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# Richmond Cops Mistakenly Hand Over Anti-Protest Guides to Anarchist

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**After filing a Freedom of Information Act request with the Richmond Police Department for police training documents, Mo Karn received much more than expected in return: homeland security and crowd control guides that show how the police target protests.**

The police filed for an emergency court order yesterday to prohibit Karn from publicizing any of the documents, which should never have been released. The cops' reasoning? "Defendant Mo Karn is a known and admitted anarchist."

The documents, however, have already been published online. And buried in the training guides are insights into three trends in law enforcement that have been occurring not just in Virginia, but nationally: the demonization of protest, the militarization of police, and turning local cops into "terrorism" officials.

### **The Demonization of Protest**

The Richmond Police Department's Emergency Operations Plan

<http://ia700400.us.archive.org/20/items/EmergencyOperationsPlanPart1Of2/emergencyopplan1of2.pdf>

includes a section on "civil disturbances." While this sounds innocuous, "civil disturbances" are defined so broadly as to include what the police call "dissident gatherings."

"The City of Richmond is a target rich environment" for antiwar protesters, the document says. And it warns that police and homeland security have reason to be increasingly concerned:

"Current training and intelligence reveals that protestors are becoming more proficient in the methods of assembly."

### **Militarization of Local Police**

Such a depiction of "assembly" (a First Amendment right) as a "disturbance" and a threat is all the more troubling when put in the context of the other police department guides. Richmond's Crowd Management

### **Operating Manual**

<http://ia700404.us.archive.org/33/items/CrowdManagementTeam/CrowdManagementTeam.pdf>

is for the police unit assigned to large protests (no experience required). Among the tools that the crowd management team are issued include riot shields, chemical agents, cut tools, helmets, body armor, cameras, video cameras, batons, gas masks, and a "mass arrest kit."

### **Deputizing Local Cops as Counter-terrorism Officials**

This militarization of local police is accompanied by another trend in law enforcement since September 11th: deputizing local cops to becoming "homeland security" and counter-terrorism officials. According to the Homeland Security Criminal Intelligence Unit Operating Manual, "The Richmond Police Department is under contract with the FBI to provide assistance through staffing, intelligence and equipment." And one member of the homeland security unit is assigned to the Joint Terrorism Task Force.

The result? Documents like the Virginia Terrorism Threat Assessment. The 2009 document was created by the Virginia Fusion Center, of which the Richmond Police Department is part. Fusion centers are ostensibly designed to gather terrorism intelligence from multiple police agencies, and make us safer. In practice, they routinely label activists as “terrorists.” Among the “terrorist threats” identified in Virginia were animal rights activists, environmental activists, and anarchists.

According to the threat assessment, “The Virginia Federation of Anarchists has held two conferences in Richmond in November 2007 and January 2008? and “Anarchist protesters at the International Monetary Fund in Washington, D.C. spilled over into Prince William County.”

Karn, meanwhile, wears her scarlet circle ‘A’ with pride, and has no problem being labeled an anarchist. The FOIA was submitted by the **Wingnut Collective**,

<http://wingnutrva.org/richmond-police-department-documents/>

a Richmond anarchist group, as part of their police accountability project.

In his court motion warning that Karn is an “anarchist,” Richmond’s Deputy Assistant Attorney Brian Telfair doesn’t allege the possibility of any violence or property destruction. Instead, he cites a blog post by Karn about acquiring government information through legal requests. The title? “FOIA Rocks!”

<http://anarchymo.wordpress.com/2010/12/21/foia-rocks/>