



# The Far Right – Ideology, Modus Operandi and Development Trends

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## Synopsis<sup>1</sup>

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the influence of the far-right phenomenon upon public agenda and political systems became glaringly apparent, and its potency has been consistently growing in recent decades. The evolution of the far-right since its previous, twentieth-century iteration has become evident through both structural changes to its organizational composition as well as definitive shifts to the movement's operational stratagem. The far-right political coalition has mutated from a hierarchical organization with a centralized operational command to a highly decentralized movement typified by "lone wolf" and "copycat" attacks driven by ideological rather than organizational influences. This shift in the movement's approach to command and control occurred in conjunction with a marked escalation in the force of their terrorist ventures, from a 'limited' (soft) violence to 'comprehensive' (hard) violence demonstrated through mass casualty attacks mostly perpetrated by Lone Wolf actors.

1995 served as the watershed moment precipitating the above structural and operational changes, catalyzed by Timothy James McVeigh's terrorist attack on the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City on April 19<sup>th</sup> of that year. This act of domestic terror constituted the most fatal act of homegrown terrorism in United States' history, and the first maximum-casualty terror attack perpetrated by a lone wolf. McVeigh's attack altered the course of the far-right militia movement from which he derived his ideology. Prior to the Oklahoma City Bombing, white supremacist terrorists targeted specific individuals or groups considered enemies. McVeigh diverted from this established framework, intending to commit mass murder for the sake of inflicting a massive body count that would grab the attention of the wider population and inspire 'brothers in arms' to mobilize in the name of the white supremacist ideology. The attack's success thereby triggered a fundamental shift in the trajectory of white power activism, spawning a new generation of radical extremists motivated to emulate and replicate McVeigh's Lone Wolf modus operandi. The prolific legacy of the Oklahoma City bombing, coupled with the rapid technological advancements of the digital age, have formed a fertile ground for the internationalization of the white supremacist movement. No longer constrained by physical boundaries, far-right influencers have embraced the internet and social media as a means to disseminate their message, connect with like-minded individuals and expand their spheres of influence far beyond their specific geographic area. Within this modern, digitized far-right community, traditional organizational hierarchies are rendered obsolete, replaced by a decentralized and diffused online ecosystem in which the internet is weaponized as the agent of the "leaderless resistance".

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<sup>1</sup> The authors would like to thank Max Hoffer, an intern at ICT for his assistance with this research

Furthermore, concurrently to the proliferation of violent, extremist rhetoric across the internet, other factions within the far-right ideological constellation have pursued a separate endeavor, attempting to legitimize racist, white supremacist discourse within mainstream politics. This normalization of racial identity politics is facilitated through rapid increase in far-right political parties which, by carefully manipulating latent xenophobic tendencies emanating from mainstream political issues such as immigration and Islamic terror, have galvanized massive public support and been elected into European parliaments.

The extremist far-right narrative considers the existing state apparatus inherently corrupt, seeking to topple the current political regime and the established social order in favor of a white ethnostate. In this sense, they are no different than the global jihadist organizations that seek to replace the current global political order with a worldwide caliphate, in which all mankind would live under the principles of Islamic jurisprudence. In order to actualize this idealized Islamic society, ardent Islamists enlist Da'wa and Jihad, the established methodology to accelerate the imposition of Islamic Law upon the world. However, despite these general similarities, unlike the global jihadi movement, the far-right is entirely devoid of a coherent governing ideology that delineates the parameters of accepted behavior. Despite the overarching thematic commonalities, the new radical right of the twenty-first century is by no means a cohesive movement with a single defined philosophy or strategy. Instead, it encompasses a broad spectrum of ideological groups and subgroups, some in agreement and others in adamant disavowal of each other's positions. Each ideological group has different demographics, subcultures and core beliefs that influence their *modi operandi* and potential to pose a legitimate domestic terror threat.

The far-right phenomenon has, in recent years, emerged as a virulent threat to national security, with white supremacist terrorism significantly outpacing terrorism from other perpetrators. Contending with the terrorist threat posed by the far-right is challenging, and therefore requires a deep understanding of contemporary white supremacist groups and ideologies: their guiding doctrines, strategies and organizational structures; the movement's spoken and projected linguistic discourse; influencers and role models; cultural milieus; as well as leverageable opportunities to promote deradicalization.

This article aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the far-right phenomenon, in order to facilitate the formation of a general typological framework through which to assess threats posed by any current or future far-right affiliated groups.

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## Preamble

In April 2020, the U.S State Department designated Russian white supremacist group, the Russian Imperialist Movement, as a terrorist organization. This designation came amid growing concern over global far-right terrorist activity within the United States, with FBI Director Christopher Wray recognizing far-right and racially motivated terror attacks as a national threat priority in 2020<sup>2</sup>. The inhumane police killing of George Floyd, an unarmed African American man in May 2020, ignited nationwide protests against racism and racial inequality. The video of the incident, in which white Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin calmly pressed his knee into Mr. Floyd's neck, suffocating the handcuffed victim for a jarring 8 minutes and 46 seconds, quickly went viral. Floyd's murder generated massive demonstrations by social justice activists, leftist organizations and the Black Lives Matter movement against police violence and systemic racism across the United States. As protests swept the country, far-right extremists inserted themselves among the demonstrators, seeking to wreak havoc and incite chaos in order to turn protests into riots. This climate of civic unrest exacerbated tensions between the radical activists on the left and right, sparking a global conversation about race and inequality.

The issue of far-right extremism has also pervaded public discourse as a result of the clear expansion of the phenomenon in Europe and in the US, evidenced by the overt increase in lone wolf terror attacks over the past two decades, perpetrated by adherents to far-right ideology.

Extremist far-right organizations, like their Jihadist counterparts, seek to replace the existing social order with a political system of their own design. The means employed by far-right radicals to achieve this end also has notable similarities with their Islamist parallel. Radical white supremacists seek to 'awaken' the white race to the reality of their people's imminent imperilment. Through the propagation of this imperilment narrative, akin to Islamists' practice of Da'wa, far right activists seek to mobilize the white masses into violent action against the state in defense of their race. Unlike global jihadist organizations, however, the far-right milieu encompasses a plurality of outlooks, lacking a singular, overarching ideological framework to cohere and guide the movement.

The surge in far-right terrorism in recent years has generated a widespread notion surrounding the emergent terror threat posed by the movement to the public order. Accordingly, combatting far-right extremists has increasingly become a priority for police and security organizations. Countering the far-right terrorist threat

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<sup>2</sup> Woodward Alex, "FBI raises neo-Nazi threat level to same as Isis", *INDEPENDENT*, February 7 2020, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/fbi-neo-nazi-isis-us-terror-threat-level-trump-a9323786.html>

poses unique challenges to the national security establishment. Extreme right-wing terrorist actors present distinct operational patterns and organizational structures, including the predominance of lone wolf actors acting under the principal of 'leaderless resistance' rather than according to the direction of a distinct hierarchical organizational command. Furthermore, in recent years, far-right terrorists have increasingly perpetrated or attempted mass casualty attacks, indicating a shift from a strategy of limited, 'soft' violence against specific targets to high intensity, high casualty 'hard' violence.

These modi operandi differ in focus, scope, and outcome. The former, "**limited (soft) violence**", is typically characterized by demonstrations, arson and, occasionally, singular hate crimes against specific targets. The implementation of "limited violence" is generally instigated, managed and supervised by far right organizations or parties, who strive to stay within the accepted boundaries of political activity. The latter, "**mass (hard) violence**", is typified by medium and high intensity attacks perpetrated by lone wolves or small cells, acting alone but tied together through online virtual communities. These mass-casualty attacks, often accompanied by a written manifesto and a live-stream of the attack, are perpetrated with the intention of capturing mass attention and propagating far-right ideology in order to incite a race war and accelerate system collapse.

This article is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the far-right phenomenon, exploring the various methodological and theoretical challenges that complicate a coherent conceptualization of the far-right threat. It delineates the variations and ideological boundaries between the disparate far-right constituents and charts the structural and organizational development of the phenomenon over the past decades. The FBI's elevation of the threat posed by racially-motivated far-right extremists to "the same footing" as threats posed by foreign jihadist organizations such as ISIS and al-Qaeda is encouraging yet problematic. Whilst on one hand this designation reflects an understanding by the national security apparatus regarding the magnitude of the threat and the imperative to contain it, the comparison of far-right radicals with Islamist extremists serves to ignore the indelible differences between these two phenomena. A nuanced appreciation of the inherent distinctions in ideology, organizational culture, operational structure and sources of influence is crucial to combatting the far-right terror threat.

