off. Infiltrators later revealed that the Silver Shirts had the full support and protection of the police and sheriff's office once the insurrection had begun.

**1936** - William Dudley Pelley runs for President of the United States. He is quoted saying that if he won, he would implement Hitler's plan in America.

**1938** - The Silver Shirts and wealthy business owners associated with them attempt to intimidate and harrass a driver's union in Minneapolis, Teamsters Local 544. Union membership included leftist organizers, making them a target of the American Nazi group. The Teamsters use a strong intelligence team and militant tactics to drive the Silver Shirts out of Minneapolis.



# THE Grey Wolves



*image: the Turkish Grey Wolves, a militant, nationalistic movement that emerged in the late 1960s*



**Location:** Turkey, Western Europe, Syria, China

**Timeframe:** 1968 - present (currently operates as a “cultural and sports organization”)

**Founder:** Alparslan Türkeş

**Ideology:** Far right, neo-Fascist, Turkish nationalism, xenophobia, antisemitic, anti-communist, strive for an “ideal Turkish nation,” “The Turkish race above all others.”

**Activity:** “Grassroots fascist network”. Youth movement modeled after Hitler’s SS. In its early days, assassinated left-wing and liberal activists, intellectuals, labor organizers, Kurds, and journalists. Engaged in political violence and guerrilla warfare. Unofficial militant wing of Turkey’s Nationalist Movement Party (MHP). More recently, the MHP entered a political alliance with President Erdoğan’s Justice and Development Party for their 2018 general election.

**Membership:** Founded as a youth movement, early members were young male students and economic migrants from rural areas. Now they are comprised of ultra-nationalist radicals. It is difficult to find a lot of detailed information about who they are now. The Turkish government says “no such group exists,” while the leader of Turkey’s Nationalist Action Party is often photographed using the hand signal that represents the Grey Wolves.







*top: Grey Wolves flashing their salute  
bottom: ultranationalist politician Meral Akşener in 2018*





## **Notable Events:**

### **May 1st 1977** - Taksim Square Massacre:

Leftist demonstrators attacked while recognizing International Workers Day. Between 35-45 people are killed and up to 200 are injured. The CIA is said to have employed Pan Turkist SS member Ruzi Nazar to train the Counter Guerrillas, including Grey Wolves, who carried out the attack.

**December 1978** - The Grey Wolves and conservative Sunnis carry out the Maraş massacre which leaves more than 100 Alevi Kurds and leftists dead, with thousands more injured. The attackers storm the area where Alevis live, killing, maiming, and destroying houses and shops.

**September 1980** - General Kenan Evren leads a coup which results in the disbanding of the Grey Wolves, who at the time had 200,000 members and over a million sympathizers.

**1990's** - Post-coup and disbandment, the Wolves are forced to reorganize. They refocused and became involved in the Kurdish-Turkey conflict. They are involved in two murders in 1998: one of a student and one of a member of the pro-Kurdish People's Democracy Party.

**November 2020** - France moves to ban the French arm of the Grey Wolves (Loups Gris) after a memorial to Armenian genocide was defaced with graffiti of "Loups Gris" and RTE, a reference to Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.



# THE Proud Boys



*image: Proud Boys march in support of Donald Trump two days before the electoral college confirms the 2020 Presidential Election*



**Location:** United States

**Timeframe:** 2016 - present

**Founder:** Gavin McInnes

**Ideology:** “Western chauvinism”, nationalism, anti-communism, misogyny, antisemitism, islamophobia, transphobia.

**Activity:** Took part in inciting the January 6th Capitol insurrection; have acted as a “voluntary security force” for pro-Trump, right-wing, and neo-fascist events; organized and attended anti-leftist events with the intent to assault counter-demonstrators; disrupted leftist and queer events and spaces.

**Membership:** Men-only fraternity, average age 18-40, suburban right-wing Christian conservative. Many are veterans, small business and land owners, may include current members of law enforcement and/or active military members.





*top: the logo of the Proud Boys worn by a member with long gun  
bottom: Proud Boys at a demonstration, December 2020*



## **Notable Events:**

**March 2017** - Proud Boys attend a March 4 Trump rally in Berkeley, CA where white nationalist Kyle Chapman (who later became a Proud Boy), was filmed violently attacking a counter protestor.

**August 2017** - Proud Boys attend the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, VA where Heather Heyer was murdered by a neo-nazi. One of the main organizers, Jason Kessler, was a member of the Proud Boys. Another Proud Boy, Alex Michael Ramos, was convicted for the assault of DeAndre Harris, a Black man.

**October 2018** - After a controversial event at the Metropolitan Republican Club in NYC where founder, Gavin McInnes, was speaking, Proud Boys instigate a clash with counter protestors resulting in ten of their members and associates being arrested.

**August 2020** - Members of the Proud Boys mobilize from all over the country to confront and attack Black Lives Matter protestors in Portland, Oregon. Heavily armed Proud Boys shot paintballs and used homemade tear-gas to attack counter-protesters before being escorted away by police.

**January 2021** - Proud Boys attend the Stop the Steal rally in Washington D.C. in which supporters of Donald Trump attempted a coup on the US government. A number of Proud Boys incited the crowd to further violence and helped lead the charge up the Capitol steps.





For further information about the Proud Boys  
you can read the full doxxes at our website:

**[rosecityantifa.org](https://rosecityantifa.org)**

If you have any information about racist or  
fascist organizing in your area you can email  
us at:

**[tips@rosecityantifa.org](mailto:tips@rosecityantifa.org)**