

Committee: Special Political and Decolonization

Issue: Addressing the rise of the alt-right movement

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INTRODUCTION

Ever since its “creation”, Nationalism and the far-right movement have been a dominant ideology among nations. In the last decade, though, it is evident that there has been an extreme spike in far-right support across Europe and the whole world in general. This unprecedented support for such ideologies, at least for the 21st century, has caused the birth of many new movements that revolve around the far right and so-called white nationalism. Out of these movements, the most notable with the biggest potential for harm is said to be the alt-right movement. The aforementioned movement can be characterized by racism, anti-Zionism and anti-globalization. This hate towards non-white people in combination with violent acts carried out in the name of the movement is the reason for which they are described as dangerous and their rise in popularity is alarming and must be brought to the attention of the international community and the United Nations. This study guide aims to provide all delegates with a clear understanding of the topic, the roots and main ideas of the alt-right movement as well as key historical events and an in-depth analysis on the reasons for which there has been a notable rise in its popularity.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Nationalism

Nationalism is an ideology that can be defined both as a political and socioeconomic movement. Its main characteristic is the promotion of the interests of a certain Nation and maintaining the country’s sovereignty. Furthermore it seeks to preserve a nation’s traditions and culture and aims to build a single national identity without having diverse social characteristics such as language, religion and culture.

Patriotism

Patriotism, not to be confused with Nationalism, is a belief based on love, devotion and sense of pride towards one’s nation.

Populism

Populism as an ideology does not have one single definition. Most scholars tend to define populism as an anti-elitist, anti-establishment ideology which presents the “good” and “pure” people against the corrupt “elite”. In right-wing politics, populism (right wing populism) is mostly used to describe groups with strong anti-immigration sentiments who are usually critics of the European Union.

Alt-right

The alt-right movement is a new online movement which has gained quite a following in the U.S. Although it is a really vague term with no official definition, the alt-right can be characterized as a far-right white-nationalist movement which stands against globalism, immigration and “Zionist agendas”. They believe that there is a Jewish plot which aims to bring about “white genocide” and replace the white majority of the United States.

Guerrilla Warfare

Guerrilla warfare is a form of unconventional, unorthodox warfare. It is mostly used by groups of armed civilians and paramilitary militias. Their way of conducting warfare could be summarized by the use of sabotage, ambushes and any type of unconventional fighting. They usually fight against official larger military forces and could be described as violent non state actors.

4chan-8chan

These two websites are anonymous image boards where users can post their images of choice with little to none moderation and can comment and interact with user’s posts.

Paleoconservatism

Paleoconservatism is a branch of conservatism. This philosophy is mostly active in the United States and its main characteristics are nationalism, Christian ethics and culture, extreme traditionalism and limited government.

White Nationalism

White Nationalism is a “subsidiary” Nationalist ideology that sees white people as a race and believes that the maintenance and survival of the white identity and race is of the utmost importance. There is the belief that historically white countries should remain majority-white and that there are huge differences between races. White Nationalists, just like the supporters of the Alt-right, believe that miscegenation, multiculturalism, immigration and low birth rates are all being promoted in order to cause the white genocide.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2010 and the creation of the alt-right

In order to understand the alt-right and realize its motives it is important to see how it was created and analyze its history and origin. Although officially beginning in 2010, the alt-right started to come into being in 2008. During that year, the paleoconservative speaker and academic Paul Gottfried gave a talk entitled “The Decline and Rise of the Alternative Right”. During his speech, Paul noted that with the “downfall” and the gradual fading away of the paleoconservative ideology, a new rightwing wave had started to appear. This wave of passionate young right-wingers is mostly due to a revolt of the youth against the neo-conservative ideology which was then a prominent force in America and the Republican Party. Paul never intended to use the word “alt-right” and it was just used in the title of his speech. In fact, when the term started to be used in order to identify white nationalists and neo-Nazis, Paul made it clear that he wanted to have nothing to do with the ideology that was being created around the term and distanced himself as much as possible from it.

Richard B. Spencer was another prominent Paleoconservative who endorsed the idea of the alt-right and helped Paul come up with the term. Unlike Paul, he did not appear to distance himself from this newly created alt-right. By 2010, Spencer had fully transitioned from paleoconservatism to white nationalism and the new alt-right beliefs. That was the turning point of the alt-right, as Spencer launched The Alternative Right webzine in order to present his ideas to the world. Through the image board 4chan and various other online platforms, the movement started to gradually gain attention until 2015-2017 when it started to become mainstream.

