

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FORT WORTH INTELLIGENCE EXCHANGE

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS BULLETIN

7 October 2021



(U//FOUO) Critical Infrastructure – Activist Encouraging Pipeline Sabotage

Medium Risk Recommendations:

Based on current intelligence and available situational information, an event or issue appears to pose a MEDIUM risk or impact to the community. Based on the tone of the ideology, INTEX and Fort Worth Police Department's Homeland Security Unit recommend educating/notifying potentially impacted resources for preparation and/or response planning as your leadership deems appropriate.

(U//FOUO) SCOPE: The Fort Worth Intelligence Exchange (INTEX) has prepared the following Situational Awareness Bulletin regarding a September 2021 podcast interview with climate change activist Andreas Malm, the author of *How to Blow Up a Pipeline*. In the book and subsequent interview, Malm encourages pipeline sabotage and property destruction and questions whether the climate movement would succeed with a stance of absolute non-violence. INTEX is disseminating this product for partners' situational awareness. We have surfaced no information indicating a specific, credible threat to our AOR at this time; however, the tactics and techniques used to impede and/or sabotage critical infrastructure and key resources (CIKR) remain a public safety concern. Information in this bulletin is current and accurate as of 7 October 2021.

(U) FIRST AMENDMENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: INTEX recognizes that Americans have constitutionally protected rights to assemble, speak, and petition the government. INTEX safeguards these rights and reports on only those activities where potential use of rhetoric and/or propaganda could be used to incite acts of violence. Regarding the signs of terrorism and/or criminal activity, INTEX highlights that we do not profile individuals – we profile behaviors.

(U) PUBLICATION/PODCAST DETAILS:

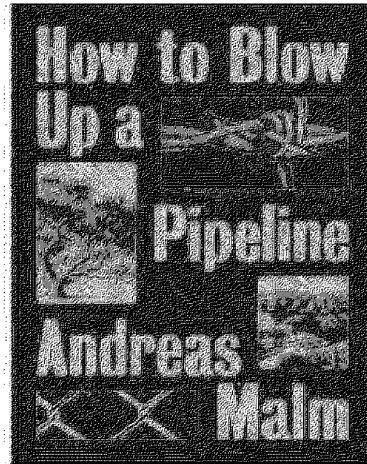
***** FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY *** LAW ENFORCEMENT USE ONLY *****

(U) *How to Blow Up a Pipeline: Learning to Fight in a World of Fire* is a nonfiction book written by Swedish author Andreas Malm and published in January 2021. The book argues that sabotage is a logical form of climate activism and criticizes pacifism within the climate movement.

- The book is divided into three chapters – Learning from Past Struggles, Breaking the Spell and Fighting Despair – and is available in print and digitally on a variety of online platforms.

- Prior to the release of *How to Blow Up a Pipeline*, Malm had written several other books related to politics, the economy, climate change and fossil fuels. Malm's newest book, *White Skin, Black Fuel*, was published in May 2021.

(U) *Should the Climate Movement Embrace Sabotage?* is a September 2021 article published by *The New Yorker* with links to several podcasts discussing controversial works of literature. The podcast, *Andreas Malm on How to Blow Up a Pipeline*, was featured in the article. (Analyst Comment: While the content of the book and subsequent podcast are more nuanced than the titles suggest, Malm advocates for targeted sabotage to include the destruction or neutralization of equipment and property but is not in favor of harming people.) Salient podcast details:



- Malm was inspired to write the book in 2018 during wildfires, a drought and heat waves which left him feeling “panicked and desperate”. Malm calls for escalation, a diversity in tactics and moving away from focusing on polite/civil disobedience and encourages destruction of property, hampering pipeline construction, and shutting down gas mines/coal mines – all of which he considers morally legitimate.

- Malm highlighted the storming of the police station during the 2020 George Floyd protests as a significant catalyst in the movement (bringing more people to the streets) and dismissed the idea that increased violence negatively impacted momentum. In that vein, Malm believed that climate activists should avoid adapting tactics because of the “enemy’s script” and that they should use opportunities of extreme climate disasters to their advantage.

