

# Siege: The Atomwaffen Division and Rising Far-Right Terrorism in the United States

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In the past several years, the United States has witnessed a concerning rise in far-right extremism and terrorist violence. Attackers in Oak Creek, Charleston, and Pittsburgh emerged from an increasingly emboldened radical right, which has grown in size and ambition in recent years. The Atomwaffen Division—a small, neo-Nazi terrorist organisation—is part of this movement. This Policy Brief tracks the reasons behind the American far-right's rise and increasing turn to terrorism, and warns that the threat is likely to imminently worsen. To illustrate this trend, Atomwaffen's story is applied as a case study. This Policy Brief will conclude with a series of recommendations for policymakers looking to understand and address the threat posed by rising violence from the far-right.

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The Atomwaffen Division is a small neo-Nazi terrorist organisation mainly active in the United States and responsible for five killings in the past two years.<sup>1</sup> The group is part of a rising American radical right, which is growing increasingly emboldened and violent, with fringe elements that should be taken far more seriously by counter-terrorism scholars, law enforcement, and the US government.<sup>2</sup> With increasing national numbers, growing activity, and a White House that has been reluctant to condemn right-wing violence, violent fringes of the radical right pose serious concerns for counter-terrorism officials, particularly as political rhetoric ratchets up in preparation for the 2020 elections. In its own right, Atomwaffen presents a continuing terrorist threat for two fundamental reasons: the group's plainly stated intentions to increase their use of violence, and its efforts to recruit from the US military.<sup>3</sup> Dramatically improved counter-terrorism policies, in both the short- and long-term, are urgently needed to counter the threat.

Atomwaffen's rise, and the growth of groups and individuals who share its extremist worldview, are best understood against a simplified version of McCauley and Moskalenko's pyramid model of radicalisation. In the McCauley and Moskalenko model, "from base to apex, higher levels of the pyramid are associated with decreased numbers but increased radicalisation of beliefs, feelings, and behaviours."<sup>4</sup> The base, in this case, is America's political right, with its conservative and legally-protected views on abortion, immigration, LGBT rights, and the Second Amendment. Like any radicalisation pyramid base, this group is made up of mainstream, law-abiding citizens, who engage in peaceful political processes, and in no way condone violence or extremism. The middle of the pyramid has been fleshed out in recent years, as the so-called alt-right has not only proliferated, but has become increasingly mainstream. Political views previously condemned as radical, such as constructing border walls and policies targeted at certain religions, are now endorsed and claimed by some of the country's most powerful politicians.<sup>5</sup> Groups such as the Atomwaffen Division sit at the summit of the radicalisation pyramid. They are the extreme manifestation of the right wing, a violent, criminal, fringe movement within the radical right which sees terrorist violence as the only solution to its grievances.

By introducing the group, the context in which it exists, and the conditions in which it thrives, this contribution will show that the Atomwaffen Division is but one subsection of a rising American radical right that is growing in size, viciousness of message, and acceptance of violence.<sup>6</sup> The group is living proof that America's violent extremist underbelly is thriving, that political rhetoric emboldens such actors, and that condemnation of extremism—or lack thereof—by leaders matters.<sup>7</sup> Many scholars have told the story of the short- and long-term forces that have shaped the far-right in recent memory. It's time we start telling the story of the far-right's most violent fringes, and the

<sup>1</sup> Greg Myre, "Deadly Connection: Neo-Nazi Group Linked To 3 Accused Killers," *NPR*, March 6, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Peter W. Singer, "National Security Pros, It's Time to Talk About Right-Wing Extremism," *Defense One*, February 28, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, A.C. Thompson, "An Atomwaffen Member Sketched a Map to Take the Neo-Nazis Down. What Path Officials Took Is a Mystery," *ProPublica*, November 20, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko, "Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways toward Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20 (2008): p. 417.

<sup>5</sup> David Neiwert, *Alt-America: The Rise of the Radical Right in the Age of Trump* (New York: Verso, 2017).

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Neiwert, *Alt-America*; Vegas Tenold, *Everything You Love Will Burn: Inside the Rebirth of White Nationalism in America* (New York: Nation Books, 2018); and Daryl Johnson, *Right-Wing Resurgence: How a Domestic Terrorist Threat is Being Ignored* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012).

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Stephen Tankel, "Riding the Tiger: How Trump Enables Right-Wing Extremism," *War on the Rocks*, November 5, 2018; Daniel Byman, "Trump's Rhetoric Is Raising the Risk of Right-Wing Terrorism," *Slate*, January 21, 2019; and Adam Serwer, "The Terrorism That Doesn't Spark a Panic," *The Atlantic*, January 28, 2019.

increasing threat they pose. The particulars of Atomwaffen's rise are at the heart of this tale.

## Far-Right Extremism in the United States

The spiritual and ideological origins of right-wing fringe groups in the United States reside largely in the post-Civil War period, with the first iteration of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). In its early days, the Klan attacked emancipated slaves and their supporters, seeking to reverse gains they may have made upon the Confederacy's defeat. The original Klan declined in part due to law enforcement pressure; in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a second iteration rose and fell again, during a period that saw great social upheaval, Prohibition, and restrictions on immigration. After World War II, the KKK revived for a third time, spurred on by opposition to the growing civil rights movement.<sup>8</sup> The third iteration declined due to internal conflicts and government infiltrations, but the group maintains a presence today, with up to 8,000 members spread around the United States.<sup>9</sup>

The Klan has not been the sole voice of right-wing extremism in US history. The second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the rise of others on the extreme far-right espousing violence. By the 1970s and 1980s, two groups—the Aryan Nations, led by Richard Butler, and the National Alliance, led by William Pierce, author of a popular right-wing extremist call-to-arms titled *The Turner Diaries*—claimed a central role. Both groups subscribed to neo-Nazi and white supremacist views, and held tense relationships with the government. These groups had limited real success, however, and by 1989, “right-wing extremism was in trouble.”<sup>10</sup>

The modern far-right movement was reawakened by two incidents in the 1990s which epitomised perceived government overreach into civilian life: Ruby Ridge in 1992 and Waco in 1993. At the former, an FBI-led standoff resulted in the deaths of the wife and son of an alleged Aryan Nations member in rural Idaho. In the latter, 82 members of the Branch Davidians religious group were killed after the FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms led a siege on the Davidian compound in Waco, Texas. Soon after these events, anti-government hysteria was compounded by the 1994 passage of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, which imposed background checks on firearms purchases. Ruby Ridge, Waco, and the Brady Bill provided a toxic mix of the things right-wing extremists love the most: “guns, a compound standing in the face of federal agents, and religion.”<sup>11</sup> Taken together, the three events catalysed a rebirth for the American far-right, sparking a national militia uprising, and ensuring the health of the extreme right for years to come.