Understanding the far-right phenomenon requires a paradigmatic shift in conceptualization. The accepted framework for evaluating and assessing the jihadist threat according to organizational ties and hierarchical command and control structures is not applicable or appropriate for the far-right archetype. The far-right is not a coherent, centralized or easily defined movement. Rather, it comprises a fluid, complex and overlapping web of loosely connected individuals, groups and sub-groups with a diverse ideological tapestry, linked together by a core set of common ideas surrounding the superiority of the 'pure' white race, the corruption

of the ruling elites (usually identified as Jews) and the impending threat of racial imperilment. The movement thus does not function according to the logic of a classic organizational structure that includes a functional hierarchy, operational dogma or training mechanisms. This article therefore strives to provide a practicable typological paradigm through which to classify, evaluate and assess various manifestations of the far-right terrorist threat, so as to facilitate the development of appropriate and actionable counterterrorism measures.

**The first chapter** will discuss the complex ideological tapestry of the far-right, delineating and clarifying the blurry boundaries between the predominant currents of the movement. Further, it will identify the core, ineliminable components uniting the movement, whilst emphasizing the inherent ideological differences that can be expected to influence the behavior and strategy of each groupuscule. **The second chapter** will outline the shifts in organizational structure observed within the far-right movement, examining the variations in the movement across its main theatres – Europe and the United States. **The third chapter** will evaluate the evolution in the movement’s modus operandi, from ‘soft violence’ directed, managed and sponsored by established, centralized organizations to ‘hard violence’ perpetrated by lone wolves operating without direct guidance from an organized entity. **The last chapter** will review and contextualize the various concepts presented in previous chapters, emphasizing the current trends of the far-right phenomenon and exploring the movement’s estimated trajectory for future development.

## Chapter 1: Far-Right Literature Review – Ideology, Modus Operandi and Developmental Trends

Far-right terrorism is not a new phenomenon. It comprises a diverse and dispersed network of individuals, groups and organizations united by a set of common ideas centered upon racial unity, white nationalism, xenophobia, and a powerful narrative of racial imperilment. Recently, the international community has witnessed a new wave of far-right extremist terrorism, manifest in a devastating barrage of mass attacks perpetrated by white nationalists accompanied by a concerted effort to recruit and mobilize supporters. A recent report published by the UN's Security Counterterrorism Committee (CTED) in July 2020 identified the far-right movement as a concerning global threat, evidenced by a 320% increase in far-right terrorist attacks over the past five years<sup>3</sup>.

With notable exceptions such as Norway in 2011 or Christchurch in 2019, far-right terrorism has hitherto been characterized by high-frequency, low intensity attacks, meaning many incidents but few fatalities. As such, the law enforcement and national security establishments suffer from a tendency to dismiss the far-right threat in favor of the apparently more serious, higher-casualty threat posed by Jihadist Islam. In recent years, however, there has been a notable increase in the frequency and lethality of far-right extremism, evident in multiple mass-casualty attacks targeting minorities in Christchurch (March 2019), El Paso (August 2019), Halle (October 2019), and Hanau (February 2020). In the United States, since 9/11, more people have been killed by far-right extremists than by Islamist terrorists<sup>4</sup>. These incidents of mass-murder inspired by far-right ideology are no longer rare nor exceptional cases, and rather, reflect the growing, pernicious and increasingly transnational threat posed by the new generation of far-right extremism. Accordingly, policymakers, researchers and the national security enterprise are adjusting the security agenda to prioritize a campaign against the extreme-right's potential for terrorist violence<sup>5</sup>. The Southern Poverty Law Center's 2019 report summarizing that year's incidents of racially and ethnically motivated terrorism corroborates the importance of this elevation of far-right extremist terror to a "national threat priority", declaring the virulent ideology of far-right white supremacy as a "serious threat to national security and pluralistic democracy"<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). "Member States concerned by the growing and increasingly transnational threat of extreme Right-wing terrorism". July 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/news/2020/07/06/cted-publishes-updated-trends-alert-response-extreme-right-wing-terrorist-groups-covid-19/>

<sup>4</sup> Tore Bjørgo & Jacob Aasland Ravndal, "Extreme-Right Violence and Terrorism: Concepts, Patterns, and Responses", *ICCT*, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://icct.nl/publication/extreme-right-violence-and-terrorism-concepts-patterns-and-responses/>

<sup>5</sup> Zakir Gul and Dr. Ferhat Goktepe, "A Local and Global Threat: The White Racially and Ethnically Motivated Terrorism", *August 2020*. Retrieved from: [https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2020/08/19/a-local-and-global-threat-the-white-racially-and-ethnically-motivated-terrorism/?utm\\_source=iterable&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=1455707](https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2020/08/19/a-local-and-global-threat-the-white-racially-and-ethnically-motivated-terrorism/?utm_source=iterable&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=1455707)

<sup>6</sup> The Southern Poverty Law Center, "The Year In Hate And Extremism 2019", retrieved from: [https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/yih\\_2020\\_final.pdf](https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/yih_2020_final.pdf)



The rise in terrorist attacks perpetrated by far-right extremists is increasingly concerning not only because of their escalating lethality, but also due to the cycle of inspiration and interconnection between disparate lone actor terrorists across the globe. Since 2011, a third of far-right extremist attackers were directly inspired by their predecessors, seeking to emulate the 'successes' of their role models<sup>7</sup>. With the proliferation of lengthy online manifestos on extremist internet forums and live-streamed attacks to a global audience, copycat terrorism has emerged as the primary modus operandi of lone-wolf far-right terrorists, creating a self-perpetuating cycle of violence fueled by a culture of celebrity. Brenton Tarrant's widely disseminated manifesto accompanying his 2019 mass-shooting at a Christchurch mosque inspired copycat killings in 2019 by John Ernest in Poway, California (1 killed), Patrick Crusius in El Paso, Texas (22 killed), and Stephan Balliet in Halle, Germany (2 killed) – all of whom cited Tarrant as the source of their inspiration<sup>8</sup>. Tarrant himself claimed inspiration from Norwegian far-right terrorist Anders Breivik, the perpetrator of the 2011 Norway massacre, and Dylan Roof, a white supremacist who killed nine African American worshippers at a South Carolina church in 2015<sup>9</sup>. This copycat contagion reflects the transnational potency of far-right extremist ideology, facilitated through the ethereal web of unregulated, anonymous online platforms. These online communities are not confined to the barriers of physical proximity, allowing members across the world to congregate in extremist echo-chambers in which anonymous members are free to disseminate propaganda, radicalize and recruit new members, exchange tactical and operational advice, coach members to evade law enforcement and counterterrorism operations, finance their endeavors and coordinate with one another<sup>10</sup>. Whilst the disparate attacks perpetrated by members of this digital brotherhood are plotted and executed by lone actors, each individual act forms part of a global network of inspiration<sup>11</sup>.

An additional testament to the transnational nature of the far-right phenomenon is presented in a 2019 report published by the Soufan Center. The research demonstrates the growing danger of white supremacist extremists across the globe, emphasizing the multiplication and fortification of far-right transnational networks. Ukraine, according to the report, has emerged as the epicenter of transnational white supremacist extremism, attracting foreign recruits from across the world to train and radicalize within the theatre of conflict between pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian government forces. Just as aspiring jihadists have exploited conflicts in Afghanistan, Chechnya, the Balkans, Iraq and, most recently, Syria to accrue combat

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<sup>7</sup> Liang, Christina Schori, and Matthew John Cross. "White Jihad: How to Prevent Right-Wing Extremists from Exploiting the Internet."

<sup>8</sup> Ibid; Tore Bjørgo & Jacob Aasland Ravndal, "Extreme-Right Violence and Terrorism: Concepts, Patterns, and Responses"

<sup>9</sup> Zakir Gul and Dr. Ferhat Goktepe, "A Local and Global Threat: The White Racially and Ethnically Motivated Terrorism", August 2020. Retrieved from: [https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2020/08/19/a-local-and-global-threat-the-white-racially-and-ethnically-motivated-terrorism/?utm\\_source=iterable&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=1455707](https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2020/08/19/a-local-and-global-threat-the-white-racially-and-ethnically-motivated-terrorism/?utm_source=iterable&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=1455707)

<sup>10</sup> Tiana Gaudette, Ryan Scrivens & Vivek Venkatesh, "The Role of the Internet in Facilitating Violent Extremism: Insights from Former Right-Wing Extremists", July 2020. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2020.1784147>; Tore Bjørgo & Jacob Aasland Ravndal, "Extreme-Right Violence and Terrorism: Concepts, Patterns, and Responses"

<sup>11</sup> Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). "Member States concerned by the growing and increasingly transnational threat of extreme Right-wing terrorism". July 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/news/2020/07/06/cted-publishes-updated-trends-alert-response-extreme-right-wing-terrorist-groups-covid-19/>

training, indoctrination and battlefield experience, so too have far-right extremists embraced the Ukraine as a safe haven to congregate, train and radicalize<sup>12</sup>. However, despite these similarities, the foreign fighter phenomenon differs between its jihadist and far-right manifestations. Within the global jihadist movement, Al-Qaeda and IS constitute the standard-bearers, a centralized command and control directing the transnational jihadi effort within its various theatres. The far-right extremist milieu has no such authority. Instead, the foreign fighters of the far-right are highly factionalized, with multiple competing movements vying for pre-eminence<sup>13</sup>.

