

Forbes

As Pressure Mounts To 'Demilitarize' Police, Sovereign Citizens Arm For War

By [JJ MacNab](#)
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On July 30, 2014, the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism at the University of Maryland released a report entitled "[Understanding Law Enforcement Intelligence Processes](#)." According to the officers polled for the study, the Sovereign Citizen movement is the number one domestic terrorism threat today, a big jump from just seven years ago when the group was seventh on the list.

In the months since the poll data information was gathered, both the United States and Canada have experienced a considerable increase in sovereign activity – a violent wave of ambushes, attacks, and domestic terrorism plots aimed specifically at law enforcement.

Perceived Threat of Extremist Groups

Type of Group	2013/2014	2006/2007
Sovereign Citizens	1	7
Islamic Extremists/Jihadists	2	1
Militia/Patriot	3	6
Racist Skinheads	4	3
Neo-Nazis	5	2
Extreme Animal Rightists	6	4
Extreme Environmentalists	7	5
Klux Klux Klan	8	8
Left-Wing Revolutionaries	9	13
Extreme Anti-Abortion	9	11
Black Nationalists	11	10
Extreme Anti-Tax	12	8
Extreme Anti-Immigration	12	9

The numbers

- At least eight officers have been killed so far this year by sovereigns and related anti-government extremists, mostly in ambush situations. None of the accused killers appeared to have known the officers; they were merely convenient, symbolic targets.
- In the last eleven years, at least 23 officers have been killed by sovereigns, militia members, and other anti-government extremists.
- In just six years, another 22 were severely injured (either shot or in one case, bombed.)
- Since 2010, another five extremists attempted to shoot officers, but missed.
- In just the last four years, at least ten extremist groups or individuals were caught before their plans to kill multiple police officers could be put into effect.

I have compiled a detailed list of these various attacks. Click [here to view the full report](#).

More names will likely be added over the next few months, since murder and attempted murder investigations tend to be extremely slow and the ideology of the suspect may not be divulged for months, if ever.

Examples of recent activity

September 9, 2014 – [Eric Frein](#), an anti-government survivalist, is currently a fugitive wanted for shooting two Pennsylvania State troopers in an ambush, killing one and wounding the other. According to the State Police Commissioner, Frein had talked about committing mass murder in addition to killing officers. He was recently added to the FBI's [10 Most Wanted list](#). *General Anti-government*

August 12, 2014 — Armed with an AK-47, ammunition, and propane canisters, [Douglas Lee Leguin](#) set a fire, then called 911 to report it. When Texas officers and firemen responded to the call, he shot at them in order to bring attention to his political complaints. *Sovereign Citizen*

July 11, 2014 – According to court documents, [John Huggins](#) had a plan to trigger the next American Revolution by killing two police officers, then bombing both the Tremonton Utah police station and a nearby bridge to prevent first responders from helping those injured and killed in the attacks. In his home, police found a bomb and five notebooks that detailed his surveillance on Tremonton police officers. *General Anti-government*

July 10, 2014 – An Ohio Probation Officer was shot and injured when he attempted to arrest [Tyshawn Hancock](#) for violating the terms of his probation on aggravated assault charges. *Sovereign Citizen*

June 30, 2014 – [Samuel Bradbury](#) was arrested for threatening to kill local Indiana police officers and “blow the Tippecanoe County Courthouse to pieces.” Bradbury claimed to be affiliated with Jerad and Amanda Miller (see below.) During a search of Bradbury's home, police found the components for a firebomb and two explosive devices. *Hybrid Extreme Left / Extreme Right, General Anti-government*

June 14, 2014 – [Brent Douglas Cole engaged in a shootout](#) with two officers who confronted him when he was camping illegally in the Tahoe National Forest in California. Cole, a California Highway Patrol officer, and a Bureau of Land Management ranger were all wounded in the shootout. The federal government [charged Cole](#) with the shooting on September 18, 2014. *Sovereign Citizen*

June 8, 2014 — [Jerad and Amanda Miller ambushed and killed](#) two random Las Vegas Metro Police Department officers having lunch in Nevada. They also killed a bystander who tried to stop their spree, before being killed by officers responding to the scene. The couple had provided armed support to Cliven Bundy during his standoff against the federal government in April. *Sovereign Citizen*

