



# Siege Culture After *Siege*: Anatomy of a Neo-Nazi Terrorist Doctrine

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## Abstract

Since the end of 2016, Britain and the US have taken unprecedented steps to proscribe post-war radical right groups; National Action, Sonnenkrieg Division, and Feuerkrieg Division by the former, and the Russian Imperial Movement by the latter. While these groups are serial purveyors of online extremism and often celebrate terrorism in their fora, deeper similarities extend to a shared ideological embrace of “accelerationism” and, in particular, a recently-revived doctrine advanced by the neo-Nazi ideologue, James Mason, now termed “Siege Culture.” Following an overview of this rehashing of revolutionary National Socialism, this ICCT report shows how the terroristic advocacy of “Siege Culture” has a radicalising effect on right-wing extremists. Then, for the first time, we introduce recent “Siege Culture” texts in light of the specific challenges posed for authorities facing the threat of political violence inspired by this praxis. After analysing Mason’s writings on one “Siege Culture” website following his return on the scene in 2017, this paper concludes with several recommendations for potential means of redress.

**Keywords:** Siege, James Mason, right-wing extremism, radicalisation, lone-wolf terrorism



## Introduction

“As we move farther towards the Universal Order, we become more on the offensive with our world view. Wild wishes for the end times.” So concludes the introductory remarks heralding the launch of a *Siege Culture* website.<sup>1</sup> With promises of weekly writings from prominent neo-Nazi James Mason, moderators touted this as a part of a new era for twenty-first century neo-Nazism, helping support readers’ preparations for and contributions towards the imminent destruction of existing socio-political orders. In fact, the website proved to be just one node of a broader cultic milieu online known as “Siege Culture.”<sup>2</sup> As reflected in its name, “Siege Culture” is an appropriation and updating of Mason’s book *Siege*, a collection of editorials promoting neo-Nazism and encouraging so-called “lone wolf” terrorism designed to precipitate race wars in multicultural societies.<sup>3</sup> As Brendan O’Connor has noted “[*Siege*] became a sort of ur-text for the now-defunct web forum Iron March. (Iron March was like the Velvet Underground of Trump-era fascist organizing: not very many people used it, but everyone who did went out and started a neo-Nazi terror cell.)”<sup>4</sup> While overstated, O’Connor captures something vital about the voluntarism intrinsic to the new form of neo-Nazism linked with “Siege Culture” since 2015. This paper will analyse “Siege Culture” in terms of its ideology and methods of proliferation, assessing this reheated doctrine in relation to the spate of neo-Nazi groups that have sprung up like so many poisonous mushrooms across social media and in real life. Of especial relevance is an overview of Mason’s 41 new comment pieces from 2017 and 2018, highlighting continuities and changes with his original *Siege* writings, which have yet to receive scholarly attention.

## *Siege* before “Siege Culture”

Before examining specifics of the newer elements of “Siege Culture,” it merits pausing to consider the primogenitors of this content, James Mason and *Siege*. *Siege* is essential reading for those within the contemporary neo-Nazi movement today, and Mason currently may be the most important fascist revolutionary alive. Now nearing his eighth decade, Mason has been an enduring presence within postwar fascist circles, and has proved one of the most influential ideologues to rethink fascism in the face of 21st century realities. Mason has been a militant neo-Nazi since 1966 when, at the age of 14, he joined the American Nazi Party then under the leadership of George Lincoln Rockwell. In the 1970s, he joined perhaps the first openly terroristic

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1 *Siege*, “A New SIEGE Culture”. *Siege Culture*. (Website no longer available online but links have been scraped and retained by the authors of this report.) The authors are grateful to Anna-Maria Andreeva and colleagues at the ICCT, as well as to two anonymous reviewers, for guidance that improved earlier drafts of this report.

2 For application of this term to right-wing extremism, see Jeffrey Kaplan, “The Postwar Paths of Occult Neo-Nazism: From Rockwell and Madole to Manson”, *The Cultic Milieu: Oppositional Subcultures in an Age of Globalization*, eds. Jeffrey Kaplan and Heléne Lööv (Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2002), pp. 225-264; and Paul Jackson, “Cultic milieus and the extreme right”, *openDemocracy*, 9 May 2019, online at: [www.opendemocracy.net/en/cultic-milieus-and-extreme-right/](http://www.opendemocracy.net/en/cultic-milieus-and-extreme-right/) (all websites last accessed 04/04/21.)

3 In preference to this term, we understand lone or solo actor political violence as ‘self-directed political or religious violence undertaken through the “terrorist attack cycle” by individuals—typically perceived by its adherents to be an act of asymmetrical, propagandistic warfare—which derives from a variable amount of external influence and context (notably now online), rather than external command and control’. Matthew Feldman, “Comparative Lone Wolf Terrorism: Toward a Heuristic Definition”, *Democracy and Security*, 9/3 (2013), pp. 270-286.

4 Brendan O’Connor, “The Accelerating Gyre”, *The Baffler* (July 2020), online at: <https://thebaffler.com/salvos/the-accelerating-gyre-oconnor>.

neo-Nazi cell in the US, led by Joseph Tommasi, the National Socialist Liberation Front (NSLF).<sup>5</sup> Following Tommasi’s murder in 1975, Mason helped re-establish the NSLF and its newsletter, *Siege*, publishing monthly instalments over nearly six years from August 1980. While originally hand-circulated in newsletter format and individually mailed (*Siege* folded in June 1986), fully 217 of these op-ed style pieces Mason wrote were eventually bundled together into a book, first released by Michael Moynihan’s Storm Books in 1992. A further three editions have followed since, which retain the core texts first published between 1980 and 1986. Yet thanks to the inclusion of new prefaces, appendices and added images, each new volume was longer than the last, with printings in 2003, 2017, and finally 2018. Far from a static document, these *Siege* volumes responded to post-Cold War developments as Mason contributed new writings, news clippings, and other materials. Between 1992 and 2018, for instance, the text grew from 434 pages with Storm Press to 684 pages in the perhaps-final edition appearing via the self-publishing platform, CreateSpace.

While stylistically clear and accessible, *Siege* is shot through with extreme, visceral forms of racism, with a particular emphasis on antisemitism. Yet *Siege*’s prominence on the twenty-first century neo-Nazi scene is particularly notable given that it is thoroughly concerned with Mason’s contemporaneous 1980s American context, including its most quixotic feature: the inclusion of Charles Manson in the ranks of canonical Nazis. Mason’s repeated celebration of the imprisoned cult leader—to the extent of renaming Mason’s affiliation with NSLF to the Manson-inspired “Universal Order”—is surely one of the reasons for the limited popularity of *Siege* in its newsletter format, even within the comparatively tiny neo-Nazi scene of the period. Indeed, despite the reissued volumes *Siege* may have languished had it not been recovered by militants of the Iron March forum, who were also looking to break away from fascists’ failures of the postwar period. Like Mason’s fascination with Manson, they were unafraid of incorporating unconventional methods and themes into their activism, in their case internet-savvy memes and artwork that soon took on the name “fashwave”, which glorifies, incites and radicalises individuals toward self-directed terrorist attacks.<sup>6</sup>

It warrants briefly mentioning another factor in the resurgence of *Siege* amongst neo-Nazi circles today. Mason’s rejection of traditional politics clearly struck a stronger chord after 9/11. While it took six years to transform the writings into a book and another 11 years between the first and second editions, the growing popularity of Mason’s messaging may be seen in the rapidity of the publication of the latter two editions in two years, in addition to an unofficial revision of the text released in 2015 (which is virtually identical to the 2017, 563-page third edition, save for an added six-page preface by Mason). Having found his audience in recent years, Mason’s writings have inspired a transnational spike in militant neo-Nazi activity. Especially for younger neo-Nazis, since 2015 *Siege* has been a foundational text—one arguably rivalling even *Mein Kampf* in contemporary fascist gravitas. That is concerning for multiple reasons, not least as *Siege* is at the shamelessly terroristic end of right-wing extremism.<sup>7</sup>

5 For an essential background and context see Jeffrey Kaplan, “The post-war paths of Occult National Socialism: from Rockwell and Madole to Manson”, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 35/3 (2001), pp. 41-67; and Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism and the Politics of Identity* (London: NYU Press, 2002) pp. 19-26. See also the recent overview of Mason by the *Counter-Extremism Project*, “James Mason”, online at: [www.counterextremism.com/extremists/james-mason](http://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/james-mason).