The United States has suffered a string of far-right inspired violence in recent history. The most lethal attack occurred on April 19, 1995, when Gulf War veteran and gun fanatic Timothy McVeigh detonated a truck bomb under the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, killing 168. McVeigh justified his act as direct revenge for government actions at Ruby Ridge and Waco.<sup>12</sup> A year later, in July 1996, Eric Rudolph, an anti-abortionist, killed two in the Olympic Park bombing in Atlanta, Georgia.

<sup>8</sup> Jonathan R. White, “Political Eschatology: A Theology of Antigovernment Extremism,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 6 (February 2001): p. 941.

<sup>9</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center, “Ku Klux Klan.”

<sup>10</sup> White, “Political Eschatology,” p. 944.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 945.

<sup>12</sup> Lou Michel and Dan Herbeck, *American Terrorist: Timothy McVeigh & The Oklahoma City Bombing* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), p. 277.

Right-wing extremist violence has continued since the turn of the century, with the United States suffering a 1,450% increase in far-right terrorist attacks between 2007 and 2017.<sup>13</sup> Two particularly notorious incidents stand out. In June 2015, white supremacist Dylann Roof killed nine worshippers at the Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina. He released a manifesto calling for a race war, and infamously uttered during his rampage that African Americans were raping “our women and are taking over our country” and that he “had to do it.”<sup>14</sup> Then, in October 2018, a neo-Nazi attacked the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, killing 11 at Shabbat morning services. According to reports, he shouted “All Jews must die” as he walked in.<sup>15</sup> Other incidents include a failed bombing along the route of the Martin Luther King Jr. Day march in Spokane, Washington in January 2011; the August 2012 mass shooting at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin; a June 2014 shooting spree in Las Vegas perpetrated by an anti-government extremist married couple; an Islamophobia-motivated stabbing on a train in Portland, Oregon in May 2017; the car ramming attack aimed at counter protesters at the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, Virginia in August 2017; and a mass shooting at the Chabad of Poway synagogue in Poway, California in April 2019. America has a protracted history of terrorism from the far-right, which shows no sign of relenting.

These instances, and the myriad other acts of violence motivated by extreme-right views, have been perpetrated by disparate actors emerging from an array of movements and networks. There are typically few connections between attackers, with many radicalising and plotting their attacks outside formal groups.<sup>16</sup> Many individuals draw their ideologies and inspiration from the Internet, with far-right extremism, like its jihadist counterpart, benefiting from the rise of social media and online communities. In fact, some violent elements of the far-right, such as the misogynistic Incel (‘involuntary celibate’) movement, exist almost entirely online.<sup>17</sup> In the Internet’s shadowy corners, some of the country’s most vulnerable and impressionable individuals find solace, engaging others with likeminded, extreme views, and joining them in a spiralling radicalisation. Roof, for instance, spent years in Internet “rabbit holes,” finding bogus statistics on race and crime to fuel his increasing hatred of African Americans.<sup>18</sup> Beyond proliferating extremist ideas, the online space has also facilitated violence. As Graeme Wood argues, “murder is easier when someone is whispering at you every few minutes, telling you the rest of the world deserves what it gets.”<sup>19</sup> Social media has revolutionised jihad, helping Islamic State followers around the world commit mass murder and achieve their dreams of martyrdom. The same trend has concurrently strengthened America’s far-right.<sup>20</sup>

Of late, some of the more vicious activity has come from neo-Nazi organisations, such as Atomwaffen. In recent years, the American neo-Nazi landscape has been dominated by organisations such as the National Socialist Movement, American Nazi Party, Vanguard America, and the now-defunct Traditionalist Worker Party. Though America’s neo-Nazis

<sup>13</sup> From two attacks in 2007 to 31 in 2017. Seth Jones, “The Rise of Far-Right Extremism in the United States,” *CSIS*, November 7, 2018.

<sup>14</sup> Rachel Kaadzi Ghansah, “A Most American Terrorist: The Making of Dylann Roof,” *GQ*, August 21, 2017.

<sup>15</sup> Daniel Byman, “When to Call a Terrorist a Terrorist,” *Foreign Policy*, October 27, 2018.

<sup>16</sup> Bruce Hoffman, “Back to the Future: The Return of Violent Far-Right Terrorism in the Age of Lone Wolves,” *War on the Rocks*, April 2, 2019.

<sup>17</sup> Abby Ohlheiser, “Inside the Online World of ‘Incels,’ the Dark Corner of the Internet Linked to the Toronto suspect,” *Washington Post*, April 25, 2018.

<sup>18</sup> Ghansah, “A Most American Terrorist: The Making of Dylann Roof.”

<sup>19</sup> Graeme Wood, “ISIS Tactics Have Spread to Other Violent Actors,” *Atlantic*, April 24, 2018.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, J.M. Berger, “Nazis vs. ISIS on Twitter: A Comparative Study of White Nationalist and ISIS Online Social Media Networks,” *GWU Program on Extremism*, September 2016.

do not subscribe wholly to Nazi ideology as it was expressed in Germany during the Second World War, they assume Nazi iconography, revere Adolf Hitler, and propagate his views on Judaism and minorities.<sup>21</sup>

Today's American neo-Nazi movement rests on a series of conspiracy theories, most notably the Zionist Occupied Government (ZOG) theory, which is the idea that the United States government has been overtaken by a small group of Jews which controls banks, media, and the United Nations; and the white genocide, which holds that white people in America are being deliberately replaced by immigrants and black people. America's neo-Nazis also subscribe to David Lane's 14 Words mantra—"we must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children"—and believe in the apocalyptic prophecy of a coming Racial Holy War, or RaHoWa.<sup>22</sup> Like many white supremacists in America, neo-Nazis also revere Pierce's *The Turner Diaries*, in which the hero, Earl Turner, overthrows the federal government and eventually sparks a race war. Neo-Nazism in the United States has frequently sparked violence and terrorism, particularly so in recent years.<sup>23</sup> Deadly violence, in particular, tends to take place outside of defined groups, with a preference instead for what, years ago, white nationalist leader Louis Beam called "leaderless resistance," a strategy in which adherents operate outside formal hierarchies and chains of command.<sup>24</sup> In short, the modern American neo-Nazi movement is in good health, and poses an increasing threat to mainstream American society.<sup>25</sup>

Clearly, the US has a long history of far-right extremism and terrorism, as well as a resurgent neo-Nazi movement today. It is in this context that we find the Atomwaffen Division, an exceedingly violent and thoroughly neo-Nazi faction of the American far-right.