June 6, 2014 — [Dennis Marx attempted to take over a courthouse](#) in Cumming, Georgia while wearing body armor and a gas mask, with explosives strapped to his body. He set a spike strip in the road to slow first responders and was armed with guns, ammunition, grenades, tear gas, and bombs. His plan was thwarted by a deputy who was outside the courthouse doing a perimeter sweep. The officer was shot and wounded, and Marx died at the scene. The violent battle was captured on [a security camera](#) and on [the smart phone of a witness](#). *Sovereign Citizen*

June 5, 2014 — In Moncton, Canada, [Justin Bourque](#) ambushed and shot five Mounties, killing three. Although Canadian, Bourque's [social media](#) pages reveal an obsession with U.S. gun laws and politics, killing police, typical sovereign conspiracy theories, the American Revolution, and Anonymous, all similar to Jerad Miller's online presence. *General Anti-government/Canadian*

May 1, 2014 — While [Arvin Kangas](#) argued with two Alaska State Troopers in remote Tanana, Alaska, his teenage son Nathaniel shot the officers in the back multiple times, killing them both. The father and son staged the bodies of the Troopers to make it appear that they had drawn their weapons and then rushed to hide their marijuana plants and seeds. *Sovereign Citizen*

January 15, 2014 — When Ohio sheriff deputies went to evict [Mark Kulis](#), they knew he was a sovereign citizen so they waited until he left his home. He was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon and once inside the home, the officers found multiple explosive devices, including a bomb in the oven that was wired to a motion sensor. Kulis was found unfit to stand trial. *Sovereign Citizen*

December 19, 2013 — When two South Carolina deputies pulled [Yahchanan Reames](#) over for driving erratically, he engaged the officers in a shootout. All three were injured. At the time, Reames was out on bond for engaging officers in a fight in a prior traffic stop. *Sovereign Citizen*

August 21, 2013 [David Brutsche](#), a convicted felon and child sex offender, and Devon Newman were caught in plot to kidnap, torture, and murder Las Vegas Metro Police Department officers. They pled guilty to lesser charges and were sentenced to probation. *Sovereign Citizen*

September 4, 2012 [Christopher Lacy](#) obscured his license plate and then shot and killed the first California Highway Patrol officer who pulled him over. Lacy was killed by the officer's partner. *Sovereign Citizen*

The militarization of civilians

While [the ACLU](#), [the Cato Institute](#), cop-bashing sites such as [Cop Block](#) and [Cop Watch](#), and the media have made quite a bit of noise about the “militarization” of police forces following the Bundy standoff in Bunkerville, Nevada and the Michael Brown protests in Ferguson, Missouri, they’ve said little about the groups and individuals the police fear most – sovereigns, Islamic terrorists, and militia groups.

The following list contains examples of the weapons and tools purchased, built, or used by sovereign citizens and related anti-government extremists in their recent attacks and plots on law enforcement:

- Biological weapons
- Chemical weapons
- Sniper rifles
- .50 caliber rifles with armor piercing rounds
- Fully automatic machine guns
- Improvised explosive devices (IEDs)
- Night vision scopes
- Grenades
- Tear gas
- Body armor

Some of the equipment above was stolen from military bases, some was purchased on the black market, and some is legal to own in various states.

Many of the sovereigns and militia members were trained by the military, and a few are still on active duty. At least two groups have sent volunteers to join the military to receive tactical training which they then teach other group members when they return home.

A rumor of war

Obviously, police relations in some communities like Ferguson are in bad shape right now, but the answer isn’t to demonize all cops as racist, abusive thugs and strip them of their defensive tools. The groups stirring up much the criticism have their own agendas – for example, some want to end the War on Drugs – but they are ignoring that the solution is to change the drug laws, not put the police at greater risk in an effort to make sure the laws can’t be enforced.

Law enforcement agencies realistically don’t need MRAPs, grenade launchers, and gun turrets during a violent riot, but since criminals, drug traffickers, and groups like the sovereign citizen movement do have easy access to military-grade weapons, the police do need more protection than they did a few years ago, and they can’t afford the intermediate solutions. A Bearcat armored police vehicle runs \$230,000 per truck, yet they can get the military surplus MRAP from the federal government for the nominal cost of shipping.

The sovereign and militia movements are growing rapidly, emboldened by the Bundy standoff in April, where they outgunned and outmanned the federal and county officers who were there by court order to remove Bundy's trespassing cattle from federal land. These groups are gearing up and preparing for war, and local police are going to bear the brunt of their attacks. To ignore the warning signs is foolhardy, but practical solutions are going to require compromise and adult conversation, not sensationalized stories and cop bashing.