Like jihadis, for the foreign fighters of the far-right, their contribution to the cause does not cease upon arrival home from the international battleground. Former foreign fighters are expected to return to their homes of origin (or a third party country to which they may access) in order to recruit new members and implement their learned operational knowledge in acts of terrorist violence. The Azov Battalion, formed in 2014 to oppose the pro-Russian separatist effort, has established a dedicated wing to manage international relations – the ‘Western Outreach Office’. Operatives from the outreach office travel across Europe dedicated to proselytize the movement’s mission of white supremacy, recruit and attract foreign fighters and connect with other like-minded extremist individuals and groups. In July 2018, German-language pamphlets produced by the Azov Battalion were found distributed among the audience at a right-wing rock concert in Thuringia, inviting the reader to enlist in the movement, “join the ranks of the best” and “save Europe from extinction”<sup>14</sup>. Moreover, in September 2019, a U.S Army soldier was arrested after he was found distributing detailed instructions on how to build a bomb and proclaiming his desire to travel to Ukraine and fight with the Azov Battalion<sup>15</sup>.

In addition to these already worrying trends, the rapid spread of the far-right extremist contagion has been further expedited amidst the political and socioeconomic disruption caused by COVID-19. The Coronavirus pandemic and resultant imposition of lockdowns across the world has provided the far-right movement with a captive, disaffected audience on the internet to radicalize and recruit. COVID-19 has provided a rare opportunity for far-right extremist individuals and groups to exploit the current climate of panic, discontent and uncertainty to further their objectives. Far-right radicals have elevated their online activism: promoting conspiracy theories; fueling panic and distrust through disinformation; engaging in campaigns of cyber

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<sup>12</sup> The Soufan Center, "White Supremacy Extremism: The Transnational Rise of the Violent White Supremacist Movement", September 2019. Retrieved from: <https://thesoufancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Report-by-The-Soufan-Center-White-Supremacy-Extremism-The-Transnational-Rise-of-The-Violent-White-Supremacist-Movement.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

harassment; and calling for direct attacks<sup>16</sup> – whether through kinetic means or weaponizing the coronavirus as a biological weapon<sup>17</sup>.

The online infrastructure employed within the far-right ecosystem has presented the movement with access to the borderless, technology-enabled financial solutions of the digital era. The radical right has consistently been quick to adapt to the unabating rapidity of technological progress. The movement has thereby implemented this adaptability to the financial sector, exploiting new technologies, online networks, payment systems and digital currencies to raise, store, transfer and obscure their funds<sup>18</sup>. Research conducted by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) and Global Disinformation Index (GDI) in October 2020 exposed the broad spectrum of online financial platforms and services used by far-right activists to support their activity, including: onsite donation forms; crowdfunding sites; content subscription fees; direct sale of merchandise; charity aggregation sites; flexible monetary transaction/collection platforms; and cryptocurrency<sup>19</sup>. The funds accumulated through these transnational monetary networks are then invested to further the objectives of the movement. Purchases may cover short-term goals of violence and recruitment (weapons, propaganda material and legal fees) or longer-term goals to expand and consolidate the movement (most notably through the purchase of land to be used as an extremist enclave and training headquarters)<sup>20</sup>

Another disturbing exemplar of the mounting threat posed by the far-right is the marked growth in public support for far-right populist parties across various European parliaments. Populist radical right parties repeatedly, intentionally and consistently clash with the core tenets of liberal democracy, separating society into two dichotomous entities – the “pure” sovereign people and the corrupt “other” – seeking to exclude non-native, minority groups from social benefits and political rights<sup>21</sup>. Bjørgo and Ravndal emphasise that far-right ‘radical’ populist parties, as opposed to their closely-associated right-wing ‘extremist’ brethren, operate within the democratic framework to challenge the current system from within, exploiting the freedoms of the liberal-democratic order to undermine the foundations of the regime<sup>22</sup>. Whilst ‘radicals’ promote a political solution, preserving the democratic rule of law, ‘extremists’ reject the viability of a political solution, legitimizing violence, terror and revolutionary war to achieve their means.

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<sup>16</sup> Liram Koblenz-Stenzler, “The Far Right is Using Covid-19 Pandemic as a Tool To Deepen Influence an Encourage Violence”, ICT, April 2020, [shorturl.at/hQS39f](https://shorturl.at/hQS39f)

<sup>17</sup> Josh Margolin, “White supremacists encouraging their members to spread coronavirus to cops, Jews, FBI says”. *ABCNews*, March 2020. Retrieved from: <https://abcnews.go.com/US/white-supremacists-encouraging-members-spread-coronavirus-cops-jews/story?id=69737522>

<sup>18</sup> Institute for Strategic Dialogue & The Global Disinformation Index. 2020. *Bankrolling Bigotry: An Overview of the Online Funding Strategies of American Hate Groups*. London: Institute for Strategic Dialogue.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Albertazzi, D., & Mueller, S. (2013). Populism and Liberal Democracy: Populists in Government in Austria, Italy, Poland and Switzerland. *Government and Opposition*, 48(3), 343-371. doi:10.1017/gov.2013.12

<sup>22</sup> Ami Pedahzur (2001) "Struggling with the Challenges of Right-Wing Extremism and Terrorism within Democratic Boundaries: A Comparative Analysis", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 24:5, 339-359, Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1080/105761001750434213>

The transnational rise of far-right extremist movement poses a veritable threat to the international order. In order to counter this threat, the global community must formulate a coherent counterterrorism strategy, based on a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Continued inaction in the face of this domestic terror threat by far-right extremists serves to directly endanger the liberal-democratic order and the lives of innocent civilians, rendering the government inept in the face of the current threat landscape.

## Chapter 2: The Development and Characterization of Far-Right Ideologies

Global Jihadi organizations traditionally operate according to a systematic organizational hierarchy. This internal organizational structure dictates the norms, worldview and modus operandi of its members, ensuring the ability of the central leadership to direct and manage the behavior of its subordinate cells and affiliates to support the decentralization of the administrative model. Even as the war on terror forced Islamist terrorist groups to dismantle their hierarchies and disperse their networks across the globe, those who claimed leadership of the global jihadist effort maintained control over the trajectory and strategic direction of the movement according to a “centralization of decision and decentralization of execution” management model<sup>23</sup>. According to this paradigm, the senior leadership proscribes the strategic and tactical standards for the organization as a whole, whilst empowering mid-level field commanders across the theatres of jihadist operations to execute these dicta as they see fit.

The current iteration of far-right extremism, by contrast, largely operates outside the confines of traditional, hierarchical structures, reflecting an increasing emphasis on the individual. Within this decentralized collective of loosely-connected anonymous activists, the esoteric boundaries between organizations and movements, instruction and inspiration, and satire and incitement are becoming more and more ambiguous. This individualistic nature of extreme-right terror does not indicate, as some have assumed, that these events are isolated happenstance. Rather, it serves as a manifestation of the modern networked milieu, whereby web-based technologies and platforms allow for a diffuse form of radicalization, connecting seemingly unrelated attacks in a transatlantic web of ideologically-connected acts of terror. These amorphous networked communities provide for anonymous, unorganized participation in ideologies by a variety of individuals who may or may not engage with formally organized groups. Lone Wolves are the new vanguards of the violent far-right revolution, and ideology is the potent, mobilizing force galvanizing their action. Online interactive participation also serves to connect a myriad right-wing extremist ideologies, creating a nexus of hate-based narratives that expands the pool of potential recruits.

In the digital epoch, ideology has eclipsed organization as a unifying force of collective mobilization. Thus, in order to properly evaluate the threat posed by far-right extremists, researchers must understand the broad spectrum of ideologies within the broader movement and recognize the various motives and strategies that determine their actions. This is difficult, as despite core themes and commonalities, radical right ideology is not a homogenous phenomenon. Identifying the ideological idiosyncrasies of each movement is crucial to illuminating relevant counter-action, yet the boundaries demarcating these different ideological variants are

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<sup>23</sup> Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed, and Nathaniel Barr. "How Al-Qaeda Works: The Jihadist Group's Evolving Organizational Design." *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* 23 (2018): 66-122

not always clear. By providing a brief ideological profile of groups and subgroups within the contemporary extreme right, this work hopes to inform more nuanced and percipient counterterrorism practices.