6 For example, see Jacob Ware, “*Siege*: The Atomwaffen Division and Rising Far-Right Terrorism in the United States”, ICCT (Jul. 2019), online at: <https://icct.nl/app/uploads/2019/07/ICCT-Ware-Siege-July2019.pdf>; the Counter Extremism Project, “Violent Right-Wing Extremism and Terrorism – Transnational Connectivity, Definitions, Incidents, Structures and Countermeasures” (Nov. 2020), online at: [www.counterextremism.com/sites/default/files/CEP%20Study\\_Violent%20Right-Wing%20Extremism%20and%20Terrorism\\_Nov%202020.pdf](http://www.counterextremism.com/sites/default/files/CEP%20Study_Violent%20Right-Wing%20Extremism%20and%20Terrorism_Nov%202020.pdf).

7 See, for example, the Counter Extremism Project, “James Mason’s *Siege*: Ties to Extremists”, online

## Turning to self-directed violence

In recent years, *Siege* has been championed as a kind of neo-Nazi bible, providing readers with what Kaplan and Lööw, building upon the work of the sociologist Colin Campbell, have characterised as a ‘cultic milieu’:

*The cultic milieu is a zone in which proscribed and/or forbidden knowledge is the coin of the realm, a place in which ideas, theories and speculations are to be found, exchanged, modified and, eventually, adopted or rejected by adherents of countless, primarily ephemeral groups whose leaders come and go and whose membership constitute a permanent class of seekers whose adherence to any particular leader or organization tends to be fleeting at best [...] The sole thread that unites the denizens of the cultic milieu – true seekers all – is a shared rejection of the paradigms, the orthodoxies, of their societies.<sup>8</sup>*

Alongside a burning hatred of the mainstream, this particular form of cultic milieu requires total devotion on behalf of an “apocalyptic helter skelter race war scenario”.<sup>9</sup> There are three overriding themes within *Siege* worth highlighting given their implications for counter-terrorism; two related to political philosophy, and one to terrorist tactics. These strands of thinking set *Siege* apart as a particularly violent text, and help explain its celebration among neo-Nazi militants—indeed, so much so that they have built an entire broader “culture” around *Siege*.

First, in James Mason the neo-Nazis of the Iron March forum (and beyond) found a soulmate who shared their belief that there can be no peaceful political solution for fascists. Unlike other right-wing extremists, “Siege Culture” enthusiasts unequivocally reject democracy and view attempts at reconstituting society via slow-moving political engagement as futile and even seditious. Instead, they favour political violence to advance their desired ends. For instance, reflecting upon the state of disarray in the American Nazi Party following Rockwell’s murder on 25 August 1967, in a December 1985 speech reprinted in all collections of *Siege*, Mason addressed White Aryan Resistance (a group led by Tom Metzger, himself in the 1990s an important proponent of what they both called, more than a generation ago, “lone wolf” actions). The following portion of this address is perhaps the most defining feature of *Siege*—namely, the rejection of any traditional politics.

*In Commander Rockwell’s lifetime, it was not at all unreasonable to plan for the action of a spearhead movement to prompt the loyal elements within the established government to wake up and take things back away from the nation’s subverters. Since his death and in plain fact things have moved way beyond that stage. What this means to us as a Movement is that any kind of a fascist-style coup d’état is completely out of the question as the basis for it just doesn’t exist.<sup>10</sup>*

Mason has consistently maintained that socio-political change for fascists through democratic politics is a waste of time. In fact, Mason’s commitment to revolution has only become further entrenched since 1985, seemingly in response to changes in post-Cold War social order. In this way, *Siege* and the derivative “Siege Culture” are ideologically aimed at a singular goal:

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at: <https://www.counterextremism.com/sites/default/files/james-mason-siege-ties-to-extremists.pdf>; and “Atomwaffen Division (AWD),” *Anti-Defamation League*, [www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/atomwaffen-division-awd](http://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/atomwaffen-division-awd).

8 Jeffrey Kaplan and Heléne Lööw, “Introduction”, in *The Cultic Milieu: Oppositional Subcultures in an Age of Globalization*, pp. 3-4.

9 Jeffrey Kaplan, “The Postwar Paths of Occult Neo-Nazism: From Rockwell and Madole to Manson”, *ibid.*, p. 250.

10 James Mason, “Betrayal,” speech given on 15 December 1985, reproduced in *Siege*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, (CreateSpace, 2018), p. 523.



total social breakdown by any means necessary. Unconcerned with being “electable” or even “likeable” by the vast majority of society, devotees are encouraged to plot attacks that they believe will precipitate the race wars that they see as essential in the emergence of white ethno-states in the future.<sup>11</sup> While this may be standard fare for terrorist groups and ideologues, Mason’s outright rejection of politics had previously been of truly miniscule scale on the revolutionary right before *Siege*.

In terms of radicalisation, *Siege* displays considerable acumen in addressing disaffected readers, enjoining them to believe that their personal struggles are the fault of the era itself. Mason specifically targets those deemed to be social outcasts or ‘losers’. “To ‘not fit’ into this society can be a distinct badge of honor,” one article contends: “To ‘not make it’ in a money-based society oppressed, exploited and persecuted by money-men and by money considerations—and to be scorned and ridiculed by a conventional world, does not mean that one is a “loser” in the true sense necessarily.”<sup>12</sup> The phrase “badge of honor” appears multiple times in *Siege*, with Mason arguing that outcasts are actually rejected by society because of their social-Darwinistic superiority.<sup>13</sup> People who see themselves as “nobodies” are told that they can become heroes, or even be immortalised, if they become neo-Nazi militants. According to Mason, engaging in terrorism would mean a militant could help found a “purer” society: “Our TYPE—the True Believer—will one day rule again. The rest, under whatever society, will go on being serfs. Take your pick”.<sup>14</sup> Those who feel lost, alienated, or isolated are provided much succour by Mason: a reason for their unsatisfactory lives (other than their own choices); a cultic milieu of militant community (now in the form of online neo-Nazism); and an ideological imperative that provides purpose and meaning.

*Siege*, and in recent years “Siege Culture,” meanwhile, call on these terrorist attacks to be executed in a particular style; that is, through self-directed terrorism. In fact, *Siege* must be acknowledged as central to the re-discovery and promotion of self-activating terrorism in the 20th century. Invented as “propaganda of the deed” by anarchist terrorists in the later 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Mason was the first to retitle and reposition this tactic for political violence by radical right “lone eagles”. As early as 1980, Mason was explicitly advocating for “one-man armies” and “lone wolves” to destroy liberal democracy from within:

*The lone wolf cannot be detected, cannot be prevented, and seldom can be traced [...] For his choice of targets he needs little more than the daily newspaper for suggestions and tips galore. For his training the lone wolf needs only the U.S. military or any one of a hundred good manuals readily available through radical booksellers [...] His greatest concern must be to pick his target well so that his act may speak so clearly for itself that no member of White America can mistake its message.*<sup>15</sup>

“Siege Culture”, based directly upon this doctrine, encourages *individuals* to take up arms and plan terrorist attacks. While Louis Beam’s “Leaderless Resistance” has commonly been cited as the source of inspiring solo actor terrorism among the neo-Nazi underground, the reality is that Mason has been advocating for such a tactic for more years and with unwavering consistency.<sup>16</sup>

11 The construction of ‘out-groups’ in *Siege* – including white American nationalists uncommitted to neo-Nazi revolution – is ably recounted in JM Berger’s “A Paler Shade of White: Identity and In-Group Critique in James Mason’s *Siege*,” Washington, D.C.: RESOLVE Network, 2021, 16 Apr. 2021, online at: <https://doi.org/10.37805/remve2021.1>

12 James Mason, “The True Believer,” December 1982, in *Siege* (4<sup>th</sup> edition), p. 338.

13 James Mason, “Alienation,” June 1982, in *Siege* (4<sup>th</sup> edition), p. 339.

14 Mason, “The True Believer,” in *Siege* (4<sup>th</sup> edition), p. 338.

15 James Mason, “Later on We’ll Conspire,” September 1980, in *Siege*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (IronMarch.org Publication, 2017), pp. 91-92.