The important role of 4chan

The alt-right, as mentioned in the beginning, is mostly an online movement. It is certain that without the help of 4chan, 8chan and reddit, the alt-right would have never reached its form today. After many years of mostly leftist rhetoric, in 2015, 4chan’s political board (/pol/) started to focus on the alt-right movement. Just as today, 4chan’s /pol/ contributors were mostly online trolls who did not care about the ideology itself. The lack of moderation on such websites and their anonymous aspect was what cultivated this notion of the alt-right and provided a safe-haven for anyone interested in the movement. The main actions of the alt-right advocates involve mostly the creation and distribution of memes, commentary on world politics and recent events as well as blunt racism and anti-Semitic and anti-gay rhetoric. There have been instances where the board has resorted to dangers and unlawful actions such as raids, doxing and hacking. Although alarming, these should not only be associated with the alt-right. Doxing and raids are common among the chans and should not reflect only the actions of the alt-right.

The year 2015 was notably the most prosperous for the movement, as their popularity and acceptance grew tremendously. Gamergate was one of 4chan’s most successful campaigns which made thousands of people keen to become “alt-righters”. It started as a harassment campaign against several women in the video game industry, as well as various feminists and social justice warriors. It served as an internet crusade against the “infidels” as they were called and caused mass panic. During this campaign many different technique were used, from

doxing to hacking, blackmail as well as various threats of rape and murder. Due to the nature of the campaign, many teenagers and younger people were curious and partook in these acts. It successfully recruited thousands of people worldwide and started a never-ending cycle of trolling, which remains the main characteristic of the movement today.

Donald Trump and the alt-right

Donald Trump has always been a target for journalists and different media outlets. This became only worse with his 2016 presidential campaign. Many different types of people across the political spectrum voted for Trump. Notably, Trump's announcement was met with an overwhelming acceptance and joy from the alt-right. The majority of the alt-right, white-supremacists and neo-Nazi groups rallied behind Trump as they agreed with most of his policies. They believed that by voting for Trump they would be able to get rid of the "fake conservatives" and finally change the establishment. In particular, Trump's attitude towards immigration, his requests for Muslims entering the U.S. to be detained and his policies concerning the wall between the U.S. and Mexico were the main reasons for which these groups believed that Trump would be the force of change in what they believed is a corrupt and "degenerate" world.

It must be mentioned that many people who later on identified with the alt-right movement did so by being Trump supporters and learning more about Trump and his policies. There were in fact numerous allegations that condemned Trump as a white nationalist and an alt-right sympathizer. He did not deny any of these allegations, but rather caused more unrest among media outlets with his repetitive tweets and reposts of posts published by white-nationalists and containing the hash tag "#WhiteGenocide". This made Trump one of the alt-right's favorite figures and, after him winning the election, many supporters of the movement supported that his victory was due to them and without them he would not have been able to win. If that was not enough, after the Unite the Right Rally, Trump did not denounce the protestors until the very end. He denounced bigotry and violence, but did not mention the movement at all.

Furthermore, in following statements, he said that there were "very fine people in both sides", something that was used by the media to show that he is sympathetic towards white supremacy. It is obvious that Trump is not a white supremacist nor a sympathizer of the cause. The similarity he has with them was used in order to further promote their agenda and seem more credible to the general public.

From the internet to the physical world

It must be clear by now that the alt-right was, and is, mostly an online movement which exists across different image boards and online forums with few exceptions. Everything changed in 2017 when the Unite the Right rally took place in Charlottesville.

This rally was an attempt to transform the movement from an online one to a street-based phenomenon as well as to unify the American right. Hundreds of protesters from different parts of the right had gathered at the meeting point. Most attendees either identified with the alt-right or with other white-supremacist movements.

In the beginning, everything was peaceful until a group of "anarchists" and Antifa members arrived at the rally and greatly outnumbered the protesters. Clashes soon began and things turned violent leaving more than 30 people injured. The local authorities failed to contain the damage and remove the malicious entities causing problems. This resulted in governor Terry McAuliffe stating that the police forces were unable to safeguard public safety and that there was an immediate need for external help. Within an hour, the Virginia State Police flagged the rally as an unlawful assembly and ordered for it to be broken up immediately. At

approximately 13:40 on that day one of the protesters rammed his car into a handful of counter-protesters leaving one dead and nineteen other people injured. Violence was condemned by both sides, but there were many alt-right members who applauded the attack and saw it as something positive.

Unfortunately for them, the Unite the Right Rally turned out to be “catastrophic” for the movement due to the extreme amounts of negative publicity and criticism it received. It even resulted in organized revenge attacks towards all attendees and groups who supported such ideologies. Most, if not all, scheduled lectures by such groups in universities and events in general were canceled and many twitter users started a campaign of shame where they tried to identify people who attended the rally from photographs and publicly shame them. This even resulted in people losing their jobs due to photographs published of them attending the rally.

