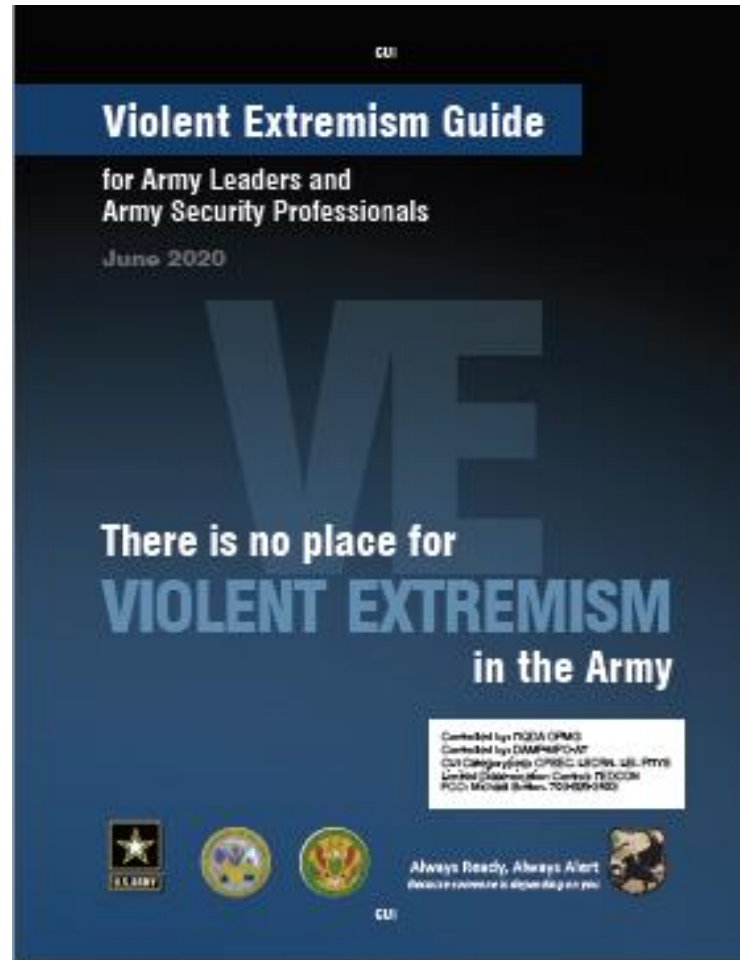




# EXTREMISM IN THE RANKS



Army Leader, Soldier, and DAC Awareness

*People First, Winning Matters!*



# Agenda



- Executive Summary
- AR 600-20 definitions and leader actions
- AR 381-12 indicators of potential extremism
- Learning from case studies
- Leaders' and Soldiers' resources
- Preventing negative behavior in the ranks



# Executive Summary



*Violent extremism poses a critical threat to the United States,* both in the homeland and to U.S. operations overseas. Acts of violent extremism undermine the rule of law and the protection of human and civil rights. The threat is not limited to a single political, religious, ethnic/cultural, or ideological background. Regardless of its motivation, violent extremism can have devastating effects on both civilian and military communities and could, if left unchecked, impact Army readiness.



# AR 600-20: Extremism



## Prohibitions and Service Member Responsibilities

- Participation in extremist organizations and activities is prohibited. It is inconsistent with the responsibilities of military service.
- Commands and law enforcement will take appropriate action upon learning that a Soldier is participating in extremist organizations or activities.
- Soldiers: ask your unit's leadership team if you do not clearly understand your duty to refrain from prohibited activity. Read Army policy.
- Leaders: educate your Soldiers and consult with your unit's JAG.