## Introducing Atomwaffen: The Violent Face of American Neo-Nazism

The Atomwaffen Division (German for 'nuclear weapons division') first went public when it was acknowledged by founder Brandon Russell in October 2015. The group had developed as a breakaway from the Iron March forum, a fascist online outlet of over 1,600 users which went down in September 2017.<sup>26</sup> Atomwaffen, or AWD, is estimated to have about 60 to 80 members—as well as a large number of "initiates"—mobilised in a decentralised hierarchy with up to 20 cells dotted around the country.<sup>27</sup> The group's popularity increased after the 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, VA, where neo-Nazis marched openly and gained widespread publicity.<sup>28</sup> The group is currently led by John Cameron Denton—alias "Rape"—a 25-year-old from Texas who took over leadership after Russell was jailed in January 2018 on federal explosives charges.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, "Deconstructing the symbols and slogans spotted in Charlottesville," *Washington Post*, August 18, 2017.

<sup>22</sup> Adam Serwer, "White Nationalism's Deep American Roots," *The Atlantic*, April 2019.

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), *Ideological Motivations of Terrorism in the United States, 1970-2016* (College Park, MD: START, November 2017), p. 6

<sup>24</sup> Jones, "The Rise of Far-Right Extremism in the United States."

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center, "Atomwaffen Division."

<sup>27</sup> Frontline, "Documenting Hate: New American Nazis," *PBS*, November 20, 2018.

<sup>28</sup> TSC, "Intelbrief: The Atomwaffen Division (AWD): A Brief Profile," *The Soufan Center*, April 4, 2019.

<sup>29</sup> A.C. Thompson, Ali Winston, and Jake Hanrahan, "Inside Atomwaffen As It Celebrates a Member for Allegedly Killing a Gay Jewish College Student," *ProPublica*, February 23, 2018.

In the group's early days, Atomwaffen members busied themselves with non-violent activism. The group's first public activity involved senior members dispersing anti-Semitic propaganda around the University of Central Florida, and early YouTube videos showed members burning the American flag as well as copies of the Constitution.<sup>30</sup> More recently, Atomwaffen has held a series of training camps in rural locations, most notably a January 2018 "hate camp" in the Nevada desert.<sup>31</sup> The camps are intended to prepare members for the RaHoWa—"Racial Holy War"—with trainings in guerrilla tactics and the use of weapons. Training is often provided by former military servicemen. Atomwaffen has also started to grow across the Atlantic. In December 2018, three members of the British neo-Nazi Sonnenkrieg Division (German for 'sun war division') were arrested for threatening to kill "race traitor" Prince Harry. The leaders had been in direct contact with senior Atomwaffen members.<sup>32</sup> Atomwaffen has also expanded to Canada<sup>33</sup> and Germany,<sup>34</sup> and may have had contacts with organisations in Ukraine.<sup>35</sup>

In terms of its ideology, Atomwaffen subscribes to fairly standard neo-Nazi views. The group rails against Jews, minorities, and gays, and describes itself as a "revolutionary national socialist organization."<sup>36</sup> Atomwaffen recruitment drives declare that "joining us means serious dedication not only to the Atomwaffen Division and its members, but to the goal of Total Aryan Victory," while former member Devon Arthurs testified that "they want to build a Fourth Reich."<sup>37</sup> Atomwaffen subscribes to the Zionist Occupied Government and white genocide conspiracy theories, both central to the American neo-Nazi ideology. Members believe American democracy has "given way to Jewish oligarchies and globalist bankers resulting in the cultural and racial displacement of the white race."<sup>38</sup> Some members even adhere to a form of Satanism known as The Order of Nine Angles, which is "steeped in neo-Nazi themes that praise Adolf Hitler, promote Holocaust denial and identify Jews as the enemy."<sup>39</sup>

Like many extremist groups, Atomwaffen's ideology centres on a key text, in this case *SIEGE*, by neo-Nazi activist James Mason. The book, a 563-page collection of newsletters produced by Mason during the 1980s, is required reading for new recruits. *SIEGE* preaches "leaderless, cell-structured terrorism and white revolution," and implores America's true neo-Nazis to go underground and begin a guerrilla war against what it dubs "The System."<sup>40</sup> As a former member attested, "the group [follows] James Mason's *SIEGE* like a bible."<sup>41</sup> Atomwaffen distinguishes itself from other neo-Nazi groups active in the United States through its open embrace of violence and terrorism. Where others, such as Identity Evropa and Vanguard America, prioritise political activism, the Atomwaffen Division is "a cadre that fetishizes violence as its core doctrine."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Janet Reitman, "All-American Nazis," *Rolling Stone*, May 2, 2018.

<sup>31</sup> Frontline, "Documenting Hate."

<sup>32</sup> Daniel Sandford and Daniel De Simone, "British Neo-Nazis suggest Prince Harry should be shot," *BBC*, December 5, 2018.

<sup>33</sup> Mack Lamoureux and Ben Makuch, "Atomwaffen, an American Neo-Nazi Terror Group, Is in Canada," *VICE*, June 19, 2018.

<sup>34</sup> Martín Steinhagen, "Terrorpropaganda in der Uni-Bibliothek," *Zeit Online*, May 25, 2019.

