



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on March 24, 2021

The Pentagon Politicizes the Military, Targets Conservatives

In business and academia, media and sports, we see that people who hold opinions that deviate from the leftist discourse are [being attacked](#) and “canceled.”

The military remained, perhaps, one of the only institutions in our hyper-polarized nation that largely remained above the turbulent political process, as it should have. This firm stance earned our armed forces a sterling reputation as [the institution in which the American public has the most confidence](#). Unlike so many other entities, the military is viewed as an altruistic organization impartially focused on serving the nation’s interests. For obvious reasons, our government ought to keep the military apolitical, and Americans should be concerned if the military seems to be taking sides — if we want to remain a constitutional republic.



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That is why it is so disturbing to see the Department of Defense’s Secretary Lloyd Austin [stating](#) that the military must change because it is “focused on dangerous, extremist beliefs that are not compatible with the values of the armed forces,” referring to the fact that former and current members of the military [appear](#) to have participated in the events on January 6 in Washington, D.C.

On February 5, Secretary Austin [ordered](#) a 60-day “stand-down” for all branches of the military, a period in which units stationed all over the world set aside at least one day to discuss extremism, racism, and discrimination.

Supposedly concern about extremism in the ranks was raised by an October 2020 report to Congress. In the end of February, the previously unpublicized Pentagon report started to circulate in the mainstream media. The first article on that topic, “Pentagon report reveals inroads white supremacists have made in military,” was published by [Roll Call](#). Then it got picked up by [CNN](#), [ABC](#), the [Washington Post](#), and many others.

Though the report concluded that extremist views were not widespread and identified “a low number of cases in absolute terms,” it is supposedly an urgent problem because “individuals with extremist affiliations and military experience are a concern to U.S. national security because of their proven ability to execute high-impact events,” and “In addition to potential violence, White supremacy and White nationalism pose a threat to the good order and discipline within the military.”

On February 26, the Pentagon [released documents](#) meant to serve as training materials to address extremism.



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The materials lay out four goals for commanders in broaching the issue, including a review of the meaning of the oaths to the Constitution taken by all service members; an assessment of actions prohibited under law or military policy; the responsibility to report to the chain of command when a prohibited action is seen or learned of, or certain behaviors cause concern; and planned listening sessions. The documents also remind military personnel that while they have the right to free speech under the First Amendment, “speech that interferes with or prevents the orderly accomplishment of the mission or presents a clear danger to loyalty, discipline, mission, or morale of the troops may be restricted under some circumstances.”

In addition, “speech in the workplace that interferes with the mission, espouses extremist or discriminatory doctrine, or is disrespectful and harmful to colleagues, will have consequences.”

On March, 22, [PJ Media](#) published “Extremism Stand Down — Commander Engagements With All Service Members. Discussion Guide 19FEB2.” Those are the training materials presumably to be used to target and root out “extremism” in the Navy. The materials claim, “If we don’t eliminate extremist behaviors from our Navy, then racism, injustice, indignity and disrespect will grow and keep us from reaching our potential.” The materials do not cite a single instance of racism, injustice, indignity, or disrespect.

The content of the training materials makes out conservatives and anyone worried about the size and abuse of government to be extremists. To spot “extremism” and “prohibited behavior,” for example, the personnel should be “alert to statements about Prohibited Behavior (Extremism in the Ranks) which rely on inaccurate or misleading assumptions, misperception or myth.” What might such a myth or prohibited behavior be? The Pentagon provides helpful talking points for officers forced to do the training. “Anti-government extremists” might continue the myth of a “stolen election” in 2020 or assume that the government serves foreign interests, for example. People who express an unfavorable opinion should be viewed as “anti-government extremists,” facing “the full range of administrative and disciplinary actions,” including being discharged. First Amendment rights, anyone? “Speech that incites violence or criminal activity that threatens to undermine our government and Constitution is not protected by the First Amendment,” states the document. Actually, the First Amendment would cover those areas, in fact. The First Amendment allows anyone to stand in the town square and repeatedly give speeches undermining or belittling the government. That is the beauty of constitutionally protected rights: They are not limited to one political party or viewpoint. Note that the media and 99 percent of the Democrats undermined confidence in government and aroused criminal action round the clock for the last four years.

Then, training materials have a whole section dedicated to behavior on social media. Here, the Pentagon insists, people shouldn’t exercise their rights by sharing and “liking” certain information, such as “any material that promotes discrimination based on ... gender identity.” In other words, if you believe in biological sex, you might be involuntarily separated from the military or court-martialed.

The great danger in labeling fully lawful expressions “extremism” is that anything may be deemed “racist” or “hateful.” Like in a Rorschach inkblot test meant to measure thought disorder for the purpose of identifying a mental illness, extremism may be spotted virtually anywhere. Is it a bunny or a monster that you see in that picture? Is it a rational argument, or is it an insult? Your opinion or a hate crime? And if you don’t see a monster here, then you are a monster yourself — and will be treated as such. With this type of atmosphere prevailing in the armed forces, one may expect a drop in recruitment, and dropping public trust in the military — which is [already happening](#).



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Politicizing the military is a dangerous step toward dictatorship, yet the Biden administration keeps on marching.



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