## The New Generation of Far-Right Extremism

The specter of racial animosity and white supremacy cast a dark cloud over American society on August 11, 2017, when hundreds of self-proclaimed white nationalists gathered in Charlottesville for a two-day protest they called “Unite the Right”<sup>24</sup>. Armed with clubs, pistols and semi-automatic rifles, neo-Nazi skinheads marched alongside alt-right activists, Klansmen, militia members and neo-Confederates to “dominate politics” and unite in defense against the “anti-white establishment”<sup>25</sup>. **Regardless of their individual affiliations and differing ideologies, these disparate groups migrated together from the online dimension to real-life, unified by narratives of white victimhood and xenophobia.**

Charlottesville’s motley mix of far-right activists served as a visible manifestation of the evolution of the far-right, an incarnation of a reemergent movement and its return to the political landscape. Racist movements have a long history in the United States, especially during periods of social, political and economic strain. In the 1910s and 20s, the revived Reconstruction-era Klu Klux Klan drew millions of members in an organized outburst of white supremacy<sup>26</sup>. During the war years, the German American Bund, a Nazi affiliated organization, amassed supporters and waged attacks against leftists and Jews. Desegregation and the civil rights movement triggered the invigoration of the Klan and other white nationalist movements in the 50s and 60s, epitomized through vicious and violent attacks against civil rights activists and blacks<sup>27</sup>.

At the end of the 1970s, the anti-government sentiment created by the Vietnam War served to unite various racist groups – neo-Nazi skinheads, Klansmen, southern separatists, followers of Christian Identity, Odinists and more – under a common, revolutionary banner: **The White Power Movement**. This new white power alliance consolidated against the federal government in attempt to foment a race war, emulating the cell-based terrorism advocated by Louis Beam and depicted fictionally by William Pierce in his book “The Turner Diaries”<sup>28</sup>. In 1995, the Oklahoma City bombing served as the climax of the white power revolution, killing 168 and leading to an FBI crackdown which would stifle the movement and force it back into the shadows.

<sup>24</sup> Atkinson, David C. “Charlottesville and the alt-right: a turning point?.” *Politics, groups, and identities* 6, no. 2 (2018): 309-315.

<sup>25</sup> Law, Vincent. “The ‘Unite the Right’ Rally Is Going to be a Turning Point for White Identity in America.” *AltRight.com*, published August 5 (2017).

<sup>26</sup> Chow, Kat. “What The Ebbs And Flows Of The KKK Can Tell Us About White Supremacy Today,” NPR (December 8, 2018), <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2018/12/08/671999530/what-the-ebbs-and-flows-of-the-kkk-can-tell-us-about-white-supremacy-today>

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Belew, Kathleen. *Bring the war home: The white power movement and paramilitary America*. Harvard University Press, 2019.

The latest iteration of far-right extremism – exemplified by El Paso, Christchurch, Tree of Life, South Carolina, Norway and more – has been gaining significant traction in recent years, veering from the periphery toward the mainstream. The current resurgence of far-right ideology may be explained by a variety of factors, primarily, the strategic adjustment of white supremacists to soften overtly racist rhetoric in order to appeal to a wider audience<sup>29</sup>. This new discourse attempts to normalize white supremacy, developing intellectual and theoretical foundations for racism based on the notion that the white race is at risk of eradication, threatened by the growing population of immigrants and people of colour. The pre-existing, offensive white supremacist, fascist and neo-Nazi ideas that drove the white power movement of the twentieth century were thus rebranded through a new innocuous defensive frame of white victimhood. As such, the new strategy of racist rhetoric has allowed the movement to co-opt mainstream political debates surrounding immigration and globalization, drawing large audiences through a deliberate obfuscation of the underlying ideology.

Through appropriating the political discourse, the far-right movement has benefited immensely from political issues and crises, for example, issues of global insecurity resulting from the 2008 financial crisis; the relatively new phenomenon of global jihadist terror<sup>30</sup> and; most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic. The aftermath of 9/11 and the ensuing war on terror saw a rising current of anti-Muslim, anti-immigration sentiment amid the American population. The Islamist attacks against the United States and the ascendancy of global jihad dominated the political agenda in the US and abroad, empowering far-right populists and their depiction of Muslim immigrants as a violent threat to the native society, bringing the White Genocide narrative (discussed below) to the forefront<sup>31</sup>. Subsequently, the economic grievances and rising distrust in government following the 2008 financial crisis provided additional fodder for far-right propaganda. The climate of financial distress rendered white, middle-class populations particularly susceptible to the nationalistic and xenophobic rhetoric of the far-right, lured by the narrative of a convenient scapegoat on whom to place the blame for their woes<sup>32</sup>. Recently, far-right extremists have moved to capitalize on the powder keg of fear and insecurity ignited by the COVID-19 pandemic. The rampant chaos and confusion has been identified by far-right groups as an opportunity to disseminate their ideology and incite violence, exploiting the global crisis to further their goals<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> Former KKK Grand Wizard, David Duke, first advocated for a transformation of the movement's rhetorical strategy in the 1980s, recognizing that the overtly racist messaging was no longer socially acceptable, and that a 'rebranding' was essential to facilitate recruitment: Berbrier, Mitch. "Impression management for the thinking racist: A case study of intellectualization as stigma transformation in contemporary white supremacist discourse." *Sociological Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (1999): 411-433.

<sup>30</sup> Norrlof, Carla. "Hegemony and inequality: Trump and the liberal playbook." *International Affairs* 94, no. 1 (2018): 63-88.

<sup>31</sup> Bergmann, Eirikur. *Neo-Nationalism: The Rise of Nativist Populism*. Springer Nature, 2020

<sup>32</sup> Funke, Manuel, Moritz Schularick, and Christoph Trebesch. "Going to extremes: Politics after financial crises, 1870–2014." *European Economic Review* 88 (2016): 227-260.

<sup>33</sup> Koblentz-Stenzer, Liram. "The Far Right Leverages COVID-19 Pandemic to Gain Influence and Encourage Violence," International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (April, 2020).

An additional factor contributing to the rise of the far-right is the advent of social media and the Web 2.0 revolution, which created a new fertile terrain for the far-right to propagate their ideology. The internet allows extremists to broadcast their opinions anonymously to large audiences online without the risks associated with membership in organized groups – both social and tactical. The importance of coordinated, hierarchical organizations is therefore declining, with the internet providing an alternative platform for propaganda, recruitment, planning and operational insight<sup>34</sup>. Through the virtual dimension, the tactic of the previous century's radical right: the *Leaderless Resistance*<sup>35</sup> – articulated in Klansman Louis Beam's eponymous essay – was finally realised. In this new contemporary reality, the radical right has been restructured and revamped, with the guiding ideologies of fascism, Nazim and white supremacism repackaged into the somewhat more palatable frames of identitarianism, race realism and nationalist white separatism.

Despite the overarching thematic commonalities, the new radical right of the twenty-first century is by no means a cohesive movement with a single defined philosophy or strategy. Instead, it encompasses a broad spectrum of ideological groups and subgroups, some in agreement and others in adamant disavowal of each other's positions. Each ideological group has different demographics, subcultures and core beliefs that influence their *modi operandi* and potential to pose a legitimate domestic terror threat.

In order to produce a comprehensive risk assessment of far-right extremist groups, it is therefore imperative to delineate a clear typology of contemporary white supremacist groups and ideologies: their guiding doctrines, strategies and organizational structures.

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<sup>34</sup> Neiwert, David. *Alt-America: The rise of the radical right in the age of Trump*. Verso Books, 2017.

<sup>35</sup> Leaderless Resistance is defined as "fundamental departure in theories of organization", advocating anti-state violence by lone wolves or small, cohesive cells, independent of any movement, leader or network of support: Kaplan, Jeffrey. "Leaderless resistance." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 9, no. 3 (1997): 80-95.



## White Replacement Theory

*"I can't sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I'm going in"*

Robert Bowers, Gab, 2018

The unifying narrative connecting the various white supremacist ideologies is the conviction that the white race is facing an existential threat of extinction, endangered by an influx of non-white people who intend to dilute white culture and racial pedigree. This pretense of an imminent threat serves to mobilize individuals to action, legitimizing violence under the guise of self-defense. The white supremacist slogan known as the "Fourteen Words" articulates this notion explicitly: *"We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children"*<sup>36</sup>. The 'White Replacement Theory' reflects three interlinked conspiracy theories claiming the existence of a nefarious plot to destroy white civilization: (1) the '**Great Replacement Theory**', which originated in France; (2) the '**White Genocide Theory**', which emerged in the US; and (3) the '**Eurabia**' thesis articulated by British author Bat Ye'or (Gisèle Littman).