<sup>35</sup> Oleksiy Kuzmenko, "'Defend the White Race': American Extremists Being Co-Opted by Ukraine's Far-Right," *BellingCat*, February 15, 2019.

<sup>36</sup> Anti-Defamation League, "New Hate and Old: The Changing Face of American White Supremacy," *ADL Center on Extremism*, p. 52.

<sup>37</sup> Thompson, Winston, and Hanrahan, "Inside Atomwaffen."

<sup>38</sup> Anti-Defamation League, "Atomwaffen Division (AWD)."

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Hatewatch, "Atomwaffen and the SIEGE parallax: how one neo-Nazi's life's work is fueling a younger generation," *Southern Poverty Law Center*, February 22, 2018.

<sup>41</sup> Frontline, "Documenting Hate."

<sup>42</sup> Hatewatch, "Atomwaffen and the SIEGE parallax."

Atomwaffen draws its inspiration from a lineage of far-right thinkers and terrorists. Ideological forebears include well-known neo-Nazis and white supremacists such as the aforementioned James Mason, Charles Manson, William Pierce, Joseph Tommasi, and, of course, Adolf Hitler.<sup>43</sup> Manson's "Helter Skelter" race-war prophecy has resonated with Atomwaffen members, whose propaganda honours the Manson Family and the murders it conducted in 1969.<sup>44</sup> Leaked chat logs reveal that Atomwaffen members also worship a series of far-right terrorists, including Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh, Charleston church shooter Dylann Roof, and Norwegian mass murderer Anders Behring Breivik.<sup>45</sup> Group members have even been in contact with Unabomber Ted Kaczynski.<sup>46</sup> Atomwaffen members also "venerate" The Order, a 1980s neo-Nazi terrorist group led by Robert Mathews, which was responsible for the 1984 murder of Jewish radio host Alan Berg.<sup>47</sup> Violence, and its celebration, is central to everything Atomwaffen says and does: the group sees "violence as the only vehicle for apocalyptic, racial cleansing and the imposition of order over its dystopian perception of the modern world."<sup>48</sup>

To date, Atomwaffen members have been implicated in five known murders. In May 2017, two Atomwaffen members, Andrew Oneschuk and Jeremy Himmelman, were found dead in an apartment they shared with AWD founder Brandon Russell and fellow member Devon Arthurs. Arthurs allegedly killed the two after they mocked his recent conversion to Islam. In December 2017, 17-year-old Nicholas Giampa, a reputed Atomwaffen member who was "fully in thrall to the racist, apocalyptic fantasia of white nationalism," allegedly murdered his girlfriend's parents after they raised concerns over his neo-Nazi views.<sup>49</sup> Giampa had retweeted endorsements of *SIEGE* and *The Turner Diaries*, and used his social media sites to rail against Jews and LGBT rights. And in January 2018, Blaze Bernstein, a 19-year-old gay Jewish Ivy League student, was found dead in California with over 20 stab wounds. The accused murderer, Sam Woodward, an Atomwaffen member who had participated in the group's "hate camps," was charged with a hate crime. After Bernstein's murder, Woodward was celebrated in online chat rooms, hailed by fellow Atomwaffen members as a "one man gay Jew wrecking crew."<sup>50</sup> Sean Michael Fernandez, leader of Atomwaffen's Texas cell, praised the attack for its strategic value, explaining "we're only going to inspire more 'copycat crimes' in the name of AWD. All we have to do is spread our image and our propaganda."<sup>51</sup>

Given the seemingly isolated nature of the incidents, it is worth asking: is it terrorism? According to Bruce Hoffman, "terrorism" must be political, violent, designed to create wide-ranging psychological repercussions, and conducted by a subnational organisation or individual.<sup>52</sup> Atomwaffen's activity is certainly political, perpetrated in the name of neo-Nazism. The group has breached the threshold of violence several times. Comments following Bernstein's murder indicate an organisational desire to incite psychological fear. And, the group is clearly a subnational actor. To be clear, Atomwaffen has yet to *coordinate* a successful terrorist attack, but its promotion of violence and celebration of previous attacks fit with the far-right's strategy of "leaderless resistance." Sporadic,

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<sup>43</sup> SPLC, "Atomwaffen Division."

<sup>44</sup> Luke O'Brien and Christopher Mathias, "The Maniac Neo-Nazis Keeping Charles Manson's Race War Alive," *Huffington Post*, November 21, 2017.

<sup>45</sup> Alexander Epp and Roman Höfner, "The Hate Network," *Der Spiegel*, 2018.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Thompson, "An Atomwaffen Member Sketched a Map to Take the Neo-Nazis Down."

<sup>48</sup> SPLC, "Atomwaffen Division."

<sup>49</sup> Jessica Schulberg and Luke O'Brien, "We Found The Neo-Nazi Twitter Account Tied To A Virginia Double Homicide," *Huffington Post*, January 4, 2018.

<sup>50</sup> Thompson, Winston, and Hanrahan, "Inside Atomwaffen."

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.* (New York: Columbia Press, 2017), pp. 43-44

uncoordinated, seemingly unrelated attacks allow the group to fly under the radar, as they do not attract the attention that a coordinated string of attacks would. Nevertheless, with its promotion of political violence and desire to intimidate those communities it sees as its enemies, Atomwaffen is clearly a terrorist organisation, and should be treated as such.

## Analysis: The Threat Will Likely Get Worse

The extreme far-right poses an increasing terrorist threat for four reasons; it is a growing movement, exhibits increasingly violent activity, benefits from broader political normalisation of far-right views, and may take advantage of the opportunity offered by the 2020 election. These points are discussed in more detail below.