Christchurch mosque shootings

The Christchurch mosque shootings is the single largest terrorist attack that has been carried out in New Zealand. During Friday prayer on March 15 2019, 28-year-old Australian national a heavily-armed Brenton Harrison Tarrant entered two places of worship and started rapidly shooting at any person in sight. After approximately 21 minutes from the beginning of the attacks, the police managed to apprehend the suspect, having killed 51 people and leaving 49 people injured.

Despite the tragic nature of this attack, it is crucial to analyze the reasons why this attack was carried out and find links between the attack and the alt-right movement. In order to answer these questions, we must look for the most accurate and reliable sources that could provide the point of view of the attacker. Fortunately, two years prior to these attacks Brenton Tarrant had started writing a manifesto where he answers all of our questions. Within this document, the attacker mentions many different reasons behind attacks. The three clearest and most significant are the following:

- “To most of all show the invaders that our lands will never be their lands, our homelands are our own and that, as long as a white man still lives, they will NEVER conquer our lands and they will never replace our people “
- “To incite violence, retaliation and further divide between the European people and the invaders currently occupying European soil. “
- “We must ensure the existence of our people, and a future for white Children”

Through these quotes, it is evident that the perpetrator is an alt-right sympathizer, something that can also be proven through his own posts on social media and statements.

Another notable fact is his links with neo-Nazi and alt-right groups and officials such as the IBO ([Identitäre Bewegung Österreich](#)) leader Martin Sellner and different donations he made to such organizations. Namely security officials have tracked down two major donations valued at 3,700 euros to the IBO and the [Génération Identitaire](#). These two Nationalist

Identitarian movements - one operating in Austria and the other in France - oppose Islam and mass immigration and share many other racist and xenophobic ideals and sentiments. By studying his manifesto it is evident that the alt-right movement may be mostly peaceful, but what it wants is 'war'. This war may not be a war fought with guns and ammunition, but rather a cultural war. It is important to understand that the man behind the attacks was not mentally insane. In fact, after examination he was found to have absolutely no sign of mental illness. There were certain variables and events that shaped his personality and opinions in such a way that it resulted in this tragedy, and this is exactly what we need to understand and prevent from happening again.

The biggest problem that was created by this attack is that the media outlets and the world in general did exactly what the terrorist wanted. He was regarded as a "joke" and was just labeled another psychopath. This resulted in official authorities completely ignoring his manifesto and following along with his plan. A prime example of this would be the following phrase:

"Finally, to create conflict between the two ideologies within the United States on the ownership of firearms in order to further the social, cultural, political and racial divide within the United states."

Similar to most of his goals listed in the manifesto, this has been successful not only for the United States but New Zealand as well, as there have been discussions on banning assault rifles. It is evident that the attacker's plan to spread the alt-right movement and its ideals and cause false backlash from the international community and blame wrong people and things was successful. With that in mind, it is of immense significance to reconsider the way the alt-right is being treated and act now.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

UNITED STATES

As the birthplace of the alt-right movement, it is reasonable that it is the main hub of alt-right activity. Research by George Hawley of the University of Alabama has revealed that in the U.S. 5.64% of the non-Hispanic white population identifies with the alt-right. If we take in perspective the total white population, which is around 198 million people, that would mean that there are approximately 11 million Americans that identify with alt-right politics.

Of course, not everyone is an active alt-right supporter. Most of these people are ordinary civilians that find some common ground with far-right politics and agree with their rhetoric. However, that does not mean that there are no staunch alt-right supporters. As seen in numerous situations, such as in Charlottesville, there are numerous active supporters who multiply in numbers day by day.

CANADA

Although the situation in Canada is nothing close to the situation in the United States, there has been a gradual increase in alt-right activity and popularity among the nation's citizens. The Toronto Star has even reported an increase in far-right and alt-right violence across the country in recent years. There are currently at least 130 active groups that share the same opinions with the alt-right. That number just proves the rise of the alt-right in Canada as it signifies a staggering 30% increase in alt-right groups from 2015.

ATOMWAFFEN DIVISION

The Atomwaffen Division is an alt-right U.S. based extremist group that was established in 2015. Since then, it has expanded to at least 4 different countries, ranging from Germany and the United Kingdom to different Baltic States. The group is one of the most violent and extreme groups to date, something that can be observed just by their requests and previous actions. In order for the Atomwaffen to succeed in its goals, its most usual techniques are the use of guerrilla warfare and terrorism. Atomwaffen's typical demonstrations include the burning of the U.S. constitution, desecration of the flag and numerous attacks on minorities such as the LGBTQ community. Some of Atomwaffen's most extreme and condemned past activities include the attempt to destroy nuclear power plants in order to cause a nuclear meltdown, destroying parts of United States' main power grid and polluting the public water system.