Firstly, the '**Great Replacement Theory**' was popularized by French writer Renaud Camus in his 2012 book entitled *Le Grand Remplacement*. Camus postulates that western society is under siege by unrelenting waves of immigration from non-white countries. This, according to Camus, amounts to 'reverse colonialisation', whereby white European individuals are being replaced through immigration, miscegenation and cultural adulteration<sup>37</sup>. Proponents of the conspiracy argue that this ethnic and cultural replacement is deliberate – orchestrated by elites (often overtly or implicitly identified as Jews) to weaken and eradicate European/white identity. The Great Replacement Theory has not only come to dominate the narrative in violent extremist groups on anonymous social media platforms, but also has permeated the politically mainstreamed discourse promulgated by populist, xenophobic political parties in Europe and beyond<sup>38</sup>. In particular, the theory has inspired the emergence of the Identitarian movement, embodied by Generation Identity, a pan-European white nationalist group advocating for an ethnically and culturally nativist Europe<sup>39</sup>. Though Generation Identity does not openly call for violence, its propaganda manuals employ violent language to "redpill"<sup>40</sup> and recruit new activists. This theory was the ideological impetus inspiring Brenton Tarrant, the Christchurch

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<sup>36</sup> Anti-Defamation League. "New hate and old: The changing face of American white supremacy." *ADL Center on Extremism* (2018).

<sup>37</sup> Davey, Jacob, & Ebner, Julia. "The Great Replacement': The violent consequences of mainstreamed extremism." *Institute for Strategic Dialogue* (2019).

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ebner, Julia. "Who Are Europe's Far-Right Identitarians?," POLITICO (April 5, 2019), <https://www.politico.eu/article/who-are-europe-far-right-identitarians-austria-generation-identity-martin-sellner/>.

<sup>40</sup> A reference to the movie *The Matrix*, meaning becoming enlightened to the truth about reality, particularly a truth that is difficult to accept

attacker (whose manifesto was tellingly titled “The Great Replacement”) who allegedly donated €2,200.22 to Generation Identity.

The ‘**White Genocide**’ rhetoric began circulating among American white supremacist underground groups in the 1970s. In 1972, the official newspaper of the National Socialist White People’s Party published a piece proclaiming that the “Over-Population Myth is Cover for White Genocide”. The publication labels the growing availability of contraception and “birth control campaigns” as a malicious plot to target the white birth rate in white majority countries<sup>41</sup>. A decade later, the term returned to prominence within white extremist discourse through the writing of David Lane, who penned the “White Genocide Manifesto” whilst in prison. The manifesto asserts that white populations are being deliberately eradicated through immigration, forced assimilation, abortion, promotion of homosexuality and violence. Lane also connects this alleged decline in white demographics to “the denial of jobs to white men through so-called affirmative action and other nefarious schemes”<sup>42</sup>. Unlike the Great Replacement Theory, the White Genocide narrative is overtly anti-Semitic, postulating that this ‘White Genocide’ is being intentionally engineered by a “Zionist conspiracy... to destroy the white race”<sup>43</sup>. It was Lane who summarized his three-page manifesto into the now prodigious fourteen words – a slogan reflecting the white supremacist worldview of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The numeric symbol of 14 is today often paired with a second symbol, 88, which stands for “Heil Hitler” (as H is the 8<sup>th</sup> letter of the alphabet). **The number 1488 has become ubiquitous within the white supremacist movement, in tattoos, graphics and symbols, serving as an endorsement of both the White Genocide theory and Nazi ideology.**

‘Eurabia’ is a term coined by Gisèle Littman, an Egyptian-born British author, under the pen name Bat Ye’or, describing a conspiracy surrounding a deliberate Islamization of Europe<sup>44</sup>. The Eurabia theory alleges the existence of a plot involving European and Arab political elites to Islamize and Arabize Europe, threatening western values and undermining previous alignment with the US and Israel<sup>45</sup>. The Eurabia thesis was central to Norwegian terrorist Anders Breivik’s 1516-page tract, *2083: A European Declaration of Independence*, which outlined the ideology underpinning his murder spree.

The modern white supremacist movement relies on key overarching frames through which to legitimise their ideology, especially: conspiracism, dualism and apocalypticism. Conspiracies provide narratives about

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<sup>41</sup> Feshami, Kevan A. “Fear of White Genocide: Tracing the History of a Myth from Germany to Charlottesville.” *Lapham's Quarterly*, September 6, 2017. <https://www.laphamsquarterly.org/roundtable/fear-white-genocide>.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> van Buuren, Jelle. “Spur to Violence?: Anders Behring Breivik and the Eurabia conspiracy.” *Nordic journal of migration research* 3, no. 4 (2013): 205-215.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

specific groups, justifying violence against them in order to foil their evil scheme. Dualism divides the world into competing forces of ‘good’ and ‘evil’, transforming social and political struggles into cosmic battles for the fate of the world. Apocalypticism predicts an inevitable, fast approaching confrontation between these forces of good and evil, during which the true reasons underlying the perceived chaos in society will be revealed to the world. Belief in this impending cosmic battle injects believers with a sense of urgency, driving them to protect civilization by any means necessary<sup>46</sup>. The White Replacement Theory incorporates all three themes into a single, coherent, legitimizing narrative. It combines conspiracy with dualism and apocalypticism, calling for an uprising by the forces of good – white, heterosexual men and women – against the forces of evil – non-white races, Jews, homosexuals and “race traitors”.

Proponents of the White Replacement Theory do not suggest that mass immigration and demographic shifts will end all life on the planet, but rather, will destroy the modern Western civilization created by white Europeans. This establishes a perceived existential threat, driving a sense of urgency which inspires extreme actions. **Today, white supremacist ideology, no matter which version or variation, emphasizes the general notion that the white race is threatened with extinction, condemned to disappear unless brave white men take action.**

### Accelerationism

*“At this point, anything which contributes to friction, chaos and anarchy can only help us in the long run.” (James Mason, Siege, p. 179)*

*“Acceleration is the belief that a social system’s internal contradictions should be pushed to their limits in order to encourage rather than overcome the system’s self-destructive tendencies. This is done to hasten the system’s collapse or demise as well as create space for radical social change to take root.”*

*(Poster authored by The Base Official, n.d.)*

**Whereas the overarching White Replacement narrative constitutes a ‘warning’, whereby the apocalypse (i.e. white genocide) may be averted if good people mobilize to action, accelerationism rejects such idealism. Accelerationist ideology represents a progression from apocalypticism to millenarian post-**

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<sup>46</sup> Berlet, Chip, and Vysotsky, Stanislav. "Overview of US white supremacist groups." *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 34, no. 1 (2006): 11-48.

apocalypticism, whereby the world is already lost and the tribulation to come is inevitable. Rather than attempting to avoid the impending cataclysmic revolution, it should be embraced, as the millennial future will finally herald the emergence of a perfect, utopian society in place of the current, corrupt system<sup>47</sup>.

Accelerationism constitutes a separate ideological group, based on the conviction that Western governments are irreparably ruined, corrupted by “degenerate” values such as multiculturalism, liberalism and diversity. Rather than passively awaiting the ‘**Boogaloo**’<sup>48</sup>, i.e. the violent civil war, the movement advocates the use of violence and terrorism so as to accelerate the demise of the system; sowing chaos, political tension and inciting a ‘Racial Holy War’ (RaHoWa) that will awaken the white masses and culminate in total system collapse<sup>49</sup>. Following the breakdown of the dystopian system in its current form, a perfect, fascist society based on ethnonationalism may rise from its ashes.

Accelerationism represents a new generation of white supremacists that reject the tenets of the ‘old’ extremist right. The movement may trace its origin to the now defunct fascist internet forum, ironmarch.org, an online neo-Nazi gathering place founded in September 2011<sup>50</sup>. The Iron March online community congregated in discussion of an ethnocentric fascist struggle, expressing disillusionment surrounding the failure of organized neo-Nazi movements in achieving their goals. Iron March members thereby actively distinguished themselves from other white nationalist and alt-right groups through an articulated commitment to extreme violence, premised on the realization that terrorism, rather than political involvement, is the only effective strategy for the actualization of white fascist empowerment<sup>51</sup>. Accelerationist ideology crystallized when Iron March users discovered the works of an obscure neo-Nazi ideologue named **James Mason**.

Mason’s *Siege*, a collection of news articles published in the 1980s which itself references well-known neo-Nazis and white supremacists such as Charles Mason, Adolf Hitler and William Pierce, author of *The Turner Diaries*<sup>52</sup>, became the blueprint for accelerationist thought. The incendiary tract, previously limited in circulation to obscure white supremacist circles, became a racist internet phenomenon, disseminated as

<sup>47</sup> Kaplan, Jeffrey. "America's apocalyptic literature of the radical right." *International sociology* 33, no. 4 (2018): 503-522.