Firstly, the United States is witnessing a growth of the far-right movement, as well as a mainstreaming of radical views. The process began under the Obama administration, as America's radical right rallied against the election of a black—and, allegedly, foreign and Muslim—President. There was a 600 percent rise in the number of followers of white nationalist twitter accounts between 2012 and 2016, with the American far-right far more prolific online than its Islamic State counterpart.<sup>53</sup> More interest means more radicals, more recruits, and, most likely, more violence. There has also been a mainstreaming of extremist ideology. As Daryl Johnson, co-author of a 2009 Department of Homeland Security report on the rising threat of right-wing extremism, explained, “building a border wall, deporting immigrants, a travel ban on Muslim countries — these are themes discussed on white-nationalist message boards and websites for years, now being endorsed and talked about at the highest levels of the government.”<sup>54</sup>

Secondly, not only is far-right rhetoric proliferating, but attacks perpetrated in the name of far-right groups and ideologies have intensified. The United States suffered an average of 11 right-wing attacks per year between 2012 and 2016; that number jumped to 31 in 2017.<sup>55</sup> According to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), 70% of all extremism-related killings between 2008 and 2017 were perpetrated by adherents to far-right causes, significantly more than the 25% perpetrated by Islamist extremists.<sup>56</sup> The ADL's 2018 numbers indicated that 100% of extremism-related attacks in the United States that year were perpetrated by assailants professing far-right views.<sup>57</sup> And in the 10 days leading up to the 2018 midterm election, the United States suffered four major terrorist attacks or hate crimes linked to the far-right: a Trump fanatic mailed 16 pipe bombs to senior Democratic Party figures, a neo-Nazi killed 11 worshippers in a synagogue in Pittsburgh, a white supremacist killed two black shoppers in Kentucky having failed to enter a predominantly black church, and a 40-year-old adherent to the Incel movement killed two women in a Tallahassee yoga studio.<sup>58</sup>

Thirdly, the far-right poses an increasing terrorism threat because of the political cover provided by the White House. During his administration, President Trump has proved willing to excuse far-right violence, deflecting blame or avoiding assigning blame

<sup>53</sup> Reitman, “All-American Nazis.”

<sup>54</sup> Greg Sargent, “Trump’s hate and lies are inciting extremists. Just ask the analyst who warned us,” *Washington Post*, October 29, 2018.

<sup>55</sup> Jones, “The Rise of Far-Right Extremism in the United States.”

<sup>56</sup> ADL, “New Hate and Old,” p. 57.

<sup>57</sup> Anti-Defamation League, “Murder and Extremism in the United States in 2018,” *ADL Center on Extremism*.

<sup>58</sup> Some have argued that, depending on how you measure right-wing violence, attacks have not actually increased. See, for example, Jacob Aasland Ravndal, “Right-wing terrorism and violence may actually have declined,” *Washington Post*, April 2, 2019.

altogether.<sup>59</sup> The trend began after Charlottesville, where a woman was killed by a neo-Nazi in a vehicle ramming attack during the Unite the Right rally in August 2017. Trump placed “blame on both sides” and referred to a congregation of outspoken and proud neo-Nazis and white supremacists as “very fine people.”<sup>60</sup> The President has shown little indication that he will walk back his tacit support for America’s radical right and its fringe elements. In October, when a series of pipe bombs were mailed to senior Democratic Party figures, Trump tweeted his support for conspiracy theories suggesting the bombs were liberal hoaxes, and later blamed the attack on a hostile political climate caused by the media, saying “[a] very big part of the Anger we see today in our society is caused by the purposely false and inaccurate reporting of the Mainstream Media that I refer to as Fake News.”<sup>61</sup> In October 2018, President Trump delivered a speech where he called himself a “nationalist,” further energizing the country’s radical right.<sup>62</sup>

Trump’s impact on the far-right was epitomised when lawyers for three Kansas militia members who plotted to bomb homes belonging to Somali immigrants tried to argue the men should receive lenient terms because they were inspired by the President’s “rough-and-tumble verbal pummeling,” which had “heightened the rhetorical stakes for people of all political persuasions.”<sup>63</sup> Similarly, in a manifesto published shortly before the far-right attack on mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand in March 2019, the assailant praised Trump “as a symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose.”<sup>64</sup> The attacker behind the October 2018 mail bombs, meanwhile, described Trump rallies as “like a new found drug.”<sup>65</sup> The fallout from Charlottesville and related speeches has led directly to rising recruitment for the movement and has empowered America’s right-wing extremists, who are opting for increasingly violent means to spread their message, comfortable in the knowledge the President is unlikely to condemn them.<sup>66</sup> It also makes it more difficult for the rest of the country to respond to terrorism with strength and resilience. As Dan Byman has argued, Trump’s rhetoric in the wake of violence “[creates] an atmosphere hostile to cooperation after an attack.”<sup>67</sup> Rhetoric empowers action, and as long as America’s president finds himself unable to criticise those who lash out with real violence in his name, domestic terrorism is likely to worsen.

Finally, the build-up to and fallout from the 2020 Presidential Election could provide the heated political climate for extremists to thrive. During the 2016 election, “rhetoric empowered extremists not just to angrily revive open expressions of bigotry [...] but also to open the floodgates of violence inherent in the far-right’s ideology.”<sup>68</sup> Violence subsequently spiked after the 2016 election—research indicates it often does immediately after elections, the impact of “empowerment rather than a sense of deprivation”—and likely would again with another Trump win, with a victory signalling to America’s extremist right that their agenda and methods are supported around the country.<sup>69</sup> In turn, this would lead to further empowerment and more violence. On the other hand, a Trump defeat could also lead to increasing violence. Before the 2016

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<sup>59</sup> See, for example, Tankel, “Riding the Tiger: How Trump Enables Right-Wing Extremism;” and Byman, “Trump’s Rhetoric Is Raising the Risk of Right-Wing Terrorism.”

<sup>60</sup> Rick Klein, “Trump said ‘blame on both sides’ in Charlottesville, now the anniversary puts him on the spot,” *ABC News*, August 12, 2018.

<sup>61</sup> David Frum, “A President Who Condone Political Violence,” *The Atlantic*, October 26, 2018.

<sup>62</sup> William Cummings, “I am a nationalist: Trump’s embrace of controversial label sparks uproar,” *USA Today*, October 24, 2018.

<sup>63</sup> Andrew Hay, “Kansas militia men blame Trump rhetoric for mosque attack plan,” *Reuters*, October 30, 2018.

<sup>64</sup> Brenton Tarrant, *The Great Replacement: Towards a New Society*, March 2019.

<sup>65</sup> Faith Karimi, “Pipe bomb suspect Cesar Sayoc describes Trump rallies as ‘new found drug,’” *CNN*, April 24, 2019.

<sup>66</sup> Frontline, “Documenting Hate.”