16 Louis Beam, “Leaderless Resistance,” *The Seditonist* 12 (Feb. 1992), online at: [www.louisbeam.com/leaderless.htm](http://www.louisbeam.com/leaderless.htm).

Undoubtedly, Beam’s publications had greater reach between the 1980s and the middle of the last decade, but that is no longer the case. And with advocacy of “lone wolf” terrorism dating to September 1980 in *Siege*, there can be no question who the godfather of radical right, self-directed terrorism is – and it’s not Louis Beam.

Mason’s reasons for embracing this terrorist tactic, moreover, go beyond the issue of evading law enforcement later identified by Beam (although this remains of serious concern for Mason). *Siege* is an avowedly accelerationist text, built upon the principle that liberal democratic societies are doomed to fail and that these downfalls can be pushed along via the use of terrorism. A series of cascading terrorist attacks would allegedly induce the desired level of social panic to trigger race wars, which white communities would win. Difficult to police and independent to the point that multiple attacks could be carried out within a brief period of time, self-activating terrorism is *the* method of violence for *Siege*. Terrorist plots undertaken by “one-man armies” may, Mason envisions, take an array of different formats given the personal capabilities of any given adherent. Importantly, without the need for any kind of official sanction or coordinating efforts, anyone radicalised far enough can engage in this self-activating terrorism. This has translated into considerable violence being threatened, planned, and even successfully executed by “Siege Culture” devotees. In mirroring this, the rhetoric of “Siege Culture” is some of the most unrepentantly, graphically violent content to be found even amongst online neo-Nazis.

Such realities closely accord with those discussed in existing scholarship. For instance, in *Turning to Political Violence* (the phrase preferred to “terrorism”), Mark Sageman emphasises that radicalisation towards violence “produces self-appointed soldiers willing to use violence on behalf of their threatened community.”<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, “Self-categorization into a martial social identity in a political community means that violence is imminent because with this new social identity they may act out who they think they are.” Furthermore, within such groups there is typically “an active core, engaged in constant discussions, egging each other on [...] They already shared the same ideology, but the active core attributed the necessity for violence to the state’s escalation of violence against them.” Taking up this martial identity can lead militants to “go about acquiring necessary weapons, ranging from knives and firearms to materials to build bombs.” Perfectly describing *Siege*’s cultic milieu, Sageman continues:

*Their social identity is mutually negotiated through discussions within a specific context and converges around the need to use violence. Such discussions are dangerous, for the state is often vigilant, and therefore take place among trusted friends and relatives, who over time become a bunch of violent people – women can be as violent as men. This process results in small clusters, which are much more internally homogenous than the larger political community because they are self-selected from networks of friends and relatives.*<sup>18</sup>

## “Siege Culture” Content

While exceptionally long and re-worked over several decades, *Siege* is just one (central) element of a broader “Siege Culture.” Just as *Siege* promotes accelerationism, promoting the use of near-indiscriminate violence in order to induce the race wars necessary to set up white ethno-states, so too does “Siege Culture” content, as found on sites such as *Siege Culture* and in the media accounts of devoted acolytes. Yet unlike *Siege*, in a book format prohibiting particular responsiveness to contemporary news, the largely digital nature of “Siege Culture” has proven

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<sup>17</sup> Mark Sageman, *Turning to Political Violence: The Emergence of Terrorism* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), p. 42.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, cited pp. 47, 43.

more responsive. The offspring of forced marriage of *Siege's* ideology with twenty-first century technology has been an extremely powerful radicalisation apparatus.

According to Nate Thayer, having been found down-on-his-luck living in Denver, Colorado in March 2017, Mason was eventually introduced to leading figures in Atomwaffen Division, who persuaded him to return to the scene as a kind of living legend.<sup>19</sup> The result was a short-lived column by Mason in 2017 and 2018, which saw him return to the same style of pieces in the original *Siege*. These works, some 41 in all, were published in the specially-fashioned website *Siege Culture*. To date and to our knowledge, these texts have been ignored by scholars. This is curious given the malign influence Mason has obviously had in inspiring terroristic movements, and the centrality of *Siege* in contemporary (at least online) neo-Nazi activism. Equally, "Siege Culture" has become dangerously "chic" as a cultic milieu, presenting neo-Nazism in a more appealing light than in recent, skinhead-dominated decades. Given Mason's outsized influence over the last five years, the contents of his *Siege Culture* writings are also likely to impact directly upon the future development of neo-Nazi extremism. They will be discussed here, before a broader discussion of other, spin-off "Siege Culture" style works.

For one, "Siege Culture" pieces contributed to the proliferation of racist conspiracy theories and stereotypes long-used by Mason and other neo-Nazis. Antisemitic notions such as that of ZOG (an alleged "Zionist Occupied Government") were updated in discussions about Hollywood and media in 2017 and 2018. Supposed evidence of Jewish control in Hollywood, for instance, was provided by way of naming and depicting well-known Jewish actors, directors, and producers in propaganda writing and imagery. As one "Siege Culture" post argued,

*Over a century ago they—the Jews—began making their moves to monopolize the media. Buy it up as in the case of the newspapers. Move in on it as in the case of television. To invent it as in the case of Hollywood...And so we have long had a nation full of would-be Jews...Brainwash, or, as I like to call it, BRAIN RAPE. Those locked into the Jewish mind-set of liberalism and racial, national and cultural death.<sup>20</sup>*

In keeping with longstanding antisemitic conspiracism, Jewish people's alleged prevalence in media was interpreted as allowing them to promote false narratives and dangerous ethics. Chief among these "false" narratives was what "Siege Culture" refers to as the 'Holohoax', suggesting that the Holocaust was fabricated by Jewish people.<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile, images of and references to Harvey Weinstein were used as "foul Jews" in a metonymy for all Jewish persons.<sup>22</sup> Other Jewish actors and directors are subject to vitriol by the "Siege Culture" camp, but it warrants noting that Weinstein was a particularly prominent feature, usually depicting him branding with a Star of David or through reference to his Jewish ancestry (see Image 1 for a propaganda piece inspired by "Siege Culture").<sup>23</sup>

19 Nate Thayer, 'Secret Identities of U.S. Nazi Terror Group Revealed', [www.nate-thayer.com](http://www.nate-thayer.com), December 6 2019, reproduced from, [https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:GPpx56k\\_M3cJ:https://www.nate-thayer.com/secret-identities-of-u-s-nazi-terror-group-revealed/+&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk&client=safari](https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:GPpx56k_M3cJ:https://www.nate-thayer.com/secret-identities-of-u-s-nazi-terror-group-revealed/+&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk&client=safari).

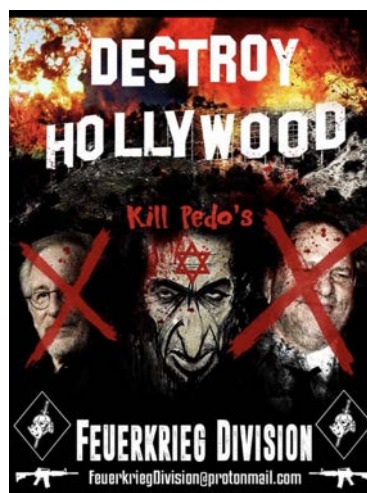
20 James Mason, "The Media," August 30 2017, *Siege Culture*.