<sup>48</sup> The term “boogaloo” derives from 1984 breakdancing film sequel, *Breakin’ 2: Electric Boogaloo*. The word ‘boogaloo’ originated as a joke to denote the word “sequel”, but was appropriated by extremist groups to denote civil war and armed revolution.

<sup>49</sup> Ware, Jacob. "Siege: The Atomwaffen Division and Rising Far-Right Terrorism in the United States." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20 (2019): 417-437.

<sup>50</sup> Hayden, Michael E. "Visions of Chaos: Weighing the Violent Legacy of Iron March," Southern Poverty Law Center (February 15, 2019), <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2019/02/15/visions-chaos-weighing-violent-legacy-iron-march>

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, Samuel Hodgson, and Colin P. Clarke, “The Growing Threat Posed by Accelerationism and Accelerationist Groups Worldwide,” Foreign Policy Research Institute, April 20, 2020, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2020/04/the-growing-threat-posed-by-accelerationism-and-accelerationist-groups-worldwide/>.

required reading and hailed as an answer to the white supremacist movement's strategic efficacy problem<sup>53</sup>. *Siege* offers the antidote to the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of organized far-right movements: decentralized terror attacks carried out by autonomous phantom cells. The rejection of political involvement reflects the accelerationist dogma that "there is no political solution".

Mason's book preaches "leaderless, cell-structured terrorism and white revolution", promoting acts of anti-systemic violence – such as "random shootings" and "assassinations" – by lone wolves and small groups in order to trigger "friction, chaos and anarchy"<sup>54</sup>. **This reflects a shift in the political approach of white supremacists: an eschewal of the strategy of building a legal, united neo-Nazi organization and instead promoting Beam's tactic of the 'Leaderless Resistance', operating outside formal hierarchies and centralized leadership. Accelerationist cells thereby generally operate based on a shared vision and ideology, rather than an organizational structure or the directions of a single leader.**

Indeed, even clearly defined accelerationist groups such as Atomwaffen Division and The Base (both allegedly disbanded in 2020) reject the characterization as formal membership organizations, preferring to describe themselves as "a loose network"<sup>55</sup> or a "fanatical band of comrades"<sup>56</sup>. This is deliberately designed in order to prevent infiltration or identification by law enforcement.

Accelerationists also venerate *The Turner Diaries* as a blueprint for violent terrorist action. William Pierce's fictional novel tells the story of an underground white supremacist army that seeks to overthrow the system through a violent 'Aryan revolution'. In the post-revolutionary period – "the day of the rope" – a global genocide against non-white races and "race traitors" (liberal activists, politicians and white women who slept with black men) ensues<sup>57</sup>. The novel has influenced and inspired acts of terror by individuals seeking to emulate the events described in the book, including one of the most lethal attacks in US history, Timothy McVeigh's 1995 Oklahoma bombing that killed 168 people.

**Accelerationist anarchist doctrine venerates all acts of violence that may destabilize the capitalist system, including those perpetrated in the name of an opposing ideology, such as Islamist terror attacks<sup>58</sup>.** Accordingly, the group is likely to celebrate all terroristic action that is likely to cause chaos and destruction.

<sup>53</sup> Hayden, Michael E. "Mysterious Neo-Nazi Advocated Terrorism for Six Years Before Disappearance," Southern Poverty Law Center (May 21, 2019), <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2019/05/21/mysterious-neo-nazi-advocated-terrorism-six-years-disappearance>

<sup>54</sup> Mason, James. *Siege*. Ironmarch, 2015

<sup>55</sup> "An Eye on 'The Base': Transatlantic Militant Fascists Continue to Interact," Hope Not Hate (April 28, 2019), <https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/2019/04/28/an-eye-on-the-base-transatlantic-militant-fascists-continue-to-interact/>

<sup>56</sup> Bride Initiative Team. "Factsheet: Atomwaffen Division," Georgetown University (October 10, 2019), <https://bridge.georgetown.edu/research/factsheet-atomwaffen-division-awd/>

<sup>57</sup> "The Turner Diaries," Anti-Defamation League, accessed June 26, 2020, <https://www.adl.org/education/resources/backgrounders/turner-diaries>.

<sup>58</sup> "I, for one, don't mind acceleration, regardless of who's doing it." - Sminem's Siege Shack Telegram group

Recently, in the politically charged environment following the murder of George Floyd, some accelerationist platforms have urged their followers to capitalize on the civil unrest and widespread riots in order to provoke polarization and instigate civil war<sup>59</sup>. With tensions high and law enforcement preoccupied, accelerationist affiliated *Boogaloo* groups have infiltrated the riots, sowing discord through attacks on infrastructure, protesters and federal officers<sup>60</sup>.



#### TERRORWAVE REFINED

1.8K edited 4:59:54 AM



#### TERRORWAVE REFINED

Photo

If someone really wanted to kick off the boogaloo, now would be the fine time to fire some shots and frame the crowd around you as responsible

#### Attempts to incite violence (Telegram)

It is important to note that the **Boogaloo** movement is not exclusively white supremacist. The movement encompasses anti-establishment, militia, libertarian and Marxist ideologies as well as white supremacist accelerationist doctrines, united by their plight to fight to launch a violent insurrection against the ‘tyrannical’ government. Some members of Boogaloo groups, such as the “Boogaloo Bois”, “Big Igloo Bois and the “Bojahideen”, have disavowed racism and neo-Nazi ideologies. However, these aberrations do not represent the group as a whole – the term “Boogaloo” has become deeply entrenched within violent accelerationist spaces and it is therefore difficult to clearly extricate the Boogaloo subculture from far-right extremist alignment<sup>61</sup>.

Accelerationist ideas have gained significant traction in recent years. Fiercely critical of the non-violent alt-right strategy of ‘keyboard warfare’ and political involvement, adherents to accelerationism attempt to penetrate mainstream conservative, alt-right and fascist groups, injecting virulent rhetoric in order to “siege-pill”<sup>62</sup> (i.e. propagandize and recruit) reticent white supremacists. By appropriating the counterculture of less

<sup>59</sup> Owen, Tess. “Far-Right Extremists Are Hoping to Turn the George Floyd Protests Into a New Civil War,” Vice (May 30, 2020), [https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/article/pkyb9b/far-right-extremists-are-hoping-to-turn-the-george-floyd-protests-into-a-new-civil-war](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/pkyb9b/far-right-extremists-are-hoping-to-turn-the-george-floyd-protests-into-a-new-civil-war).

<sup>60</sup> “White Supremacists and Other Extremists Exploiting This Moment,” Integrity First for America (June 22, 2020) <https://www.integrityfirstforamerica.org/newsroom/white-supremacists-and-other-extremists-exploiting-this-moment>.

<sup>61</sup> Miller, Cassie. “The ‘Boogaloo’ Started as a Racist Meme,” Southern Poverty Law Center (June 5, 2020), <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2020/06/05/boogaloo-started-racist-meme>.

<sup>62</sup> Reference to “pills” (predominantly, “red-pill” or “black-pill”, is an analogy deriving from the 1999 film *The Matrix* in which the protagonist Neo is given the choice of taking one of two pills: the ‘blue pill’ would mean a continued life of ignorance and delusion, whilst the ‘red-pill’ wakes him from the dream-world, enlightening him to the truth of his reality. The term “red-pilling” has since been appropriated by the far-right to connote a racial awakening, and later “black-pilling” connoted an understanding of the irredeemable state of society and acceptance of despair and nihilism. “Siege-pilling” thus refers to embracing the ideology and strategy espoused within *Siege*.

extremist groups, accelerationist propagandists spread their ideology to a wider audience, capitalizing on mounting disenchantment with the “cluster fucks like [Charlottesville]”<sup>63</sup>.

Accelerationism’s veneration of lone-wolf terror attacks has propelled the manifestation of *Siege* ideology into the real world. Brenton Tarrant and John Earnest, perpetrators of mass-shootings in a Christchurch mosque and the Californian ‘Tree of Life’ synagogue, respectively, both incorporated explicitly accelerationist tenets within their manifestos<sup>64</sup>. Attacks are livestreamed by perpetrators for a global audience, mirroring content from violent computer games and thus gamifying mass murder. The manifestos and livestreams of terrorists are then disseminated in far-right forums, serving as “propaganda of the deed” and inspiring others to emulate successful attacks with high “kill counts”<sup>65</sup>. Mass shooters responsible for large numbers of fatalities are elevated to “sainthood”, inaugurated into the so-called “scoreboard” and glorified within the digital accelerationist community.



WILL YOU MAKE IT ONTO THE LEADERBOARD		
	BREIVIK	77-0
	TARRANT	51-0
	CRUSIUS	22-0
	BOWERS	11-0
	ROOF	9-0
IN THE FIGHT FOR WHITE SURVIVAL?		