<sup>67</sup> Byman, “Trump’s Rhetoric Is Raising the Risk of Right-Wing Terrorism.”

<sup>68</sup> Neiwert, *Alt-America*, p. 293.

<sup>69</sup> Arie Perliger, “Terror isn’t always a weapon of the weak – it can also support the powerful,” *The Conversation*, October 28, 2018.

election, Trump signalled he may not accept a Hillary Clinton win, saying, “I will totally accept” the results “if I win.”<sup>70</sup> Should Trump lose, and refuse to accept the results, there could be a significant mobilisation of far-right supporters in his favour.<sup>71</sup> Law enforcement should closely watch the build-up to, and fallout from, the election, and politicians on both sides of the aisle should be prepared to encourage President Trump to peacefully relinquish the Presidency should he lose the election.

## The Atomwaffen Threat

Returning to the Atomwaffen case study, the group also bears watching closely, for two reasons: its public declarations, and its active recruitment from the military. Firstly, Atomwaffen poses a continuing terrorist threat because its members have publicly declared an intention to intensify their campaign of violence and broaden it to more public targets.<sup>72</sup> In fact, Atomwaffen’s failure to cause a mass-casualty incident so far largely results from good police work, rather than a lack of ambition. When searching Brandon Russell and Devon Arthurs’ apartment after the latter’s alleged double murder, police found traces of the explosive hexamethane triperoxide diamine (HMTD), as well as detonators.<sup>73</sup> Russell was arrested two days later at a Florida Burger King, found with a fellow Atomwaffen member, an AR-15, and over 1,000 rounds of ammunition. He is believed to have been en route to the Turkey Point nuclear power plant, and deputies recalled that “when we found all the weapons, we were convinced that we had just stopped a mass shooting.”<sup>74</sup> It is still unclear what Russell and his roommates were plotting with their “bomb-makers workshop.”<sup>75</sup>

Elsewhere, Michael Lloyd Hubsby, a senior Atomwaffen member from Las Vegas dubbed “Komissar,” has claimed to possess a map of the Western states’ power grid, and has discussed intentions to attack American infrastructure: “So in any war, you need to cut off your enemy’s ability to shoot, move and communicate. You would want to target things like: Substations, water filtration plants, etc.”<sup>76</sup> Former member Devon Arthurs similarly attested to a desire to attack “power lines, nuclear reactors, [and] synagogues.”<sup>77</sup> *Der Spiegel*, which gained access to AWD chat groups, documents violent threats such as “Carpetbomb your local refugee center,” “Bombing police stations is artistic expression,” and “I want to bomb a federal building.”<sup>78</sup> In June 2018, one Atomwaffen member declared “I don’t understand why people think killing/genocide requires justification. Every single genocide was deserved. Every single murder, killing, spree, war.”<sup>79</sup>

A former member, “Bones,” believes that certain AWD members are preparing to commit attacks: “I think there are some guys that are actually materialising these plans, and most of them we don’t hear from because they’ve gone offline, gone off the grid.”<sup>80</sup> In February 2019, an alleged Atomwaffen member was arrested on child pornography charges, with the FBI admitting the arrest was based on fears he was “mobilizing to violence.” The suspect, named Benjamin Bogard, apparently ran a Twitter account which

<sup>70</sup> Jeremy Diamond, “Donald Trump: ‘I will totally accept’ election results ‘if I win,’” *CNN*, October 20, 2016.

<sup>71</sup> “Retired Lt. Colonel: Trump’s WH departure will be ugly,” *CNN*, April 24, 2019.

<sup>72</sup> See, for example, Thompson, Winston, and Hanrahan, “Inside Atomwaffen.”

<sup>73</sup> SPLC, “Atomwaffen Division.”

<sup>74</sup> Frontline, “Documenting Hate.”

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> Thompson, Winston, and Hanrahan, “Inside Atomwaffen.”

<sup>77</sup> Frontline, “Documenting Hate.”

<sup>78</sup> Epp and Höfner, “The Hate Network.”

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

had claimed that the best part of a gun was “the part that kills 30 babies per trigger pull.”<sup>81</sup> Perhaps most ominous is Atomwaffen leader Denton’s own proclamation: “Politics are useless. Revolution is necessary.”<sup>82</sup> With that goal in mind, “Rape” has been imploring members to pool resources to buy rural land, hoping to “get the fuck off the grid” and get started on the insurrection.<sup>83</sup> Little is known about Atomwaffen’s real-world capabilities and its capacity to act on its threats, making law enforcement and counter-terrorism even more difficult, but the aforementioned “bomb-makers workshop” compiled by Russell and his accomplices suggests the group has made efforts to transcend the “leaderless resistance” model adopted by previous attackers.<sup>84</sup> With Atomwaffen, there is not just a willingness to commit violence; there may also be a capability. Atomwaffen has made little effort to hide its grand intentions; should the group succeed, and follow through on its stated objectives, it could pose a fearsome terrorist threat.

Secondly, and finally, Atomwaffen actively recruits from the military, seeking out servicemen who can provide expertise in firearms and military tactics. Developing links with the military has been a deliberate Atomwaffen strategy, and members have enrolled specifically to benefit the group; as Devon Arthurs attested, “these people join the military specially to get training. To get access to equipment.”<sup>85</sup> American troops returning from combat tours and enrolling in militia groups has been seen throughout recent history; white supremacist militias experienced spikes after the Vietnam War and the Iraq War, and Timothy McVeigh was a Gulf War veteran.<sup>86</sup>

Atomwaffen’s deliberate pursuit of military members indicates an ominous intent: the group wants military experience and professional training on its side for coming attacks against civilians and battles with the government. At least seven Atomwaffen members have military experience. Founder Brandon Russell was formerly with the National Guard, while the rest of the group includes at least three active duty servicemen and three veterans.<sup>87</sup> Atomwaffen member Vasillios Pistolis was thrown out of the Marines for his ties to neo-Nazism, and in May 2019, the *Huffington Post* exposed an additional member, Army Pfc. Corwyn Storm Carver, under military investigation for links with the group.<sup>88</sup> AWD’s growing connections with the military should be of grave concern to law enforcement agencies. Better training and a more militaristic mindset could drive the group towards more militant activity, including terrorism.