21 For instance: James Mason, "An American Nazi Looks at 'The Holocaust'," 29 September 2017, "Siege Culture".

22 James Mason, 'Me Three,' no date, *Siege Culture*. On the concept of antisemitic metonymy, see Matthew Feldman, "'Intellectual' Dis courses on the Radical Right: From Double-Speak to Holocaust Denial", in *Politics, Intellectuals and Faith*, ed. Archie Henderson (Stuttgart: ibidem, 2020), pp. 223-224.

23 Mason, 'Me Three,' *Siege Culture*; Feuerkrieg Division, 19 November 2019, *Telegram*.

Image 1:



References to a purportedly Jewish-controlled Hollywood and the base immorality purportedly within that industry were frequently exploited as a spring-board for discussions about the perceived decay of Western societies, invariably laid squarely at the feet of Jews. For “Siege Culture” militants, perceived social ills such as race mixing, homosexuality, and abortion were allegedly the result of Jews plotting to destroy the white race. Depicted as manipulative, exploitative, and self-serving, Jewish people were also identified as part of a cabal to enslave whites around the world. Presented as such, “Siege Culture” argued those who seek to protect traditional morality must disbelieve the media, must aspire to eradicate Jews, and must fight the institutions that they supposedly control.

Popular cultural references did not stop there, nor were they exclusively aimed at denigrating Jews. One example was the issue taken with the musical *Hamilton!* and its decision to have non-white actors play almost all of the roles, including those of the American Founding Fathers. “They have a stage play now about Alexander Hamilton full of n\*\*\*\*\* in the cast. Total falsification of history, Stalinist style,” Mason cried, referring to the alleged cancelling of white people.<sup>24</sup>

“Siege Culture” also sought to use the #MeToo movement for its own ends. While a great deal of material includes stereotypes of non-white peoples in predatory or sexualised terms – and despite the movement being responsible for the identification of many of those who white supremacists would view as enemies to be sexual harassers – “Siege Culture” remains scathing of the movement. “Siege Culture” is largely addressed to white men and includes large helpings of chauvinism, meaning that taking a woman at her word was not widely embraced. Beyond this, #MeToo was used to rail against “PC culture” and against any societal shift that accepts tarnishing the reputations of white public figures.<sup>25</sup> #MeToo was thus viewed as yet another threat to white men, and a function of the liberal order.<sup>26</sup>

In addition to the #MeToo movement, “Siege Culture” had much to say about other social justice campaigns of recent years, and especially the backlash to them. The Black Lives Matter movement that campaigned for racial justice in the United States and elsewhere was a frequent topic of discussion—and racist invective—in Mason’s “Siege Culture” texts. For example, images of angry black people were interspersed between writings promoting white supremacist themes, which fit with Mason’s idea in *Siege* that black people are inherently more violent and even

<sup>24</sup> James Mason, “A New Media,” October 11 2017, *Siege Culture*.

<sup>25</sup> Mason, ‘Me Three,’ *Siege Culture*; Feuerkrieg Division, 19 November 2019, *Telegram*.

<sup>26</sup> See also references that draw links between femininity and submissiveness. Vincent Snyder, “The Movementarian Menace,” *Siege Culture*.

less evolved than whites.<sup>27</sup> Even party-political and movement-type fascist responses to racial justice movements were parodied in "Siege Culture" texts as not extreme enough. Posts featured images from the 2017 Unite the Right rally and from figures who emerged as well-known faces among the alt-right thereafter. "Siege Culture" professed outright disdain for what they called, in a text included in the 2018 edition of *Siege*, the "movementarian menace." As the author, John Cameron Denton (aka Vincent Sullivan and "Rape") explained,

*We are opposed to the movement on ALL LEVELS. As we do not need to pay dues or rally arm and army with our supposed 'white brothers and sisters', whether we are talking about the AltRight or even genuine National Socialists. Something that is missing, has been missing for a long time, is the application of individual self-reliance and self-sufficiency. Too long have Movements relied on numbers rather than the numbers themselves being the one man armies of truth and death.*<sup>28</sup>

Even those willing to mobilize against the Black Lives Matter movement, to advocate an 'All Lives Matter' outlook, or openly embrace white supremacy were criticised as ineffective "Right Wingers, Classical Fascists, 'Fashy goys' ... frauds."<sup>29</sup> While this will be expanded upon below, the same criticism was made of former president Donald Trump those who embraced the Make America Great Again message. Mason's "Siege Culture" intervened in contemporary social issues, but in addition to applying a racist lens to them consistently claimed that anything other than an overthrow of the system was a waste of time.

Despite this view, "Siege Culture" did not view racial justice debates as entirely negative for their movement. In fact, it fed on it. The fractiousness caused by discussions of white privilege and racial inequality, many thought, potentially benefitted their cause. While they believed that the overwhelming majority of western societies misinterpreted the lessons to be learned from discussions of race, they did see the current landscape as fertile ground for recruitment. Those angered by Black Lives Matter highlighting white privilege, those upset by the perceived kangaroo courts of the #MeToo movement or sceptical of gender equity, those who embraced the ideas of Make America Great Again had the *potential* – with accelerationist grooming – to see the alleged error of their ways, to embrace the "Siege Culture" ideology, and to begin fighting for white, fascist ethno-states. The mounting racial tensions could prove a useful point of radicalisation for just such race wars as "Siege Culture" devotees desired.

Alongside culture, there was an unmistakable political bent to "Siege Culture". This can be seen, for instance, in Mason's praise of the Philippine president of Rodrigo Duterte's infamous drug war: "I just love to recount the actions of the Philippine President as he sanctions the open killings of the dope addicts over there."<sup>30</sup> Most obviously, contemporary politics are refracted through the presidency of Donald Trump on *Siege Culture*. His words and image found considerable use in these writings, alongside debates over the significance of "Trumpism" as a kind of right-wing populist ideology. Perhaps surprisingly, Mason claimed: "I am not ashamed to say that I shed a tear of joy at [Trump's] win." Mason interpreted Trump as a potential way station in violent political polarisation (particularly, though not exclusively, for Americans).<sup>31</sup> Importantly, "Siege Culture" used criticisms of Trump by politicians and the media to further white supremacist conspiracy theories about putative liberal, Jewish biases within powerful institutions. The Trump administration's inability to quickly enact the more stringent versions of his more nativist ideas, meanwhile, was seen as evidence of a conspiratorial cabal controlling the US government.

27 Feuerkrieg Division, July 30 2019, *Telegram*; James Mason, "Whole Lotta Race-Mixing Goin' On," no date, *Siege Culture*.