Antipodean Resistance

The antipodean resistance is an alt-right, neo-Nazi group based in Australia. Since its creation in 2016, the group has promoted race discrimination and violence particularly towards people of Jewish descent and the LGBTQ community. The group has even advocated in the past for the legalization of the execution of Jews.

Rise Above Movement

The Rise Above Movement is a California-based alt-right organization. The group has been characterized as a neo-Nazi anti-Semitic street fight gang and openly supports its neo-Nazi and alt-right beliefs. Most of the time, its actions involve physically attacking their “enemies”. These “enemies” are mostly Jewish and gay people that are just randomly selected most of the time. Due to their street fighting nature, many prefer to identify the group more like a “fight club” scenario rather than a clan like the KKK. This “fight club” characterization seems to be accepted by the group as when they recruit people online this fighting nature of the club is one of the main things they mention, as they believe it can lure young passionate members more easily.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
June 28 th 1914 - November 11 th 1918	World War One.
1922	Mussolini comes to power.
1930s	Europe’s darkest, bloodiest chapter where far-right ideologies start to thrive across Europe.
1933	Adolf Hitler is named chancellor of Germany.
September 1 st 1939 - September 2 nd 1945	World War Two.
1947 – 1991	Cold War.
1967 - 1974	Greek military junta assumes control of the Greek government.
1970s - 1990s	The far right becomes prominent again in Europe and the “National Front” polls 44% in a local election in London.
1990s	Due to the huge influx of asylum seekers in Germany and, especially East Germany, prejudice and xenophobia is widespread among the people which results in far-right populist parties gaining influence in the region.
September 3 1993	Founding of the United Kingdom Independent Party.
13 June 2001	Formation of the Polish Law and Justice party .

2010	The Fidesz Hungarian party leans towards illiberal authoritarianism.
2010	The American white nationalist Richard B. Spencer launched The Alternative Right webzine to share his ideas.
1 January 2012	Media restrictions are imposed in Hungary.
2008	The financial crisis.
2015	Huge influx of Syrian refugees into Europe.
January 27 2017	The immigration ban is signed in the U.S. , suspending temporary entry in the country for residents of Syria, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Yemen and Sudan.
August 11 2017 - August 12 2017	Unite the Right rally.
March 15 2019	Christchurch Shooting

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

There are no relevant resolutions or treaties signed by any country. Even with that being the case, all countries have a negative stance against the issues and no nation supports the movement officially.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

There have been no official attempts to solve the issue yet. The only thing that has been done by governments is the imprisonment of members as well as the banning of the users' social media accounts, measures that have been proven ineffective in solving the issue.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

In order to try and find a feasible solution to the issue of the rise of the alt-right, firstly we need to identify the causes that are most likely to be the ones responsible for the issue. The alt-rights complaints could be summarized as the following:

- Broken Economy
- Lack of border Control
- Low birth index
- The refugee crisis
- Rise of socialism and movements such as feminism and the SJW (Social Justice Warriors)

- Political correctness and lack of freedom of press
- Disbandment of religion and traditions
- The loss of the place white masculinity once had in society

These core “complaints” should be used in combination with common sense and the United Nation’s methodology on combating such situations in order to find feasible solutions to this issue of grave importance. By observing the Christchurch shooter, we can identify three main aspects where, with correct regulations and governmental awareness, the whole situation could have been foreseen and perhaps even avoided.

As mentioned at the beginning, the alt-right is mostly an online movement. Thus, most communications take place online on public forums such as 4chan and 8chan, where there is no moderation and users stay anonymous. This anonymous nature poses a great problem for authorities trying to identify users. A board of specialists could be formed where surveillance on posts uploaded on such message boards could take place and any suspicious uploads could be flagged.

Furthermore, it has been observed that, like any fanatical supporter, the shooter donated a certain amount of money to organizations committed to his cause and sharing his views and ambitions. Hence, there could be some type of “transactions monitoring” on bank accounts affiliated with such organizations.

Finally, a step every government should take would be to raise awareness on the negative consequences of believing in such an ideology by recognizing its malicious and populist incentives. It is important not to highlight the differences between us, rather than our similarities. The bottom line is that we are all humans and we should not crave conflict and discrimination, but solidarity and love.

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