‘Leaderboard’ of infamous attackers and their number of victims (source: Telegram)

<sup>63</sup> Loadenthal, Michael, Samantha Hausserman, and Matthew Thierry. “Accelerating Hate: Atomwaffen Division, Contemporary Digital Fascism, and Insurrectionary Accelerationism.” In *Cyber Hate: Examining the Functions and Impact of White Supremacy in Cyberspace*, edited by Robin Maria Valeri and Kevin Borgeson. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books/Rowman & Littlefield, 2020.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Community Security Trust. “*Hateful: The hidden online world fueling far right terror*,” CST Media (2020)



## Alt Right

*“The Alt-Right is... serious opposition to, not just the left, but also the conservative status quo. The alt-Right would agree that... race is the foundation for identity... Almost all people in the Alt-Right have an awareness of Jewish influence... and.. [are] skeptical of it.”*

*“The Alt Right—[are] a radical alternative to the [current] political theology... The Alt-Right is really an alternative to the theology of equality and universalism that is shot through American society”.*

Richard Spencer<sup>66</sup>

“Alt-right”, short for “alternative right”, is a term introduced by Richard B. Spencer in 2008 as “a catch-all for a variety of right-wing voices at odds with the conservative establishment”<sup>67</sup>. Alt-rightism provides a platform for loosely aligned individuals and fringe movements who had been exiled from the traditional right-wing conservative mainstream, forcefully expanding the realm of acceptable political ideas<sup>68</sup>. The alt-right aims to reinject their implicit (and sometimes explicit) racist and anti-Semitic views into mainstream conservative discourse, extending the culturally accepted political scale further to the right.

The alt-right movement is not monolithic. Rather, it is an amalgam of pre-existing political movements and subcultural influences united in a delicate ideological equipoise between divergent factions<sup>69</sup>. Although the movement lacks a coherent, cohesive self-identity, the alt-right bloc is unified by shared contempt of both liberal democratic ideals and mainstream conservatism. The alt-right is a reactionary political ideology fundamentally driven by a rejection of American liberal-conservative thought and the perceived shortcomings of the neoliberal, globalist political system. The mainstream conservative movement (ridiculed as “cuckservatives”<sup>70</sup> by the alt-right), is rejected as corrupt, cowardly and traitorous due to its perceived acquiescence to the liberal ideals of multiculturalism, free-market liberalism and globalism and its failure to respond to the concerns of the white, middle-class male<sup>71</sup>. Alt-right ideology combines white-identity politics,

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<sup>66</sup> Quoted in Main, Thomas J. *The rise of the alt-Right*. Brookings Institution Press, 2018.

<sup>67</sup> Lyons, Matthew N. "Ctrl-alt-delete: The origins and ideology of the alternative right." *Political Research Associates* (2017), p.9

<sup>68</sup> Hawley, George. *The Alt-Right: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press, 2019.

<sup>69</sup> Anti-Defamation League. "New hate and old: The changing face of American white supremacy." *ADL Center on Extremism* (2018).

<sup>70</sup> A combination of “cuckold” and conservative”, thereby comprising racist undertones, as the term “cuck” is often used to refer to white men who allow black men to sleep with their wives

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.



xenophobia, antisemitism, misogyny and authoritarianism, reflecting a shift from the “dog whistle”<sup>72</sup> politics of the American right to open and overt racism under the guise of free speech and a rejection of political correctness<sup>73</sup>.

Fundamentally, the alt-right is an array of far-right ideologies and individuals bound together by the overarching narrative of white replacement: the conviction that white civilization is under attack by globalist, multiculturalist forces implementing liberal ideals of humanism, equality and social justice to undermine and dilute white identity. By re-imagining white nationalist ideas through the paradigm of intellectual legitimacy and political nonconformism, the alt-right successfully exploits the latent resentment of white individuals who would not have actively sought out white nationalist rhetoric. This, combined with the replacement of tattooed skinheads by professional, well-groomed pseudo-academics, offers mainstream rightward-leaning white people a point of identification with pro-white racial politics whilst retaining plausible deniability for their racism<sup>74</sup>.

The political theory underlying the alt-right is comprised of various ideological moorings, personified by leaders and ideologues who represent the broad constellation of right-wing ideologies within the alt-right ecosystem:

### **Paleoconservatism**

One of the major ideological undercurrents influencing the alt-right is Paleoconservatism, a movement espousing limited government, traditionalism and a return to old-fashion values on subjects such as race, class, religion, ethnicity and gender. It serves as a reactionary ideology against neoconservatism, emphasising the ‘Old Right’ philosophy of strong borders, economic protectionism, isolationism and anti-interventionism<sup>75</sup>. Paleoconservatism is fundamentally anti-modern, rejecting the post-Enlightenment values of liberalism, egalitarianism, equality and the concept of natural rights. The alt-right holds this paleoconservative credo that mankind was *not* created equal, and are, in fact, differentiated by race, history, gender, culture, religion, language and culture<sup>76</sup>. Paleoconservatives consider ‘managerial liberalism’ and the human rights regime as a direct threat to the sovereign nation-state, and as such, seek to mobilize a new

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<sup>72</sup> “Dog-whistle” politics refers to the use of coded messages within political speech in order to “surreptitiously communicate support to small groups of impassioned voters whose commitments are not broadly embraced by the body politic”. Politicians use this strategy to mobilize the support of a specific public attuned to understand a subtle, controversial reference without alienating the remainder of the population. Coded racist rhetoric has been a key strategy of the Republican right since the civil rights movement rendered racist or sexist language unacceptable. See López, Ian Haney. *Dog whistle politics: How coded racial appeals have reinvented racism and wrecked the middle class*. Oxford University Press, 2015.

<sup>73</sup> Lyons, Matthew N. "Ctrl-alt-delete: The origins and ideology of the alternative right." *Political Research Associates* (2017),

<sup>74</sup> Hartzell, Stephanie L. "Alt-White: Conceptualizing the" Alt-Right" as a Rhetorical Bridge between White Nationalism and Mainstream Public Discourse." *Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric* 8 (2018).

<sup>75</sup> Ashbee, Edward. "Politics of paleoconservatism." *Society* 37, no. 3 (2000): 75-84.

<sup>76</sup> Main, Thomas J. *The rise of the alt-right*. Brookings Institution Press, 2018.

populist nationalism. Accordingly, paleoconservatives oppose non-white immigration, multiculturalism and welfare economics<sup>77</sup>.

### **Neo-Nazism, White Supremacism and Fascism**

Alongside the 'highbrow white nationalist' component of the alt-right, some radical voices within the movement openly identify with neo-Nazism, asserting that anti-Semitism, scientific racism, sexism and homophobia are foundational values within the ideology<sup>78</sup>. Despite the attempts of some alt-right elements to downplay the Nazi influence within their movement, it is difficult to ignore the blatant Nazi and white supremacist symbolism within the 'meme-factories' of the alt-right. Through mobilizing the irony, satire and humor inherent in the 4chan/8chan internet subculture, Nazi and fascist influencers insert hardcore white supremacy into alt-right circles, rendering it difficult to distinguish between real belief and parody<sup>79</sup>.

Andrew Anglin, editor of the Daily Stormer, an alt-right website which propounds many neo-Nazi and fascist themes, has defined the basic tenets of alt-right ideology, as follows: **(1) Antisemitism** - "Jews are fundamentally opposed to the White race and Western civilization and so must be confronted and ultimately removed from White societies completely." "White Struggle as a Global Battle. The Alt-Right views the struggle for the continued existence of the White race as a global battle between Whites and the Jews"; **(2) White Countries for White People** - "The end goal of the movement is to establish pure White racial states in all formerly White countries... We believe in mass deportations of all non-White immigrants... This would include, in America, a repatriation to Africa of the descendants of slaves (or an allocation of autonomous territory for them within our current borders)"; **(3) Scientific Racism** - "The Alt-Right does not accept the pseudo-scientific claims that all races are equal"; **(4) Opposition to Feminism and Gender Equality** - "The claim that 'men and women are equal' is looked at as entirely ridiculous by the Alt-Right." "The Alt-Right is opposed to homosexuality, as well as the emasculation of men through denying them their traditional role in society"; **(5) Endorsement of White History** - "We view Whites as the creators and maintainers of Western civilization"; **(6) Cultural Normalization** - "The Alt-Right seeks authoritarian measures to deal with addictive drugs, pornography, crime and other degenerate societal ills"; **(7) Common Sense Economics** - "Physically remove Jews... Most in the movement would support a type of free market socialism"; **(8) White Struggle as a Global Battle** - "The Alt-Right views the struggle for the continued existence of the White race as a global battle between Whites and the Jews. The internet has allowed for us to connect globally... [which has] fostered a sense of worldwide unity of cause for White people."<sup>80</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Greenberg, David. "An Intellectual History of Trumpism: Populism, Paleoconservatism, and the Ideas Behind a Republican Insurgency," *Pacific and American studies* 18 (2018): 7-16.