28 Snyder, "The Movementarian Menace," *Siege Culture*.

29 Ibid.

30 James Mason, "Those Who Want to Live," no date, *Siege Culture*.

31 James Mason, "Trump," July 25 2017, *Siege Culture*.



"There is an entrenched enemy system in power in this country," Mason argued: "Just look at how it is moving to block each one of Trump's lightweight moves to nationalistically protect the sovereignty of this country. Their desire is a one-world—THIRD WORLD—bastardized hell-hole. That is their goal."<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, the relationship of Trump to "Siege Culture" was anything but straightforward. The general trend was one of increased disillusionment and further radicalisation as Trump's term wore on. Despite his nativism, populism, and racialised rhetoric, Trump faced an unmistakable fall from grace, since "he [was] surrounded by Jews...And you simply CANNOT have any truck with the Jews. Ever!"<sup>33</sup> Trump's family relationships with Jewish people (his daughter converted to Judaism upon her marriage, to an Orthodox Jewish man, Jared Kushner, was also a member of the administration) received intense criticism. More than merely allowing himself to maintain personal relationships with Jews, Trump himself was viewed negatively for not going far enough. Even the slogan Make America Great Again was viewed in a two-fold way. On principle, Mason disavowed democracy and egalitarian ideals, while at the same time suggesting that there was a kind of period of "greatness" to which the US should return: the period before the enfranchisement of non-white people and women, when other socially repressive conventions limited the lives and freedoms of many other marginalised groups as well.<sup>34</sup>

Yet "Trumpism" remained a source of *tentative* optimism in "Siege Culture" writings. At the core of Trumpism (and similar movements in other white majority states), was perceived an irreducible nativism. The rhetoric Trump displayed about immigrants, refugees, and non-white majority countries, but also his desire to "drain the swamp", was sometimes viewed as a sign that many ordinary citizens were amenable to authoritarian politics, or potentially inclined towards white supremacist and illiberal messaging. For "Siege Culture", it just failed to go far enough. While extremely critical of the vast majority for not doing enough to defend the white race and for believing in democratic principles, Mason nevertheless appeared to hold out some degree of hope that, given time and induced by accelerationist pressures, many white Americans' deep-seated racial, ethnic, and religious prejudices would emerge under Trump, tipping the scales toward white supremacists in the coming race war.

The additional "Siege Culture" writings of 2017 and 2018 certainly mark a continuation of Mason's earlier works, even if there are two notable changes that merit highlighting. The first is the degree to which Mason infused racialised Christianity into his writings. More sceptical of Christianity in *Siege* and avowedly an atheist, after his stints in prison Mason published works like as *The Theocrat*, which explicitly casts Christianity in a Nazi framework. Some of these "Siege Culture" pieces likewise are more spiritually inclined. Articles with titles such as "Relics & Icons" and "Mark of the Beast", along with his relative disinterest in Satanism – which has an increasingly popular element on the extreme right – in "Regarding the Church of Satan," indicates where he falls on the issue.<sup>35</sup>

A second difference is the degree to which Mason himself shifted away from more explicit calls for violence. *Siege* rightly has a reputation for an avowedly violent streak. Mason's subsequent "Siege Culture" writings similarly call for the eradication of those he feels are threats to the white

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32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 For example: James Mason, "The Three Disgraces," no date, *Siege Culture*; James Mason, "If This Were 100 Years Ago," no date, *Siege Culture*.

35 James Mason, "Regarding the Church of Satan," no date, *Siege Culture*. While Mason's approach to Christianity is avowedly neo-Nazi, it does not appear to fully embrace Christian Identity doctrine; on the latter, for example, see Chester L. Quarles, *Christian Identity: The Aryan American Bloodline Religion* (McFarland & Co: Jefferson, NC, 2004).

race, but these texts largely focus on popular cultural references or ruminating on the reasons for engaging in violence. Several “Siege Culture” articles are much longer, for example, describing themselves as part of a broader effort to instruct readers about the nature of a given philosophy or political tradition. In articles like “Pornography”, Mason advances his own set of moral judgments, while bringing neo-Nazism into the realm of theological and philosophical discussion.<sup>36</sup> Likewise, the inclusion of posts venerating previous eras of neo-Nazism clearly attempted to “educate” newer readers, connecting them with longer-standing traditions.<sup>37</sup> Mason’s 41 pieces thus cover a range of issues—what to watch, what to believe, and who to hate. Rather than explicitly calling for people to engage in armed struggle as before, Mason appears to be advancing a rationale for why others should go join the fight (which, as will be discussed later in this paper, is exactly what has happened). Yet it is important to acknowledge that, despite the confusingly shared name, “Siege Culture” writings were and are part of a broader *Siege* mentality advanced by Mason’s devotees, who themselves wrote and produced works that were published on the same webpage. Inspired by Mason’s writings, much of this output is ideologically similar, but sketching some of its additional contours proves helpful in understanding this still-more radical content.

For instance, while Mason wrote about the #MeToo movement in specific ways in his “Siege Culture” web pieces, the latter more generally engages with women on two fronts. The first of these is to sexualise them, extending to advocating violent sexual acts. Sites or channels affiliated with “Siege Culture” often evaluate and mock the physical looks of women. Anyone seen to oppose the movement are subject to particular animus. Ironically, women are often described (and decried) as being superficial in their desired sexual partners—a result of their inferiority to men. On the whole, women are idealised as a prize for worthy men: “Aryan” fighters. At the same time, images of women subject to potentially degrading sexual acts, or nude images that may have been shared without the subject’s consent, also form part of this misogynistic landscape as well. Unsurprisingly, women who are identified as enemies of the white supremacist cause (including politicians, activists, and white public figures engaged in interracial relationships) are also repeatedly threatened with sexual violence. Propaganda imagery linked to “Siege Culture” graphically depicts sexual assaults and death threats for opponents (see images 2 and 3).<sup>38</sup>

Image 2



Image 3



36 James Mason, “Pornography,” no date, *Siege Culture*.

37 For example: James Mason, “House Cleaning & Commemoration,” *Siege Culture*; and “American Nazi Party Photo Gallery,” *Siege Culture*; James Mason, “Fifty Years Onward!,” *Siege Culture*.

38 Image 2 depicts Grete Šadeiko-Griffin, the wife of black American athlete Robert Griffin III. Image 3 depicts a member of the Estonian Green Party. Both from: Feuerkrieg Division, post on 8 September 2019, *Telegram*.

The other side of the "Siege Culture" view of women is more traditional and patriarchal; that is, less overtly misogynist. White women allegedly require protection, want to work in the home, and are ready and willing to reproduce for their race.<sup>39</sup> This 'official' position on women, though, is far less frequently found in the online elements of "Siege Culture", which takes a more violent and hateful view of gender relations.

Similar vitriol is levelled specifically against those seeking to maintain the present social order—such as politicians and law enforcement officers. In the original *Siege* collection, Mason asserted: "The Enemy is the Enemy and aliens are aliens. All politicians—high and low—are PIGS in a Pig System. If they weren't, they wouldn't be there. From President to dogcatcher, they are all the same bureaucratic, sell-out swine."<sup>40</sup> In updating this incitement, law enforcement officers are subject to similar threats on "Siege Culture" platforms. Accused of supporting "the System," authorities are viewed as traitors worthy of death, with depictions of enemies shot, hanged, or crushed not uncommon in "Siege Culture" propaganda.<sup>41</sup> While subject to violent rhetoric, law enforcement is also mocked, with posters sometimes concluding violent statements by addressing themselves to potential law enforcement observers – often accompanied by claims that their words to be entirely hypothetical or satirical.

The intermingling of the exceptionally violent and jocular tones in relation to law enforcement speaks to broader elements of the "Siege Culture" attitude. The memes and comments are distinctive and identifiable. "Siege Culture" is powered by an accelerationist narrative throughout: the imminence of systemic collapse and the destruction of alleged white enemies. Yet this is standard fare for neo-Nazism. By contrast, on "Siege Culture" platforms there is a particularly ghoulish and sadistic aesthetic. More than viewing violence as a necessary evil in pursuit of white ethnostates, "Siege Culture" sadistically revels in blood. Militants make no effort to hide violent intentions, including celebrating self-directed murderers like Brenton Tarrant and Dylann Roof. Additionally, despite Mason's increased interest in racialised Christianity, there is heavy recourse to occultism and Satanism in "Siege Culture." It is also worth noting that there is an increased referencing to of non-Western religious rhetoric and imagery (most noticeably Buddhist and, above all, Hindu – with the latter no doubt owing much to the influence of Savitri Devi).<sup>42</sup>

Perhaps most noticeably, there is also a particular aesthetic underpinning "Siege Culture". Featured images are frequently presented in white, black, and red – the infamous colours of the Nazi Party's flag – typically with the latter two in the background in order to add a darkening effect. "Siege Culture" propaganda typically breaks into three categories: praise of Nazi and neo-Nazi predecessors; eliminationism toward enemies; and attempts at recruitment. In the first category, images of Hitler, Mason, Tommasi, and Manson are often featured in imposing stances, surround by Nazi symbology. In the second, images of non-white peoples are depicted as victims of intense violence, while racial slurs and caricatures are usually included (see images 4 and 5).<sup>43</sup>

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39 See, for instance: Snyder, "The Movementarian Menace," *Siege Culture*.