## Recommendations

Pushing back against the rising far-right in the United States will require concerted efforts by a range of government agencies, a change in rhetoric by those in charge and, no less important, a sense of urgency that actions must be taken now. Four concrete suggestions are made here. In the short-term, the White House must condemn far-right violence and increase the resources and attention being paid to it by law enforcement and intelligence agencies. In the long-term, the government should strengthen its

<sup>81</sup> Kelly Weill, “Feds Feared Alleged ‘Neo-Nazi’ Benjamin Bogard Could Be Next Mass Shooter,” *Daily Beast*, February 28, 2019.

<sup>82</sup> Thompson, Winston, and Hanrahan, “Inside Atomwaffen.”

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> Frontline, “Documenting Hate.”

<sup>85</sup> Thompson, “An Atomwaffen Member Sketched a Map to Take the Neo-Nazis Down.”

<sup>86</sup> Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

<sup>87</sup> Frontline, “Documenting Hate.”

<sup>88</sup> Christopher Mathias, “Exclusive: Army Investigating Soldier’s Alleged Leadership In Neo-Nazi Terror Group,” *Huffington Post*, May 3, 2019.

countering violent extremism programming and pursue two important legislative changes: domestic terrorism legislation and gradual gun control.

Firstly, and most urgently, the White House must condemn, in no uncertain terms, the rising far-right violence America is experiencing under this administration. In other words, we have to be able to call domestic terrorists “domestic terrorists.” Publicly acknowledging the impact of the Presidency on America’s domestic terrorism landscape—“Trump may not be deliberately trying to enable far-right violence, but his rhetoric and actions are having that effect”—and denouncing it would clearly signal to the increasingly emboldened radical right that violence will not be tolerated, and that terrorists will be pursued to the fullest extent of the law, no different than their Islamist counterparts.<sup>89</sup> Additionally, the Republican establishment, including Members of Congress and right-wing media, needs to better push back against Trump’s most extreme rhetoric. As mentioned, ideas and policies that typically belonged on the radical fringe of American politics have been normalised by this President: “There’s been a mainstreaming of the extremist narratives. Things that were once on the outer fringes are now being brought to the forefront by Trump.”<sup>90</sup> The violent extremist fringes are paying attention; as James Mason, Atomwaffen’s ideological figurehead, admitted, “with Trump winning that election by surprise—and it was a surprise—I now believe anything could be possible.”<sup>91</sup> America’s political right, including the White House and Congress, must be braver in pushing back against extremism, delegitimising it, and returning it to the fringes of society. As terrorism expert Jason Blazakis warned, “if that rhetoric continues unchecked it will tear the nation asunder.”<sup>92</sup>

Also in the short term, the government needs to ramp up resources for law enforcement agencies combatting domestic terrorism. Right-wing terrorism has been ignored for a long time—as Peter Singer has argued, “in America, it is politically savvy to talk strongly and repeatedly about terrorism and extremism, except the version of it that has killed the largest number of our fellow citizens over the last decade”—and the problem has been allowed to grow as a result.<sup>93</sup> More needs to be done at the federal, state, and local levels to combat the growing right-wing threat. The UK has already handed its domestic intelligence agency MI5 more resources to pursue right-wing extremists; the US should follow suit.<sup>94</sup> That said, the FBI has begun to investigate Atomwaffen, speaking with former members around the country, and investigating Pittsburgh synagogue shooter Robert Bowers’ connection with two neo-Nazi brothers linked to the group.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, the Trump administration’s latest counter-terrorism strategy, published in 2018, included an explicit reference to domestic terrorism, warning of the threat posed by “racially motivated extremism, animal rights extremism, environmental extremism, sovereign citizen extremism, and militia extremism.”<sup>96</sup> Those are positive steps, which must now be built upon.

In the longer term, the US government should improve its countering violent extremism (CVE) programming, both through government agencies as well as through partnerships with civil society organisations. Conspiracy theories such as ZOG and the white genocide

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<sup>89</sup> Tankel, “Riding the Tiger: How Trump Enables Right-Wing Extremism.”

<sup>90</sup> Sargent, “Trump’s hate and lies are inciting extremists.”

<sup>91</sup> Frontline, “Documenting Hate.”

<sup>92</sup> Jason Blazakis, “American Terrorists: Why Current Laws Are Inadequate for Violent Extremists at Home,” *Lawfare*, December 2, 2018.

<sup>93</sup> Singer, “National Security Pros, It’s Time to Talk About Right-Wing Extremism.”

<sup>94</sup> Jones, “The Rise of Far-Right Extremism in the United States.”

<sup>95</sup> Frontline, “Documenting Hate.”

<sup>96</sup> White House, *National Strategy for Counter-terrorism of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: White House, October 2018), p. 10.

are central to neo-Nazi ideology and to Atomwaffen's ability to recruit; breaking those narratives is critical to sustained counter-terrorism success, and can likely only be achieved through long-term CVE programming. The Trump administration has acted to eradicate CVE targeted at right-wing extremism several times; the Department of Homeland Security rescinded several Obama-era CVE grants to non-profits focused on rehabilitating right-wing extremists, and the administration has even proposed rebranding CVE to Countering Islamic Extremism.<sup>97</sup> This must urgently be reversed. CVE programming is far from perfect, but it can play a critical role in steering vulnerable young men and women away from radicalisation and helping rehabilitate those who flirted with extremism.<sup>98</sup>

CVE efforts must include government and non-profits reaching out to the "nonviolent wings of the movement" to convince extremists to forego violence and militancy and instead choose peaceful and productive political participation.<sup>99</sup> Members of groups like Atomwaffen may be strongly neo-Nazi but not strongly in favour of violence; mainstream society should work to connect with those individuals and protect them from the allure of terrorist organisations. A revamped CVE strategy would necessarily require a mobilisation of civil society, including through government grants to encourage community-level organisations to develop new programs; improved relationships between government and at-risk communities; and most importantly, as former Obama administration CVE official Eric Rosand articulates, "the adoption of a public health (as opposed to a law-enforcement-driven) approach to preventing extremist violence, which offers opportunities for multipurpose programming, avoiding stigma, and leveraging existing public health resources, including mental health professionals, social workers or teachers."<sup>100</sup> Effective CVE could play a crucial role in toppling the summit of McCauley and Moskalkenko's radicalisation pyramid, working to bring former radicals back into the mainstream and deter further extremism.

