

Our View: We have our own radical groups right here at home

Devin Rokyta/Moscow-Pullman Daily News Editorial Board

The "Three Percenters" like to describe themselves as armed "patriots."

We think a more apt description would be terrorists.

How else would you describe masked and heavily armed men who routinely gather with the sole intent of intimidating others, most often Muslims? Men who call for an armed uprising and the overthrowing of the government? Men who want the people in an entire religion expelled from the country?

There would be no question if their skin color were slightly darker and they were carrying Qurans rather than poster boards decorated with hateful messages, full of misspellings and grammatical errors.

In addition to threatening Muslims, members of the group have also been suspected recently of making threats to lawmakers and police.

"We will interfere with every move (Muslims) make towards taking over our country," one member in Dallas told The Associated Press. "We are ready to fight back if they come at us violently."

The group formed back in 2008, after Barack Obama was elected president, to fight back against their own government, which they believe wants to disarm them, strip their constitutional rights and take their property. Its members, not surprisingly, are mostly white, conservative men who own guns.

While for years they have been routinely patrolling the nation's borders to keep illegal immigrants out, they've recently turned the full force of their hate and ignorance toward Muslims, nearly all of whom are peaceful and valuable members of our society.

Unfortunately, their hateful message and bigoted beliefs are being emboldened by Republicans who are pandering to their far-right, extremist viewpoints.

Currently, more than half of the states' governors want to keep their borders closed to Syrian refugees and reality TV star Donald Trump has vowed, if elected president of the United States, to stop all Muslim immigration into the country and register all U.S.-based Muslims.

It's all very dangerous, and it is likely just a matter of time before one of these "patriots" does something more than spew hate from his mouth.

It's time to start paying attention to our homegrown radicals and start calling them what they are
- terrorists.