40 James Mason "What We Can Dispense With," June 1984, *Siege* (4<sup>th</sup> edition), p. 187.

41 For example: James Mason, "Why Does the System So Hate 'Fascism'?", September 13 2017, *Siege Culture*; James Mason, "Agents Provocateur," no date, *Siege Culture*; Feuerkrieg Division, post on September 13 2019, *Telegram*; Feuerkrieg Division, post on November 15 2019, *Telegram*.

42 For an excellent study on Savitri Devi's fusion of Hindutva extremism and neo-Nazism, see Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Hitler's Priestess: Savitri Devi, the Hindu-Aryan Myth and Neo-Nazism* (NYU Press: New York, 2000), esp. ch. 11.

43 Feuerkrieg Division, post on August 15 2019, *Telegram*; Feuerkrieg Division, post on December 11 2019, *Telegram*.

Image 4:



Image 5:



Finally, in recruitment-oriented works, "Siege Culture" figures frequently appear in the centre, often heavily armed and wearing skull masks. Short phrases endorsing violence are easy to find on "Siege Culture" platforms (see images 6 and 7).<sup>44</sup>

Image 6:



Image 7:



Such imagery has a series of effects, both in dehumanising victims and in linking past terrorists to present-day activists, aiming to project an image of strength for the latter group. Likewise, the *Siege Culture* aesthetic is oriented towards freneticism, likely in an attempt to manifest the chaotic and violent future they envision. Viewing themselves as a danger to the establish order, the words as well as images of *Siege Culture* are designed to be equally menacing.

## "Siege Culture" Groups

Alongside revolutionary texts, racist and violent images have been the stock-in-trade of "Siege Culture" since 2015. That year, Iron March activists released what was to become the third edition of *Siege*, albeit without a new preface by Mason (who had returned to the right-wing extremist scene in 2017, after years of government-subsidised living in Denver); this 6-page text would not appear in a finalised third edition until 5 September 2017. Both reissued editions by Iron March were intended as calls to violent action. Inspired by Mason's willingness to support

<sup>44</sup> Feuerkrieg Division, posted on September 19 2019, *Telegram*; "Atomwaffen Division," *Anti-Defamation League*, <https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/atomwaffen-division-awd>.



emergent neo-Nazi groups from within the Iron March online forum (active from September 2011 to November 2017), several terroristic cells had already appeared. Amongst the earliest was the Atomwaffen Division (AWD), which publicly emerged across several American states in 2015. AWD has proven, without a doubt, to be the group with the most visible connections to *Siege* and its author. While claiming direct inspiration from *Siege*, AWD has also played an essential role in revitalising the text, making it required reading for new members, and using key themes in *Siege* as a springboard for generating new content online. Evidence for this direct connection is widespread, from Mason's willingness to publish new content on the "Siege Culture" website to additional material in new editions of *Siege*. With respect to the latter, for instance, the 2018 edition features dozens of new images as well as added appendices:

Image 8:

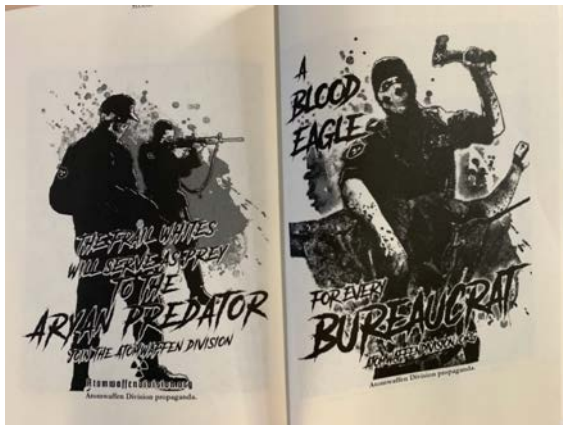


Image 9:



Other entries in the 2018, fourth edition of *Siege* praise the actions of AWD members, as well as those of similar groups like the Sonnenkrieg Division (SKD), alongside reproduced images of Mason flanked by AWD members:

Image 10:

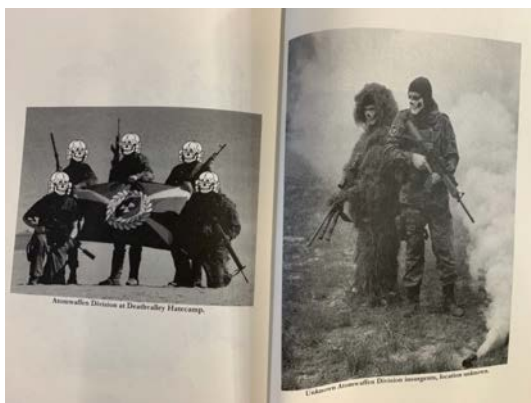


Image 11:





Within two years of its creation, reports found that AWD had members in almost half of American states, with more than two dozen chapters. Yet AWD did not merely spread across the US, but formed cells in several European countries as well (Holland’s Scrofa Division, Britain’s Sonnenkrieg Division, and Germany’s Atomwaffen Deutschland), alongside inspiring such spin-off groups in Australia (Antipodean Division) and Canada (Northern Order), as well as multinational groups such as Feuerkrieg Division and The Base.<sup>45</sup> To these can be added a number of successor groups – like NS131, System Resistance Network and Scottish Dawn in the UK – helping to bring the transnational nature of “Siege Culture” into view.

Each of the groups named above share several key features beyond simply emerging from the (largely Anglophone) neo-Nazi cultic milieu. While (neo-)Nazism is usually regarded as the most violent manifestation of fascism, perhaps surprisingly, many such groups in Europe and the US, historically at least, tended to emphasise their law-abiding political practice and adherence to free speech democratic protections. Whatever the truth of this commitment, the second decade of the twenty-first century has witnessed a striking rejection of this approach in favour of the neo-Nazi digital terrorist cell. Sometimes termed “groupuscules,” tiny cells like the National Socialist Underground can cause appalling destruction – as the recent tale of Beate Zschäpe has laid bare.<sup>46</sup> So too with a noticeable uptick in so-called “lone wolf” acts of terrorism by self-directed actors, moving alone through the terrorist cycle.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, the internet has made all-too-easy both individual radicalisation and preparation for terrorism.<sup>48</sup> In turn, this means that an increasing number of right-wing extremists are being caught posting about planned attacks, fashioning weapons, or even committing sickening acts of political violence (Anders Breivik and Brenton Tarrant being the most notorious examples from the last decade).

An overview of the violent actions suffusing several of these groups further clarifies the dangers posed by the “Siege Culture” milieu. As the best-known promoters of *Siege*, AWD provides ample evidence. More than just promoting a violent political ideology online, AWD members have also been implicated or convicted multiple violent crimes, including five murders. The US-based murders and the plots law enforcement officers have successfully foiled to date, likewise, underscore how “Siege Culture” is radicalising some white youths toward terrorism. In 2017, one AWD member, Devon Arthurs, murdered his roommates (fellow AWD members Jeremy Himmelman and Andrew Oneschuk), following his conversion to Islam. During the course of the investigation, police officers not only discovered a fourth roommate, the group’s leader Brandon Russell, had been stockpiling explosive materials, but also heard Arthurs confess to AWD’s plans

45 “Bottom Line Up Front,” May 20 2020, *The Cipher Brief*, [www.thecipherbrief.com/column\\_article/examining-atomwaffen-divisions-transnational-linkages](http://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/examining-atomwaffen-divisions-transnational-linkages). For details on the newer groups to emerge in Holland and Canada, see Alexander Epp and Röman Hoffner, *The Hate Network*, *Der Spiegel* 7 Sep. 2019, online at: [www.spiegel.de/international/the-hate-network-an-inside-look-at-a-global-extremist-group-a-1226861.html](http://www.spiegel.de/international/the-hate-network-an-inside-look-at-a-global-extremist-group-a-1226861.html).

