



IDENTITARIANISM AND ITS LINK TO IDENTITY EVROPA

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PURPOSE STATEMENT

Identity Evropa (IE) and the Identitarian movement represent a growing white supremacist movement in North America. IE is arguably one of the most active RWE groups in North America and espouses anti-immigrant, and anti-Semitic views. IE may pose a serious threat to minority communities.

THE SECURITY PROBLEM

IE and its affiliation with the identitarian movement may be seen as a public security and safety problem for minorities and law enforcement because of their extremist views, their willingness to engage in violence, and their growing numbers (Frazin, 2019).

KEY FACTS

IE and identitarianism are linked by a handful of men from different sects of the alt-right. IE is a small part of that movement which was inspired by those preaching the 'values' of racial superiority and white supremacy (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2018). While there are de facto leaders of each subsection of the movement, it appears that there is no singular head of the movement. Groups do speak and interact with one another, but no relationship is formalized, which is a hallmark of a violent transnational social movement.

IE and its founder, Nathan Damigo, were key participants in the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville. One woman was killed when a self-proclaimed white supremacist ploughed his car into bystanders at the rally (Katersky, 2019).

Richard B. Spencer is the founder of the American Identity Movement and the National Policy Institute, a white supremacist think tank which lobbies for white

supremacists and espouses views around anti-immigration and racial superiority (ABC News, 2017).

Nathan Damigo founded Identity Evropa in 2016 (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2018). He is an ex-US Marine and a self-described identitarian. Damigo is infamous for robbing a Mexican taxi driver because Damigo thought he was from Iraq (Branson-Potts & Pearce, 2016). He was convicted for robbery and while in prison, Damigo read works by David Duke, the Grand Wizard of the KKK, which may have further encouraged his white supremacist views.

BACKGROUND

IE is a symptom of the wider identitarian movement, which has at its core the idea that white Europeans are racially superior to other populations. Both IE and the movement harbour anti-Muslim, and anti-Black sentiments, which are embodied in their extremist views on things such as multiculturalism, immigration, and race-mixing.

The overall goal of IE and the identitarian movement is to sanitize their messages of white supremacy and “infiltrate the Republican Party” (Owen, 2019). These sentiments are evidenced by 700,000 leaked Discord messages uncovered by Unicorn Riot, a left-wing media outlet (<https://unicornriot.ninja/tag/identity-europa/>).

After Unicorn Riot published the leaked discord messages between members of IE, the group underwent a rebranding. This may have been in an effort to go mainstream into federal politics. IE has demonstrated a history of going to college campuses and recruiting young members, which may be part of the alleged attempt by IE to sanitize their reputation and messaging. Identitarians may see themselves as the only group that is truly aware of what is happening around them, and have thus, grounded their beliefs in scholarly literature. This may also be part of why IE has allegedly chosen to recruit from schools. Therefore, IE wants their members to be more educated and to use formal skills of articulation to recruit those who would otherwise be opposed to a movement that espouses anti-immigrant rhetoric (Meyers, 2018).

KEY CONSIDERATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Rebranding a message based on racial superiority to a message which encompasses the defence of the white race from invading non-white people is

inherently dangerous as it may increase societal divides, which may in turn lead to more soft violence, which could eventually crystallize into kinetic violence. VTSMs tend to latch on to something they see as being existentially valuable to their survival, and in the case of IE and its identitarian movement, it is their Caucasian heritage (Kelshall, 2018: 27). This fear is embodied in loud “you will not replace us” chants at various rallies of IE and the identitarian movement (Anti-Defamation League, 2017).

The various connections among IE and the identitarian movement implies that it is growing in size. Indeed, IE has grown exponentially over the past 3 years, correlating with the rise of various other right-wing extremist movements such as the III%, the Proud Boys, and the Soldiers of Odin (Frazin, 2019). Since the Unite the Right rally in 2017, there have been rallies premised on racial identity occurring across the United States and Canada.

In his 80+ page manifesto, called “the Great Replacement”, the New Zealand Mosque attacker, Brendon Tarrant, cited the identitarian movement as his inspiration for murdering more than 50 Muslims (Vinocur, 2019). Though the killer had no direct connection with the identitarian movement, he was still inspired to commit murder in the movement’s name, demonstrating how that the movement has grown to become a global influence. Furthermore, it is alleged that before his attack, Tarrant made a donation to Martin Sellner, an Austrian political activist, who is part of the identitarian movement (News Corp Australia, 2019; Bell, 2019).

ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVES TO BE CONSIDERED

All rallies that IE and the Identitarian movement have planned have been small in comparison to counter-protests. This could be because most RWE groups proliferate their messages online in forums such as 4chan and 8chan.

Identity Evropa and the movement have thus far been ineffective at organizing their movement. They are arguably fragmented as there is no cohesive leadership structure. Therefore, the movement does not pose a serious threat.

If the alt-right loses its social media platforms, the movements would not be able to survive, as they are primarily based on the internet. It is possible that extreme right-wing views will no longer be featured and/or tolerated on social media platforms. Facebook has already stated its concerns after the New Zealand Mosque shootings were broadcasted live on the platform. In response, Facebook

founder Mark Zuckerberg has asked for government intervention into regulating free speech on its site (Wattles & O'Sullivan, 2019).

WHAT IS NOT KNOWN

- Due to their online presence in opaque forums, it is difficult to gauge the exact numbers of IE and its supporters.
- It is unknown whether any political parties have expressed support for IE. Nor is it possible to know to what extent any party has been infiltrated.
- It is not immediately evident whether the de facto leaders of the identitarian movement will come together to form a cohesive movement.
- It is unknown to what extent the US Army and Marine Corps has been infiltrated by IE and other groups within the identitarian movement.

NEXT STEPS

- Counter-movements have already sprung up and will oppose IE and the identitarian movement. However, divisive rhetoric and increasing political differences between political parties can ignite simmering conflicts.
- The US military has already stated that it is investigating allegations of white supremacy in its ranks and that its soldiers will face disciplinary action (Mathias, 2019).
- A continued examination of the attacks by identitarian groups, be it soft violence or kinetic violence, will be necessary to determine what steps may be taken by decision makers and law enforcement. Examine and document every report of attacks on minorities/places of worship of minorities.

AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- Canadian and American security agencies could feasibly reconsider their stances with regard to Identity Evropa and the identitarian movement.
- Examine and document every report of attacks on minorities/places of worship of minorities.
- Invest in creating and disseminating counter-content and counter-narratives, to provide alternative rhetoric to right-wing extremist ideals.

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Appendix 1: Evidentiary images and headshots.



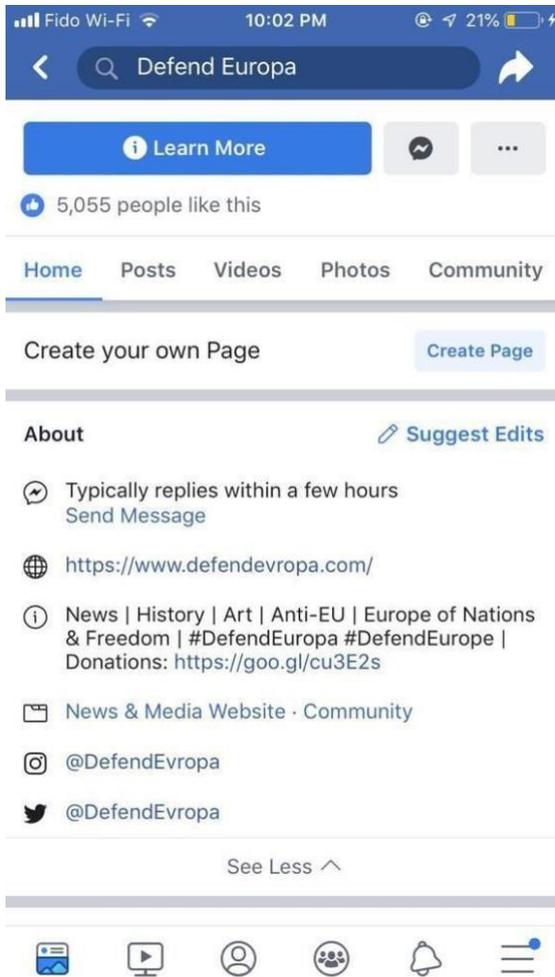
Richard B. Spencer, director of National Policy Institute



Nathan Damigo, founder of Identity Evropa



Patrick Casey, current director of Identity Evropa



Evidence of the rebranding



Evidence of the rebranding from Identity Evropa to American Identity Movement



Evidence of IE violence



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