



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on February 24, 2014

Ohio National Guard Drill Cast Gun-rights Activists as Terrorists

The Ohio National Guard is under heavy fire after [newly released documents](#) offered more insight into a controversial training exercise conducted last year that featured gun-rights activists as supposed terrorists. Despite the public outrage, officials behind the drill scenario, which imagined “anti-government” Second Amendment supporters as murderous terrorists using weapons of mass destruction at a school, have not apologized.



The dubious exercise was especially troubling to analysts in light of recent campaigns by the Obama administration and its allies to demonize gun owners while [relentlessly assaulting](#) the right to keep and bear arms. As *The New American* and other publications have been reporting, efforts to infringe on the God-given rights enshrined in the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution have [largely backfired so far](#). However, that has not deterred anti-gun rights extremists.

A rough outline of the Army National Guard drill first made headlines early last year, when the scheme was reported by local media outlets in and around Portsmouth, Ohio, in Scioto County. The latest uproar surrounding the scandal came after Media Trackers, a watchdog organization, published documents about the training obtained through Freedom of Information Act requests. From there, the details set off a tsunami of stories in the alternative press, culminating in some coverage by the establishment media.

The training scenario, which involved the Ohio National Guard 52nd Civil Support Team in coordination with local authorities, imagined employees from the school district manufacturing chemical and biological weapons to deploy against the community. In the drill, the two imaginary terrorists, who are supposed to be workers at the Portsmouth Junior High School, use ricin and mustard gas to poison school lunches and murder children.

The aim of the hypothetical domestic terrorists, according to the internal documents, was to advance their beliefs on “protecting Gun Rights and Second Amendment rights.” However, the imaginary murder of children to advance gun-rights — an absurd scenario unless it was a false-flag attack or the work of an evil imbecile — was carried out under supposed orders from late National Socialist (Nazi) leader William Pierce, documents show. The attackers were also identified as harboring “anti-government” opinions.

Portsmouth Fire Chief Bill Raison, who was quoted in local media reports about the drills last January, seemed to think the controversial scenario was perfectly reasonable. “It’s the reality of the world we live in,” Raison told WSAZ-TV, which identified him, apparently incorrectly, as the local police chief. “Don’t forget there is such a thing as domestic terrorism. This helps us all be prepared.”

Gun-rights groups and local conservatives, however, were not amused by the choice of scenario. A spokesman for the Buckeye Firearms Association, for example, told Media Trackers that “it is a scary



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day indeed when law enforcement are being trained that Second Amendment advocates are the enemy.”

Portage County TEA Party Executive Director Tom Zawistowski was also alarmed. “The revelation of this information is appalling to me, and to all citizens of Ohio who are true conservatives and patriots, who don’t have guns for any other reason than that the Second Amendment gives [sic] them that right,” he told Media Trackers, echoing concerns expressed across the country after the documents were released.

Officials, on the other hand, apparently saw nothing wrong with demonizing tens or even hundreds of millions of Americans while training troops to fight Second Amendment supporters as potential terrorists. County emergency management officials refused to comment. Ohio National Guard Communications Director James Sims II, meanwhile, tried to brush off and downplay concerns, suggesting that Media Trackers was imagining a problem. Area lawmakers did not comment.

As the news spread like wildfire across the Internet and the alternative media — even making headlines in Russia — the Ohio National Guard eventually released a statement that was posted on Fox. In the short statement, authorities said that the training exercise was “created and run by the West Virginia National Guard” and was just one of many that the 52nd Civil Support Team engaged in last year.

“To maximize the realism of the exercise, the Ohio National Guard wasn’t involved in the creation or execution of the exercise’s fictitious scenario and was deliberately not informed of its details in advance,” the statement said. “It’s not accurate to suggest that certain details of the exercise somehow reflect views or opinions of officials of the Ohio National Guard.” Critics noted that there has still been no official apology.

Commentators weighing in on the revelations about the exercise, though, were deeply troubled. “That a state’s National Guard training exercise would employ a scenario in which the ‘bad guys’ were supporters of the Second Amendment and ‘limited government’ is just a reflection of the regime’s ongoing campaign to ridicule and demonize those who cherish the Constitution,” wrote Stu Tarlowe at the *American Thinker*, also mentioning the fatal Kent State shootings decades ago.

As *The New American* has been reporting for years, federal and state agencies are increasingly [identifying everyday Americans as potential terrorists](#). Among the alleged potentially violent “extremists” identified in official documents: Gun owners, military veterans, pro-life activists, conservatives, libertarians, Ron Paul supporters, advocates for states’ rights, proponents of limited government, [Christians](#), [Jews](#), and more.

Of course, it makes sense for supposed public servants to be prepared to deal with contingencies. The fact that those “contingencies” increasingly involve targeting Americans with mainstream political views opposed to those of the establishment, however, should be setting off alarm bells nationwide.

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Photo: Ohio National Guard soldiers during an urban operations training exercise

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