46 For an overview of the NSU case, see Josefin Graef, “Telling the Story of the National Socialist Underground (NSU): A Narrative Media Analysis”, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 43/6 (2020), pp. 509-528. For an overview of “groupuscules”, see Fabian Virchow, “The groupuscularization of neo-Nazism in Germany: the case of the Aktionsbüro Norddeutschland”, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 38/1 (2004), pp. 56-70.

47 The “terrorist cycle” comprises target selection, operational planning, deployment, the attack, escape, and exploitation. See Stratfor, “Defining the Terrorist Attack Cycle”, Stratfor Worldview, online at: <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/defining-terrorist-attack-cycle>; see also Paul Gill, Zoe Marchment, Emily Corner and Noémie Bouhana, “Terrorist Decision Making in the Context of Risk, Attack Planning, and Attack Commission”, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 43/2 (2020), pp. 145-160,

48 See, for example, Ramón Spaaij, *Understanding Lone Wolf Terrorism: Global Patterns, Motivations and Prevention* (London: Springer, 2012); and Paul Gill, *Lone Actor Terrorists: A Behavioural Analysis* (London: Routledge, 2015, esp. ch. 5).

to attack synagogues, infrastructure sites, and civilian-dense locations.<sup>49</sup> Also in 2017, 17-year-old Nicholas Giampa, said to have been influenced by "Siege Culture" propaganda, allegedly killed his girlfriend's parents after they expressed discontent with his neo-Nazi views.<sup>50</sup> Early in the following year, police officers arrested a 20-year old man for the murder of a gay, Jewish teenager named Blaze Bernstein. The suspect, Sam Woodward, had allegedly attended live fire exercises as a member of AWD.<sup>51</sup>

Additional cases over 2018 and 2019 saw the indictment or conviction of several initiates on "Siege Culture" forums, including on charges of lying on federal background checks while attempting to acquire firearms, or on suspicion of possessing illegal weapons and ammunition.<sup>52</sup> Additionally, one AWD member known to have spread content promoting violence against religious and ethnic minorities, as well as women, was arrested in February 2019 on child pornography charges.<sup>53</sup> AWD also managed to successfully recruit an active-duty United States Marine Lance Corporal, with video footage evidencing his participation in the notorious 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville. AWD members have also taken part in so-called "Hate Camps" (AWD's term for paramilitary training camps).<sup>54</sup> Law enforcement managed to disrupt some of these undertakings, such by issuing an Extreme Risk Protection Order against one organiser, leading officials to seize several firearms on the grounds that he presented an "imminent threat to harm others."<sup>55</sup>

The lack of robust counter-terrorism tools to tackle neo-Nazi extremism in the US has been thrown into relief by arrests of "Siege Culture" militants in 2020. Massive operations by American investigators led to charges against several leading members of AWD for plotting acts of violence, harassment, and threatening behaviour. Alleged AWD leader John Cameron Denton was among those arrested in 2020 on charges of "swatting" (a harassment technique that entails calling the authorities to falsely report an emergency in the hopes that a S.W.A.T. team will arrive), for which he was convicted in May 2021.<sup>56</sup> Earlier this year, Denton was convicted and sentenced to 41 months in prison for no less than 134 such incidents, while another four face additional charges related to harassing and threatening both journalists and members of the Anti-Defamation League.<sup>57</sup> Since September 2020, two of those charged with threatening journalists have pled

49 Jonah Engel Bromwich, "Man in Florida Told the Police He Killed Neo-Nazi Roommates for Disrespecting His Muslim Faith," May 24 2017, *The New York Times*, [www.nytimes.com/2017/05/24/us/neo-nazi-roommate-murder.html?login=email&auth=login-email](http://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/24/us/neo-nazi-roommate-murder.html?login=email&auth=login-email).

50 Justin Jouvenal, "Va. teen accused of killing girlfriend's parents to be tried as an adult," September 25 2019, *The Washington Post*, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/va-teen-accused-of-killing-girlfriends-parents-to-be-tried-as-an-adult/2019/09/24/3e628fae-af13-11e9-a0c9-6d2d7818f3da\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/va-teen-accused-of-killing-girlfriends-parents-to-be-tried-as-an-adult/2019/09/24/3e628fae-af13-11e9-a0c9-6d2d7818f3da_story.html).

51 Emily Shapiro, "1 year after Blaze Bernstein's killing, parents look to turn alleged hate crime into 'movement of hope'," December 30 2018, *ABC News*, <https://abcnews.go.com/US/year-blaze-bernsteins-killing-parents-turn-alleged-hate/story?id=59754707>; A.C. Thompson, Ali Winston, and Jake Hanrahan, "Inside Atomwaffen As It Celebrates a Member for Allegedly Killing a Gay Jewish College Student," February 23 2018, *ProPublica*, <https://www.propublica.org/article/atomwaffen-division-inside-white-hate-group>.

52 "Atomwaffen Division (AWD)," *Anti-Defamation League*.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid. For more on Marine Lance Cpl. Vasillios G. Pistoris, see Shawn Snow, "The neo-Nazi boot: Inside One Marine's Descent into Extremism," *The Marine Times*, 4 Sep 2019, online at: [www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2019/09/04/the-neo-nazi-boot-inside-one-marines-descent-into-extremism/](http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2019/09/04/the-neo-nazi-boot-inside-one-marines-descent-into-extremism/).

55 Ibid.

56 Jason Wilson, "Sweep of arrests hits US neo-Nazi group connected to five murders," March 6 2020, *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/06/neo-nazi-arrests-deals-blow-us-group-atomwaffen-division>.

57 Wilson, "Sweep of arrests hits US neo-Nazi group connected to five murders," *The Guardian*; see also

guilty, while still other trials are pending due to the Coronavirus pandemic.<sup>58</sup> While these cases appear to have significantly hindered the group's activities and forced it to announcement its disbandment in February 2020, less than six months later AWD has been reconstituted under the name the National Socialist Order (NSO; see image 12), with leaders of the group drawn from AWD ranks.<sup>59</sup>

Nor is AWD alone. Founded in 2018 with ties to the Atomwaffen Division, SKD has similarly drawn upon "Siege Culture". Operating largely out of Europe, SKD's members have been convicted of serious crimes, largely in relation to encouraging terrorism. In June 2019, courts convicted two SKD members in Britain of promoting terrorism in light of an image of Prince Harry with a gun to his head, declaring him a "race traitor" (see images 13 and 14).<sup>60</sup>

### Image 12:

## National Socialist Order

*"It is necessary that I should die for my people; but my spirit will rise from the grave and the whole world will know that I was right." - Adolf Hitler*

### Program

1. We are strict followers of the worldview established by our Führer, Adolf Hitler.
2. While solely based in the United States, we support the overthrow of all Jew-controlled governments worldwide in order to liberate the Aryan race.
3. We are dedicated to promoting radical autonomy while fomenting a revolutionary atmosphere.
4. We refuse to denounce anyone who has boldly taken revolutionary action against the ~~USA~~ system.
5. Our priority is to seize territorial power by any means necessary.
6. We scorn and reject the current political system, and all notions of working within the left-right framework cultivated by the Jew.
7. We believe that the earth should be solely populated by the Aryan race.
8. We require all members to be armed and ready at a moment's notice.

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US Department of Justice, "Former Atomwaffen Division Leader Sentenced for Swatting Conspiracy", 4 May 2021, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-edva/pr/former-atomwaffen-division-leader-sentenced-swatting-conspiracy>.