(U//FOUO) REACTION: Public response to the book has been mixed, with individuals expressing both supporting and dissenting opinions and perspectives. Some reviewed the book favorably out of esteem for Malm’s writing style and ability to persuasively state his argument but did not support the use of violence as an effective method of activism. The majority of positive reviews remained measured in their overall assessment of Malm’s perspective, claiming that the author sidestepped various ethical concerns and downplayed the risks for and by saboteurs. Several articles have been written in response to the novel, to include some critical editorials on Malm’s perspective:

- [How to Blow Up a Pipeline is the Title of a Real Book Getting Rave Reviews and it’s Not Metaphorical](#)
- [How to Blow Up a Movement: Andreas Malm’s New Book Dreams of Sabotage but Ignores Consequences](#)
- [New Yorker Hosts Climate Change Extremist Who Advocates for Intelligent Sabotage](#)
- [Three Books Offer New Ways to Think About Environmental Disaster](#)

(U//FOUO) INCIDENTS TARGETING PIPELINES: The following are notable incidents in the United States and North America where pipelines were targeted for attacks.

- In May 2021, American oil pipeline system Colonial Pipeline suffered a ransomware cyberattack that impacted computerized equipment managing the pipeline. While ransom was paid (75 Bitcoin or USD 4.4 million) within several hours of the attack, a portion of the ransom was recovered in June 2021. The cyberattack was almost certainly carried out by Russian-linked cybercrime group DarkSide. (Analyst Comment: Climate activism may not have been the motive for this attack. On 9 May, DarkSide released a statement on their website that did not directly mention the attack but claimed, “Our goal is to make money and not creating problems for society.”)

- On 26 February 2017, law enforcement officers fatally shot a man who reportedly had used an assault rifle to attack the Sabal Trail Pipeline, a natural gas pipeline under construction in Florida.

***** FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY *** LAW ENFORCEMENT USE ONLY *****



Photo via Washington Post/Associated Press

In 2016, a coordinated group of environmentalists caused the shutdown of multiple pipelines transporting crude oil from Canada to the United States. The activists entered restricted facilities to access manual valves, seeking to stop the flow of oil via these pipelines. The activists were supporting Native American opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline and encouraging an “extraordinary shift away from fossil fuels” to avert climate catastrophe.



Activists attempt to shutdown oil pipeline valve - Climate Direct Action/Handout via REUTERS

In 2011 and 2012, there were two separate attempts to bomb U.S. natural gas pipelines in Oklahoma and Texas which were unsuccessful.

- Natural gas pipelines in British Columbia and Canada were bombed six times between October 2008 and July 2009 in acts classified by Canadian authorities as environmentally motivated.

(U//FOUO) THREAT ENVIRONMENT:

(U//FOUO) The FBI has defined eco-terrorism as the use or threatened use of violence of a criminal nature against innocent victims or property by an environmentally-oriented, subnational group for environmental-political reasons, or aimed at an audience beyond the target, often of a symbolic nature. 6 Notable United States/North American incidents:

(U//FOUO) While Malm does not go into specifics on how individuals should engage in “intelligent sabotage”, he does cite occasions where he believes this approach was successful. One example he provided was the Nigerian activist group Niger Delta Avengers, who were most active in 2016—blowing up multiple pipelines and kidnapping oil workers. Their efforts resulted in several deaths and injuries and caused a shutdown of oil terminals/pipelines, leading Nigeria’s oil production to drop to its lowest level in twenty years (photos below). Malm discouraged targeting people but believed the movement was successful due to its timing and use of escalating violence.

***** FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY *** LAW ENFORCEMENT USE ONLY *****



(U//FOUO) As of 4 October 2021, INTEX has no specific intelligence indicating that foreign or domestic terrorist organizations or lone actors are plotting to conduct against pipelines or associated critical infrastructure. However, in May of 2021 the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) advised the "US continues to face threats that have evolved significantly and become increasingly complex and volatile in 2021. These threats include those posed by domestic terrorists, individuals and groups engaged in grievance-based violence, and those inspired or influenced by foreign terrorists and other malign foreign influences. Social media and online forums are increasingly exploited by these actors to influence and spread violent extremist narratives and activity. Such threats also are exacerbated by the impacts from the ongoing global pandemic. Source: Fort Worth Intelligence Exchange

Analyst Comment Criminal and nation-state cyber threat actors have frequently targeted critical infrastructure in recent years. Some attacks have caused significant disruption and financial harm, such as the May 2021 ransomware attack on the Colonial Pipeline, which caused major gas shortages across the eastern United States. Cyber threat actors have also targeted critical infrastructure in New York City, as evidenced by China-linked hackers penetrating Metropolitan Transit Authority computer systems in April 2021. Currently, The FBI is examining whether there was a negligent discharge of oil into navigable waters in Newport and Huntington Beach. Multiple state and federal investigative agencies are already examining whether any criminal violations occurred with the pipeline leak last week.

