



Written by [James Murphy](#) on January 17, 2020

Antifa Group to March in Support of Gun Rights at Virginia Event

Apparently, the defense of the Second Amendment in America can create some unusual alliances. The coming large-scale pro-gun rally scheduled for Monday in Richmond, Virginia, will include the usual pro-gun groups such as the National Rifle Association, Gun Owners of America, and the Second Amendment Foundation. But reportedly alongside those groups will be a local Virginia chapter of the domestic terrorist group Antifa.



Vice — which referred to the Antifa group’s intentions as a “bizarre meeting of the minds” — [interviewed](#) a spokesman for the Richmond-based group Antifa Seven Hills, who called himself only James out of fear of being doxxed. A self-described anarchist, James pointed to the racist history of many gun control laws.

“I think it’s been pretty important for us to focus on the fact that gun control in America has a legacy of racist enforcement,” James said. “Like taking away guns from black people, because black people were perceived as a threat to property and the sanctity of the state.”

James is not wrong. Laws in many states [prohibited](#) ownership of guns to black Americans. Some of those laws even specified that only “free white men” could own firearms. One Georgia law from 1833 stated: “It shall not be lawful for any free person of color in this state to own, use or carry firearms of any description whatever.” The penalty for running afoul of that particular law was 39 lashes. Many of these laws lasted into the Jim Crow era of the South.

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“This is our fight as much as anyone else’s,” James said. “It’s our state, and we are largely left out of the debate. The presence of an armed left is not discussed, it’s not understood.”

The “armed Left” is a growing movement in America, consisting of groups like [Redneck Revolt](#) and the [Socialist Rifle Association](#), both of which were born in reaction to the election of Donald Trump. The “armed Left” views gun control advocates such as Virginia’s governor Ralph Northam as representing the rise of a right-wing police state, which looks to take control by disarming minorities and low-income people.

Antifa Seven Hills wants people to know that they don’t necessarily track completely with their brethren in areas such as the West Coast, where Antifa groups have been involved in physical violence against those they consider political enemies.

“I think what’s particular about the South is that we have to be a bit more creative and sensitive to the people around us — instead of fulfilling some sort of meme of what Antifa is,” James said.

Translation: If Antifa acted in Richmond the same way it acts in Portland, Oregon, the outcomes of their actions would be vastly different.



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According to James, his group is looking to challenge the stereotype that those other Antifa groups have created. “That’s what we’re really trying to work against right now,” James concluded. “Especially by talking to conservatives and showing we aren’t just a black-clad group of rabble-rousers who are out for attention and have jobs funded by George Soros.”

The Richmond rally is controversial enough without Antifa joining in on the fun. Governor Northam stoked the fire by declaring a “state of emergency” and acting to ban all firearms at the event in response to “credible intelligence” about “groups with malicious plans” attending the rally.

On Thursday, the FBI arrested [three suspected neo-Nazis](#) who were said to be planning to attend the rally. One of the three men is a former Canadian reservist, and all of them are linked to a group known as The Base, a group which advocates the creation of “white ethno-states.”

“No one wants another incident like we saw in Charlottesville,” Northam said. “We will not allow that mayhem and violence to happen here.”

While Northam is probably overreacting, the coming rally in Richmond does warrant close watching. The idea of disparate political groups coming together for a cause they both believe in sounds very American. But those same disparate groups coming together also contains the potential for violence. As sulfur, charcoal, and potassium nitrate combine to create gunpowder, so these contrasting groups might explode when mixed together.

Image: CaseyHillPhoto via iStock / Getty Images Plus

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