58 "Neo-Nazi pleads guilty over threats to journalists," September 8 2020, *AP News*, <https://apnews.com/article/arizona-journalists-washington-redskins-conspiracy-seattle-a6fe2a8b141bd5b493c0ed00f737f0d2>; see also US Department of Justice, "Leader of Neo-Nazi group 'Atomwaffen' pleads guilty to hate crime and conspiracy charges for threatening journalists and advocates", April 7 2021, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-wdwa/pr/leader-neo-nazi-group-atomwaffen-pleads-guilty-hate-crime-and-conspiracy-charges>.

59 Ben Makuch, "Neo-Nazi Terror Group Atomwaffen Division Re-Emerges Under New Name," August 5 2020, *Vice*, [https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/article/wxq7jy/neo-nazi-terror-group-atomwaffen-division-re-emerges-under-new-name](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/wxq7jy/neo-nazi-terror-group-atomwaffen-division-re-emerges-under-new-name).

60 Samuel Osborne, "Neo-Nazis 'demand Prince Harry's assassination for marrying Meghan Markle'," December 6 2018, *The Independent*, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/prince-harry-meghan-markle-neo-nazi-assassination-murder-marriage-wedding-royal-family-a8670091.html>.

Image 13:



Image 14:



More recently, the group's leader, Andrew Dymock, was convicted of 15 charges, including fundraising and promoting terrorism, in addition to hate crimes charges and possessing "materials useful to terrorists."<sup>61</sup> The group is among those proscribed in the United Kingdom alongside National Action and its successor groups (NS131, System Resistance Network and Scottish Dawn, most prominently), as well as Feuerkrieg Division (FKD).<sup>62</sup> The latter "Siege Culture" group was led by a 13-year-old Estonian boy who called himself the Commander. Although too young to be charged in Estonia, FKD has been linked to a number of serious plots.<sup>63</sup> One member in Lithuania claimed to have tried to bomb a building, although the device did not detonate.<sup>64</sup> In the United States, two alleged FKD members, Conor Climo and American Army Specialist Jarrett William Smith, have been convicted of crimes linked to right-wing extremism; the former pled guilty to possessing bomb-making components, while the latter pled guilty on two counts of "distributing information related to explosives, destructive devices and weapons of mass destruction."<sup>65</sup> Climo, for his part, claimed that he left the group due to its "inaction."<sup>66</sup> Meanwhile, the Dutch chapter of FKD also published information about the travel plans of a Green Party parliamentarian, suggesting that nearby members use the private details to plot violence.<sup>67</sup>

Finally, The Base has proved to be still another group promoting "Siege Culture". Members have been identified in the US, UK, Canada, South Africa, and Australia, with the group's alleged leader, Rinaldo Nazzaro (aka Norman Spear and Roman Wolf), apparently continuing to operate out of St Petersburg, Russia. In January 2020, several members of The Base were charged with felony

61 Daniel de Simone, "Andrew Dymock: Neo-Nazi Guilty of Terrorism Charges", BBC News, 11 June 2021, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-57439480>

62 The Home Office, "Order to proscribe far-right terrorist group comes into force," February 28 2020, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/order-to-proscribe-far-right-terrorist-group-comes-into-force>.

63 Daniel De Simone, "Neo-Nazi group led by 13-year-old boy to be banned," July 13 2020, *BBC*, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53392036>.

64 "Feuerkrieg Division Exposed: International Neo-Nazi Terrorist Network," February 24 2020, *Eugene Antifa*, <https://eugeneantifa.noblogs.org/post/2020/02/24/feuerkrieg-division/>.

65 "Las Vegas Man Pleads Guilty To Possession of Bomb-Making Components," Department of Justice, February 10 2020, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-nv/pr/las-vegas-man-pleads-guilty-possession-bomb-making-components>; Phil Helsel, "Soldier who discussed attack in U.S. pleads guilty to distributing bomb instructions," February 11 2020, *NBC News*, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/army-soldier-who-discussed-attack-u-s-pleads-guilty-distributing-n1134571>.

66 "Complaint, United States of America vs. Conor Climo," United States District Court, District of Nevada, p. 9.

67 "Bottom Line Up Front," May 20 2020, *The Cipher Brief*.

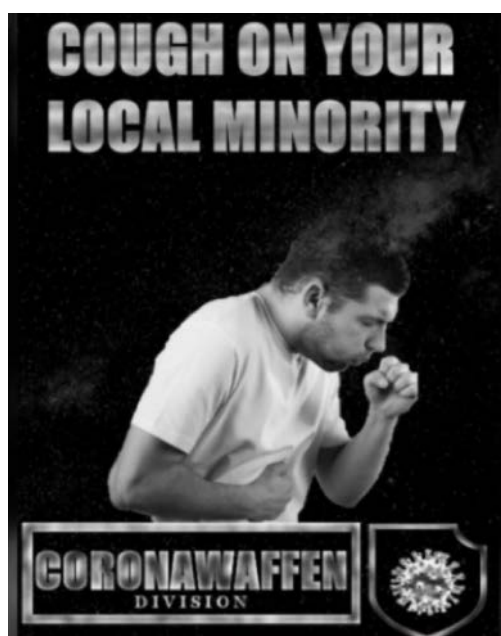


crimes in the US, including conspiracy to commit murder, vandalism and intimidation, as well as multiple gun-related offenses.<sup>68</sup> Previously, one member of The Base faced charges stemming from what was known as “Operation Kristallnacht” (a reference to the Nazi pogrom against Jews in November 1938), which was a campaign of vandalism crossing US state borders.<sup>69</sup>

Despite these arrests of key militants, there is no doubt that “Siege Culture” will endure. Additionally, these events likely represent only a fraction of the crimes planned or executed following inspiration from “Siege Culture”. Encouraging individual or small-cell acts of violence against minorities, vulnerable communities, and influential individuals, this do-it-yourself terrorism is becoming a widely diffused tactic. Still readily available online and growing, “Siege Culture” will continue to promote ideas that threaten individuals and democratic societies, helping to galvanise the next generation of so-called “lone wolves.” In returning full-circle to this report’s outset, all this begs the question: given the explosion of revolutionary Nazism in this apparent “New Age,” how might police and other authorities, to borrow a phrase from the Velvet Underground, “Cool it Down”?

This question is a particular challenge given the fact that Mason and his followers have constructed an apologia for radical right terrorism that is difficult to detect and prevent. However, work to prevent the further online dissemination of “Siege Culture” texts provide one practical piece of the puzzle. Greater discussion of how right-wing extremist groups are designated as terrorist organisations, with the resultant legal implications and content moderation, is urgently needed. Meanwhile, new challenges may arise in light of the restrictions of COVID-19 (most especially for young people who are falling prey to “Siege Culture” messages around isolation). The extent of the problem is not yet fully visible due to lockdowns in North American and European countries – even if the attempted appropriation of the pandemic is not lost on the “Siege Culture” cultic milieu.

Image 15:



68 Neil MacFarquhar and Adam Goldman, “A New Face of White Supremacy: Plots Expose Danger of the ‘Base,’” January 22 2020, *The New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/22/us/white-supremacy-the-base.html>

69 MacFarquhar and Goldman, “A New Face of White Supremacy: Plots Expose Danger of the ‘Base,’” *The New York Times*; “The Base,” *Anti-Defamation League*, <https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/the-base>.



Operating at these terroristic extremes is good for no one: not for the police and security services; not the hate-filled perpetrators; and not for societies already at risk of radical-right political violence, especially its most vulnerable members. No doubt, in returning to Brendon O'Connor's apposite comparison, "Siege Culture" would have been done better forming airing their youthful angst in music band. In such vain hopes there is a fitting lyric to the Velvet Underground's "Beginning To See The Light" forming a fitting point of departure for (hopefully soon-former) "Siege Culture" militants:

playing the fool again /  
Here we go again, acting hard again /  
All right /  
Well, I'm beginning to see the light!

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