# AR 600-20: Extremism



## Prohibitions and Service Member Responsibilities

### **Cannot participate in groups that advocate: (para. 4-12a)**

- Racial/sex/ethnic hatred or intolerance
- Creating or engaging in illegal discrimination
- Use of force or violence to deprive individuals' rights or achieve political/religious/discriminatory goals
- Support for terrorist organizations or objectives
- Overthrow of the USG by force or violence or sedition

### **Specific prohibitions: (para. 4-12b)**

- Participating in public demonstration or rally
- Attending meetings (with knowledge the meeting involves an extremist cause)
- Fundraising
- Recruiting, training, encouraging others to join
- Creating, organizing or assuming a leadership role
- Distributing literature that advocates extremism
- Receiving financial assistance from a person or organization who advocates terrorism/sedition

### **Social media and internet activity: (para. 4-12h)**

- Soldiers are responsible for social media/internet posts
- Same prohibitions apply to internet activity, including social media sites and blogs
- Soldiers are prohibited from participating in extremist organizations and activities online



# AR 600-20: Extremism



## **Commander's Reporting requirements:** **para. 4-12e, 4-12f**

- Notify the supporting counterintelligence organization if you suspect that Soldiers are engaging prohibited activities
- Ensure the security manager records derogatory information as an incident report in the JPAS IAW AR 380-67
- Contact CID and JAG

## **Commander's options: para. 4-12d**

- Designate off-limits areas
- Order removal of flags, posters, symbols
- Adverse Administrative actions—bar to reenlistment, GOMOR, involuntary separation
- UCMJ Action
  - Art. 92 (Failure to obey lawful order/regulation)
  - Art 116 (Riot or breach of peace)
  - Art 117 (Provoking speeches/gestures)
  - Art 133/134 (Conduct unbecoming/General article)

## **Commander's Responsibilities: para. 4-12e**

- In any case of apparent involvement with extremism—whether or not in violation of AR 600-20—take positive action:
  - Counsel that extremism is inconsistent with Army values
  - Provide notice of potential adverse effects upon their service, including evaluation reports
  - Inform that participation could result in suspension of security clearance and bar to reenlistment
- Prohibit any demonstration or activity on the installation if it will prevent mission accomplishment or endanger loyalty, discipline or morale of troops



Why does someone  
advocate or engage in  
extremist violence?



# AR 381-12, Table 3-3 (Indicators)



Table 3-3

## Indicators of extremist activity that may pose a threat to Department of Defense or disrupt U.S. military operations

- Receiving financial assistance from a person who advocates the use of violence to undermine or disrupt U.S. military operations or foreign policy.
- Soliciting advice, encouragement, finances, training, or other resources from a person who advocates the use of unlawful violence to undermine or disrupt U.S. military operations or foreign policy.
- Making a financial contribution to a foreign charity, an organization, or a cause that advocates the use of unlawful violence to undermine or disrupt U.S. military operations or foreign policy.
- Expressing a political, religious, or ideological obligation to engage in unlawful violence directed against U.S. military operations or foreign policy.
- Expressing support for foreign persons or organizations that promote or threaten the use of unlawful force or violence to achieve political, ideological, or religious objectives.
- Participation in political demonstrations that promote or threaten the use of unlawful violence directed against the Army, DOD, or the United States based on political, ideological, or religious tenets, principles, or beliefs.





# Domestic Extremism Case Studies



## Participation in Extremist Organization: PFC Brandon Russell



**Pathway to extremism:** In 2014 Russell began posting on a known but now defunct white supremacy online forum called “Iron March”. In 2015 Russell announced the creation of Atomwaffen Division (AWD) on Iron March, which quickly became an internationally known white supremacy group. In 2016 Russell joined the Florida National Guard.

**Participation in extremist organization/activity:** Russell created and participated in AWD, which espouses virulent racism, antisemitism, misogyny, and homophobia. With 50-80 members nationwide, Russell’s and AWD’s strategy was to engage in acts of violence to destabilize society and provoke a “race war”.

**Authorities notified:** In 2017, law enforcement responding to shots fired from Russell’s Florida apartment. Russell’s apartment mate, friend and fellow member of AWD shot and killed two fellow members (reportedly, the shooter made the decision to convert to Islam and join ISIS, causing the argument). A search of the apartment discovered lethal bomb-making materials, along with neo-Nazi signs, posters, books, and flags belonging to Russell. A fellow AWD member reported Russell was targeting power-lines, nuclear reactors, and synagogues for employment of the explosives.

**Consequences and actions:** In 2017, Russell was arrested and, in 2018, was convicted of felony possession of an unregistered destructive device and improper storage of explosive material. Russell received a 5 year prison sentence.



