

Terrorists

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The number of hate groups and patriot groups, which do not all share the same beliefs and conduct, has been growing across the country since President Barack Obama was elected in 2008, according to an annual report by the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Ala., which tracks extremists.

SPLC's 2010 compilation of active hate groups found 1,002 nationwide. Of those, 15 were located in Oregon and 13 each in Washington, Idaho and Montana, the SPLC said. The group counted 888 hate groups in 2007, before Obama's election.

Obama is also seen as someone who would curtail individual rights such as

gun ownership, said Rich King, a professor at Washington State University in Pullman who studies hate groups and teaches a class on white power movements.

Meanwhile, the financial woes sparked by Wall Street have fed anti-Semitic sentiments, King said.

It has been a busy year for extremists in the Northwest.

In the most violent incident, a young couple was arrested and charged in connection with a murder spree that claimed four lives in three Western states.

David "Joey" Pedersen, 31, and his girlfriend, Holly Grigsby, 24, were arrested in California in October. They have expressed

white supremacist beliefs.

They are charged in Washington with aggravated first-degree murder, accused of killing Pedersen's father and his wife in Everett sometime around Sept.

26. They are also suspected of killing 19-year-old Cody Myers in Oregon and Reginald Alan Clark, 53, in Eureka, Calif.

They shot Myers because his name sounded Jewish, even though he was a Christian, according to court documents. Clark was black.

Grigsby and Pedersen were arrested outside Yuba City, Calif., when a police officer spotted them in Myers' car. Grigsby told officers

"the couple was on their way to Sacramento to 'kill more Jews,'" court documents said.

In another high-profile incident, a man planted a pipe bomb along the planned route of the Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade in Spokane. The shrapnel-packed bomb was found and disabled before it could explode, but the FBI said it had the potential to kill or injure many of the 2,000 marchers, who included children.

White supremacist Kevin Harpham, 37, was arrested in March and has pleaded guilty to attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction, and the hate crime of placing the bomb in an effort to target minorities. He faces 27 to 32 years in prison when he is

They are part of a trend that has seen extremist activity on the rise nationally

Christmas Choir



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

The Mount Zion Choir sings at the Third Annual Christmas Day of Caring at Mount Zion Baptist Church on Saturday Dec. 17. Lines for the holiday event, co-sponsored by C.A.M.P and Mount Zion, surged out the door and down the street.

sentenced by a federal judge on Dec. 20.

Another violent incident occurred June 12 outside of Missoula, Mont., when former militia leader David Burgert opened fire on two Missoula County sheriff's deputies on a remote logging road in the Lolo National Forest.

Burgert disappeared into the forest after the gunbattle, in which no one was injured. He has yet to be found, despite an extensive

manhunt.

Burgert is a longtime patriot activist who spent eight years in prison on weapons charges and authorities charged him at the time with trying to spark a revolution. He was released in 2010.

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Police

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findings of the Justice Department report.

"I want to make this clear," Diaz said during an interview with The Seattle Times. "The department is not broken."

Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn said the police department has already started making reforms in response to the issues raised in the report. The public is concerned about use of force and possible bias in the police force, McGinn acknowledged, adding that the police chief and his officers take those concerns very seriously.

"We will be looking closely at the specifics the Department of Justice has raised and how we can have the best possible police force," he said

The American Civil Liberties Union of Washington and 34 other community groups called for the inquiry after a Seattle officer shot and killed the woodcarver, John T. Williams, in 2010.

Video from Officer Ian Birk's patrol car showed Williams crossing the street holding a piece of wood and a small knife, and Birk exiting the vehicle to pursue him. Off cam-

era, Birk quickly shouted three times for Williams to drop the knife, then fired five shots. The knife was found folded at the scene, but Birk later maintained Williams had threatened him.

Birk resigned from the force but was not charged. A review board found the shooting unjustified.

A man holding a "Justice for John T. Williams" sign at Friday's news conference said he was mildly encouraged by the

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Justice Department's findings.

"There are certain things a lot of us have known for years, especially minorities," said Nicholas Polimenakos, who added he has been a concerned citizen of Seattle since 1983. He and another sign holder also identified themselves as members of the Occupy

Seattle movement.

The ACLU of Washington called the Justice Department report a good start.

"Now the long-term effort to bring about the needed change in systems, culture, training and leadership begins," said Kathleen Taylor, ACLU of Washington executive director, in a written statement.

Other incidents captured on surveillance or police-cruiser video include officers using an anti-Mexican epithet and stomping on a prone Latino man who was mistakenly thought to be a robbery suspect; an officer kicking a non-resisting black youth in a convenience store; and officers tackling and kicking a black man who showed up in a police evidence room to pick up belongings after he was mistakenly released from jail.

The report also found:

- The trend of escalation toward force is most pronounced in encounters with persons with mental illnesses or those under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

- When officers use batons, 57 percent of the time it is either unnecessary or exces-

sive.

- About 61 percent of the cases of excessive force involved more than one officer confronting a single person.

- In 2010, 20 officers were responsible for 18 percent of all use-of-force incidents.

- The police department has no effective supervisory techniques to better analyze why these officers use force more than other officers, whether their uses of force are necessary, or whether any of these officers would benefit from additional use of force training.

- The public developed its belief that the department engages in discriminatory policy through their own negative experiences, well-publicized videos of force being used against people of color, incidents of overt discrimination, and concerns that the pattern of excessive force disproportionately affects minorities.

"The solution to the problems identified within the Seattle Police Department will require strong and consistent leadership

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Students

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about the presentation. "I was shocked, and we're not getting a sense of urgency from the district. We need a timeline. Not another committee. We need to know what they're doing and when."

District officials said they need to study the new data further before speculating about the reasons for it or making policy changes in response.

Mark Teoh, the district's data manager, said he has wanted to break down student-achievement data this way for years.

His team started the project two months

ago. First, the number-crunchers got all of last year's state test scores in reading and math. Then they compared the scores against information provided by students each year about the languages they speak at home.

The results, although preliminary, were eye-opening: Only 36 percent of black students who speak English at home passed their grade's math test, while 47 percent of Somali-speaking students passed. Other black ethnic groups did even better, although still lower than the district average

of 70 percent.

In reading, 56 percent of black students who speak English passed, while 67 percent of Somali-speaking students passed. Again, other black ethnic groups did better, though still lower than the district average of 78 percent.

Teoh noted the numbers are based on self-reported home-language information and exclude English Language Learners, which is an optional program for students who score poorly on an English proficiency test.

He also said that because the English-

speaking category includes students of many black ethnic groups, it's impossible to compare specific ethnic groups.

Those details seemed less relevant to parents at the meeting at Rainier Beach.

"It's very alarming that students that were born right here are at the bottom of the barrel," said Vallerie Fisher, whose daughter is a senior at Rainier Beach. "How is that possible?"

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