Finally, also in the long term, US lawmakers must pursue legislative changes, both to legally designate domestic terrorists as "terrorists," as well as to limit their access to firearms. Firstly, lawmakers should develop domestic terrorism legislation to be used to prosecute right-wing terrorists. In the US, Islamist extremists—regardless of mobilisation to violence—are often prosecuted with the "providing material support to terrorists" statute, which applies only to "designated foreign terrorists" and does not have an equivalent for right-wing extremists.<sup>101</sup> When domestic terrorists avoid the "terrorism" label, they, as well as their ideologies, also avoid "the terrorist stigma we've long reserved for foreign jihadist groups."<sup>102</sup> An equal application of the "terrorism" brand across all ideologies would be beneficial for several reasons: it could help stigmatise actions and ideologies, in turn deterring copycats; it would avoid alienating Muslim communities, which are crucial allies in the fight against jihadism; and it would allow the FBI to conduct broader investigations, including into organisations which may have inspired lone actor terrorists.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>97</sup> "Trump's Homeland Security department gives right-wing extremists a pass," *Washington Post*, August 31, 2017.

<sup>98</sup> See, for example, Jessica Stern, "Mind Over Martyr," *Foreign Affairs* 89:1 (January-February 2010): 95-109; Lorenzo Vidino and Seamus Hughes, "Countering Violent Extremism in America," *GWU Center for Cyber and Homeland Security*, June 2015; and Daniel Koehler, *Understanding Deradicalization: Methods, Tools and Programs for Countering Violent Extremism* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).

<sup>99</sup> Joshua D. Freilich, Steven M. Chermak, and David Caspi, "Critical Events in the Life Trajectories of Domestic Extremist White Supremacist Groups: A Case Study Analysis of Four Violent Organizations," *Criminology and Public Policy* 8 (2009): 520.

<sup>100</sup> Eric Rosand, "Responding to the Rise in Domestic Terrorism: Don't Forget Prevention," *Lawfare*, May 26, 2019.

<sup>101</sup> 18 USC § 2339A (1994) and 18 USC § 2339B (1996).

<sup>102</sup> Blazakis, "American Terrorists."

<sup>103</sup> Tankel, "Riding the Tiger."

Domestic terrorism legislation must fulfil two essential requirements: the statute “must preserve legitimate free speech while providing an opportunity for a federal agency to sanction US citizens.”<sup>104</sup> Sanctions might include exclusion from the financial system, material support to terrorism charges for anybody aiding, abetting, or praising the suspect, or removal of any online propaganda disseminated by the individual or their organisation.<sup>105</sup> Such legislation would devastate Atomwaffen; the group’s online presence would be decimated, and a substantial number of members could be eligible for arrest on material support charges related to Blaze Bernstein’s killing.

Additionally, government should work to pass bipartisan gun control legislation to limit terrorists’ access to weapons. In the United States, private ownership of firearms is enshrined through the Second Amendment and has become an ideological anchor for constitutional conservatives. Gun rights are also central to far-right ideology, and, as was the case with the Brady Bill, gun control measures are often perceived as the last salvo before a tyrannical government turns on its people.<sup>106</sup> Therefore perhaps the most difficult and unlikely of these recommendations, the effort to curb terrorists’ access to guns must be a bipartisan effort. Republican lawmakers must offer their blessing, and push their bases to accept the measures. Lawmakers should push for certain measures short of universal gun confiscations which could help reduce the threat, such as background checks, waiting periods, and ammunition caps. It has become too easy for dangerous people with malicious intentions to acquire military-grade weapons and thousands of rounds of ammunition, with almost every American terrorist this century, regardless of ideology, facing basically no restrictions when buying their chosen tool for mass murder.<sup>107</sup> If not for a timely police intercept, Atomwaffen’s Brandon Russell might have joined a long list of American mass shooters; it should be up to policymakers, not police on the beat, to stop the next domestic terrorist.

## Conclusion

Atomwaffen poses a continuing terrorism threat to American cities and should be taken seriously by the government and its law enforcement agencies. The group propagates some of the most vicious and hateful rhetoric ever seen among domestic extremist groups, and should they follow up on their threats, would wreak havoc on civilian life around the country. Coordinated attacks are unlikely—organisationally-plotted attacks on the far-right are rare—but the far-right’s preference for leaderless resistance, as Mason envisages in *SIEGE*, makes it likely the group creates and inspires lone-actor terrorists. As a former member surmised, “who knows, there could be another Dylann Roof in Atomwaffen.”<sup>108</sup> But AWD is just one of many similar groups popping up around the country. America’s far-right is growing in stature, ambition, and effectiveness, fleshing out the middle and top of McCauley and Moskalenko’s radicalisation pyramid, and leaving a trail of victims stretching from Pittsburgh to Portland. America is approaching a toxic period where increasingly widely-held and violent views, combined with an apologist President and his election, will see groups like Atomwaffen, with its violent stated intentions and recruitment from the military, present an imminent terrorist threat. The government and its law enforcement agencies and lawmakers must urgently turn their focus towards far-right extremism, or risk an even bigger terrorism problem within America’s own borders.

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<sup>104</sup> Blazakis, “American Terrorists.”

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> White, “Political Eschatology,” p. 944.

<sup>107</sup> Peter Bergen, *United States of Jihad: Investigating America’s Homegrown Terrorists* (New York: Crown, 2016), 286.

<sup>108</sup> Frontline, “Documenting Hate.”

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# Siege: The Atomwaffen Division and Rising Far-Right Terrorism in the United States

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ICCT The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague (ICCT) is an independent think and do tank providing multidisciplinary policy advice and practical, solution-oriented implementation support on prevention and the rule of law, two vital pillars of effective counterterrorism.

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Functioning as a nucleus within the international counter-terrorism network, ICCT connects experts, policymakers, civil society actors and practitioners from different fields by providing a platform for productive collaboration, practical analysis, and exchange of experiences and expertise, with the ultimate aim of identifying innovative and comprehensive approaches to preventing and countering terrorism.

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