Note: this vignette is derived from publicly available information

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## Material Support to Terrorist Group: SFC Ikaika Kang

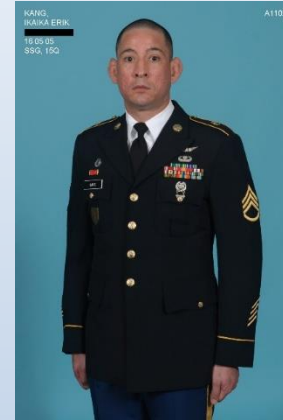


**Pathway to extremism:** SFC Kang joined the Army 30 Dec 01. SFC Kang never married, had no children, reportedly did not speak to his family, and had very few friends. While deployed to Taji, Iraq in 2011, SFC Kang's security clearance was revoked and he received a relief for cause NCOER, after he threatened to "dress up like a Haji" and kidnap his platoon sergeant and platoon leader. SFC Kang was relieved of duties as the Taji Tower Facility Chief. SFC Kang's clearance was reinstated after he was evaluated and cleared by mental health. In September 2015, SFC Kang told other unit members he intended to study the Quran while on leave.

**Participation in extremist organization/activity :** On 15 Nov 15, SFC Kang related many pro-ISIS sentiments. In Jun 2016, two Soldiers witnessed SFC Kang speaking passionately in support of ISIS. Between June and July 2017, SFC Kang met with undercover FBI agents, who SFC Kang believed to be affiliated with ISIS, and SFC Kang provided them with military information, military clothing, a civilian drone, and combat techniques/weapons training. On 8 July 2017, during a ceremony with undercover FBI agents, SFC Kang swore an oath of loyalty, known as "bayat," to ISIS and its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. After the ceremony, SFC Kang said that he wanted to go to downtown Honolulu and the Waikiki strip and start shooting. SFC Kang was subsequently arrested and taken into custody.

**Authorities notified:** In November 2015, Army Counterintelligence began an investigation after his pro-ISIS comments. The FBI and Army CID were notified in August 2016, and initiated a joint investigation.

**Consequences and actions:** On 21 July 2017, SFC Kang was indicted on four counts of attempting to provide material support to ISIS. In December 2018, SFC Kang was sentenced to 25 years in prison for attempting to provide material support to ISIS.



SFC Kang's DA Photo



SFC Kang posing with the ISIS flag



SFC Kang kissing the ISIS flag

Note: this vignette is derived from publicly available information

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# Participation in Extremist Organization / Movement: DA Civilian (DAC)



**Pathway to extremism:** In general, Sovereign Citizens are anti-government extremists who believe that even though they physically reside in this country, they are separate or “sovereign” from the United States. As a result, they believe they don’t have to answer to any government authority, including courts, taxing entities, motor vehicle departments, or law enforcement.

**Participation in extremist organization/activity:** The DAC participated in and was a follower of The Moorish Sovereign Citizen Movement. The Moorish Sovereign Citizen movement advocates an interpretation of sovereign doctrine that African Americans constitute an elite class within American society with special rights and privileges that convey on them sovereign immunity above federal, state, and local authority, laws, and regulations.

**Authorities notified:** The DAC failed to stop when pulled over by the military police while speeding on post. Once stopped, the DAC became verbally belligerent and resisted arrest.

**Consequences and actions:** The DAC’s extremist ideology and criminal conduct were reported to DODCAF and INSCOM for security clearance and suitability adjudication, due to the lack of individual recognition of any loyalty to or power of the U.S. Government. Actions resulted in a bar from the installation and loss of job.



Note: name is withheld due to not being charged as a criminal act

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# Distributing IED Information to Extremists: SPC Jarrett Smith



**Pathway to extremism:** Open source reporting stated in 2016, prior to joining the Army, Smith discussed (in an online forum) joining a far-right Ukrainian paramilitary group but decided to join the US Army instead. In 2017, SPC Smith joined the Army and served as an infantry Soldier, wherein he was trained in combat and tactical operations. In 2019, SPC Smith transferred from Fort Bliss to Fort Riley and continued using online social media platforms to discuss his extremist ideology.

**Participation in extremist organization/activity:** In 2019, SPC Smith discussed in online group conversations that he was looking for more “radicals” like himself, and discussed killing far-left protesters or destroying a cell phone tower or a local news station.

**Authorities notified:** SPC Smith began a online conversation with undercover law enforcement officers during which SPC Smith provided instructions regarding how to make IED’s. SPC Smith also stated “Got a liberal Texas mayor in my sights! Boom with that IED and the dude’s dead.”

**Consequences and actions:** SPC Smith was arrested and convicted in federal court for the felony offense of distributing information pertaining to improvised explosives. SPC Smith received a sentence of 2.5 years in federal prison and 3 years of probation. SPC Smith also received a General Discharge from the Army for Misconduct.



## Potential Indicators

**Perceived Injustice:** SPC Smith was known to be sensitive about his appearance. He had suffered teasing for a cleft pallet scar.

**Search for Identity/Purpose:** SPC Smith began a online conversation with undercover Law enforcement officers wherein he provided them instructions on how to make IED’s. SPC Smith also stated “Got a liberal Texas mayor in my sights! Boom with that IED and the dude’s dead.”

**Need for Belonging:** SPC Smith was not known to have any close friends in the squad. He was not well-integrated in the unit.

Note: this vignette is derived from publicly available information

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## Plot to Conduct Insider Attack: PV2



**Pathway to extremism:** In 2018 a PV2 joined the Army and was stationed OCONUS wherein he began using online extremist forums and became a member of “Order of the Nine Angles (O9A)” in 2019. O9A is a violent, neo-Nazi, anti-Semitic, Satanic group, which expresses admiration for Adolf Hitler and Usama Bin Laden.

**Participation in extremist organization/activity:** In 2019, the PV2, with members and associates of O9A, plotted a deadly attack against the Soldier’s unit.

**Authorities notified:** Law enforcement was notified in 2019 of an impending plot by the PV2 and members of O9A to ambush and attack the PV2’s unit while in transit to a forward location. After notification, law enforcement took quick action and stopped the ambush. The PV2 confessed to his role of plotting an attack on his unit, admitted that he intended for the planned attack to result in the deaths of as many on his fellow service members as possible, and declared himself to be a traitor against the United States whose conduct was tantamount to treason.

**Consequences and actions:** The PV2 has been incarcerated since 2020 for felony crimes to include Conspiracy to Murder U.S. Nationals, Attempted Murder of U.S. Nationals, Conspiracy to Murder U.S. Service Members, and several other charges. His trial and sentencing is pending.



Note: name is withheld as this is an ongoing criminal matter

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## Online Extremist Activity: Sergeant

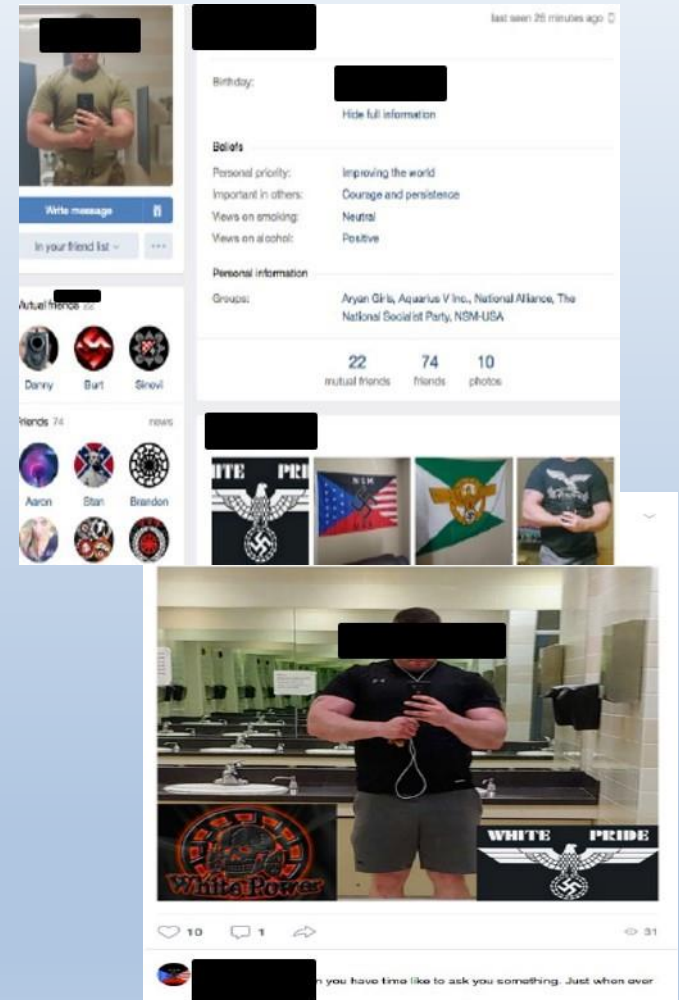


**Pathway to extremism:** Pathway to extremism is unknown.

**Participation in extremist organization/activity:** SGT posted overt, racially motivated violent extremist ideology on his social media platform. The SGT used a Russian-based social media platform, which does not regulate user content.

**Authorities notified:** In 2019, CID was notified by the National Joint Terrorism Task Force reference the SGT's participation in online neo-Nazi forums. Review of the SGT's public-facing social media identified multiple posts expressing white supremacist ideology and Nazi imagery. CID notified the SGT's chain of command regarding violations of Army policy on extremist activities (AR 600-20, Command Policy).

**Consequences and actions:** The SGT's chain of command administratively separated the Soldier from the Army for violating AR 600-20.



Note: name is withheld due to not being charged as a criminal act

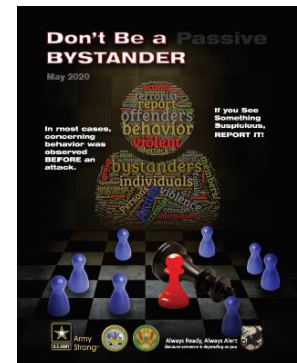
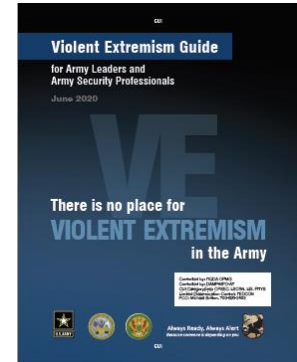
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# Resources



- SecDef Message on Extremism:  
<https://www.defense.gov/Watch/Video/videoid/784150/dvpc/false/#DVIDSVideoPlayer581>
- Army Antiterrorism Enterprise Portal:  
<https://army.deps.mil/army/sites/PMG/prog/ATEP/default.aspx>
  - Leader Resource Material:  
<https://army.deps.mil/army/sites/PMG/prog/ATEP/Violent%20Extremism%20Awareness%20Tool%20Kit/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2FArmy%2Fsites%2FPMG%2Fprog%2FATEP%2FViolent%20Extremism%20Awareness%20Tool%20Kit%2FLeaders%27s%20Folder%20for%20VE%20Information&FolderCTID=0x01200086F206DEA0E8584D8AD8604704DC94D3&View=%7B83755D94%2DBA98%2D4398%2D8F48%2DF7AF6FDA8A6C%7D>
  - Soldier Resource Material:  
<https://army.deps.mil/army/sites/PMG/prog/ATEP/Violent%20Extremism%20Awareness%20Tool%20Kit/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2FArmy%2Fsites%2FPMG%2Fprog%2FATEP%2FViolent%20Extremism%20Awareness%20Tool%20Kit%2FSoldiers%20Folder%20for%20VE%20Information&FolderCTID=0x01200086F206DEA0E8584D8AD8604704DC94D3&View=%7B83755D94%2DBA98%2D4398%2D8F48%2DF7AF6FDA8A6C%7D>
  - Reporting: The Army maintains several reporting mechanisms, such as iSALUTE, that Soldiers may use to anonymously report actual or suspected activity that violates Army policy.
    - iSALUTE: <https://www.inscom.army.mil/isalute/>.
    - Army CID Tip Line: <https://www.cid.army.mil/report-a-crime.html>







# Preventing Negative Behavior in the Ranks



- Effective Sponsorship Program that includes the Family
- Effective in-processing procedures
- Initial and periodic counseling
- Helpful programs facilitating transition from service to civilian life
- Army Values instruction
- Character instruction



# Discussion