<sup>78</sup> Hawley, George. *Making sense of the alt-right*. Columbia University Press, 2017.

<sup>79</sup> Nagle, Angela. *Kill all normies: Online culture wars from 4chan and Tumblr to Trump and the alt-right*. John Hunt Publishing, 2017.

<sup>80</sup> Anglin, Andrew. "A Normie's Guide to the Alt-Right," *The Daily Stormer* (August 31, 2016), <https://dailystormer.su/a-normies-guide-to-the-alt-right/>

### **Anti-Americanism:**

A strong component of alt-right ideology is a vituperation of contemporary America and a vehement rejection of the “Americanism of the current day”: its society, values, culture, government apparatus and multicultural, multiracial population<sup>81</sup>. The alt-right’s anti-Americanism often involves a conceptual delineation between the existing political entity known as the “United States” and the “real” America. Alt-rightism replaces patriotism to the United States with allegiance to the white race and the purportedly ‘real’ all-white America. The current multiracial society that is the United States is denigrated as a false “Anti-America” or “Black Run Amerika”<sup>82</sup>, whose ideology of racial equality has directly served to dispossess the ‘true’ white Americans. Accordingly, the present-day United States of America is no longer deserving of the allegiance of its white citizens. Instead, white Americans should transfer their loyalty from the state to the white race<sup>83</sup>.

Some alt-right theorists have gone so far as to translate their disdain for the current United States into secessionism. According to these thinkers, secession from the United States, though unconstitutional, would allow for the establishment of separate, racially homogenous nations in North America and the actualization of the movement’s idealized white ethnostate. However, most alt-rightists recognize that this solution is untenable and dislocated from political reality. As such, detailed plans for secession are dismissed as fantastical LARPing or “live action role playing”<sup>84</sup>.

### **Identitarianism:**

An additional component of alt-right ideology is Identitarianism, mentioned previously in relation to the White Replacement Theory. Identitarianism provides a euphemistic framework for the justification of white nationalism under the guise of cultural preservation and ‘racial realism’. The Identitarian movement originated in France through Génération Identitaire, but has since expanded across Europe and beyond with the emergence of like-minded groups advocating nativism, traditionalism and the cessation of non-white immigration to white-majority countries. Though the movement emerged independently of the alt-right, a transatlantic symbiotic relationship exists between the two: many of America’s leading alt-right figures identify as identitarians and some European identitarian entities have adopted the moniker “alt-right”<sup>85</sup>. Richard Spencer, for example, self-identifies as an identitarian, sponsoring a “Why I’m an Identitarian” essay contest through his National Policy Institute<sup>86</sup>.

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<sup>81</sup> Main, Thomas J. *The rise of the alt-right*. Brookings Institution Press, 2018.

<sup>82</sup> Hunter Wallace, quoted in: Main, Thomas J. *The rise of the alt-right*. Brookings Institution Press, 2018. p.202

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> “The International Alternative Right: An Explainer,” Hope Not Hate (June, 2019), <https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Alt-Right-report-SHORT-2019-v1.pdf>

<sup>86</sup> Anti-Defamation League. “New hate and old: The changing face of American white supremacy.” *ADL Center on Extremism* (2018).

## **Conspiracy Theory:**

Notably influential within alt-right circles are right wing conspiracy theorists, who provide convenient narratives of demonization and scapegoating through which to legitimize identity politics. Through misinformation and half-truths, conspiracies capitalize on societal grievances and attach a sense of nihilistic victimhood to the allegedly disenfranchised masses. In the post-truth, fake news era, fringe conspiracy theories are increasingly normalized, allowing for the radicalization of the masses disenchanted with the political establishment. As articulated by Bulck and Hyzen, “conspiracism refers to a wide range of theories revolving around secret activities and subversions of invisible enemies, often relating to covered government operations (False Flags) and cover-ups (Deep State)”<sup>87</sup>.

There is an interconnected relationship between racial hate and conspiracy theories. Most radical white supremacist communities propagate conspiratorial credos; Holocaust denial; the ‘Great Replacement’/‘White Genocide’ narrative; the Elders of Zion; or Jewish global economic/media influence<sup>88</sup>. With modern white nationalism rooted in the theory of white victimhood, it is itself inherently anchored in conspiracy. Recently, a number of non-explicitly racist conspiracy theories have begun gaining traction in online conspiracy communities with no conspicuous connection to the far- or alt-right, for example, claims that George Floyd’s murder was a ‘false flag’ or allegations that the global economy and mass media are controlled by Jews (George Soros and the Rothschild family). In a recent intelligence briefing by the FBI, certain conspiracy theories associated with members of the alt-right were labeled as a domestic terror threat with the potential to escalate into violence<sup>89</sup>. Indeed, the migration of conspiratorial belief from online platforms to the real-life political landscape has already had violent repercussions, inspiring a number of ardent adherents to commit acts of terror<sup>90</sup> based on their convictions.

Conspiracy converges with alt-rightism in its overarching epistemological doubts about the integrity of the political establishment; distrust in the mass media; lack of control; and feelings of victimhood and lack of agency<sup>91</sup>. Conspiracy theories provide simple, all-encompassing master narratives that explain the ills and evils of the world, restoring control and security in times of upheaval.

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<sup>87</sup> Van den Bulck, H., and A. Hyzen. "Of lizards and ideological entrepreneurs: Alex Jones and Infowars in the relationship between populist nationalism and the post-global media ecology." *International communication gazette* 82, no. 1 (2020): 42-59. p.45

<sup>88</sup> Crawford, Blyth & Keen, Florence. "The Hanau Terrorist Attack: How Race Hate and Conspiracy Theories Are Fueling Global Far-Right Violence." *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 3 (March, 2020): 1-9.

<sup>89</sup> Budryk, Zack. "FBI memo warns QAnon poses potential terror threat: report," *The Hill* (August 1, 2019), <https://thehill.com/policy/national-security/fbi/455770-fbi-memo-warns-qanon-poses-a-potential-terror-threat-report>

<sup>90</sup> For example, the Comet Ping Pong pizzeria attack inspired by the ‘Pizzagate’ conspiracy, attempted bombing attack against Democratic government officials based on the ‘QAnon’ conspiracy and the February 2020 Hanau terrorist attack whose perpetrator cited numerous conspiracy theories within his manifesto.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

Within this ideological ecosystem, Alex Jones stands out as a prominent ‘ideological entrepreneur,’ using his Infowars pulpit to promote his right-wing counternarrative. Although Jones himself does not identify as alt-right (though he has expressed support for paleo-conservative ideas), his populist-nationalist conspiracy rhetoric resonates deeply with alt-right audiences. Through his allegiance with alt-right ideologues and President Donald Trump, Jones pushed himself, his narrative and his worldview into the mainstream<sup>92</sup>.

One of the conspiracies promoted by Alex Jones was the Pizzagate conspiracy theory, which began circulating during the 2016 US presidential election cycle. The theory alleges that Comet Ping Pong, a Washington pizzeria, was the operational headquarters of a child-trafficking sex ring involving high-profile celebrities and political figures such as presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and her former campaign manager, John Podesta<sup>93</sup>. The theory was widely disseminated on online forums such as 4chan, 8chan and Reddit – all of which are affiliated with the alt-right. The theory gained significant amplification due to its timing and especially as a result of the hyper-polarized climate surrounding the election. Within the aggressive public discourse, members of the alt-right embraced this narrative of disinformation, content with any content that could be used to galvanize the American masses against establishment politicians and against the mainstream media<sup>94</sup>.

The ‘Pizzagate’ theory eventually morphed into a separate, more complex conspiracy termed QAnon. QAnon is an amalgam of both niche and popular conspiracy theories, echoing Pizzagate in its claims that a global elite of Satanic pedophiles – known as the “deep state” or “cabal” – control world governments, the banking system, the media and entertainment industry in order to sustain their child-murdering sex cult and keep the people of the world ignorant and enslaved. QAnon surfaced in 2017 when an anonymous user, now widely referred to as “Q” appeared for the first time on 4chan. Q claimed to be a high-level government insider with “Q clearance” tasked with posting “intel drops” to covertly inform the public about Trump’s master plan to stage a coup against the deep state<sup>95</sup>. QAnon, unlike other conspiracies, is a participatory ideological movement. Rather than telling followers what to believe, the anonymous leader provides “drops” of intel and investigative hints, thereby creating a community that is committed to the ideology primed with a participatory apocalyptic zeal. Followers obsessed with “research”, inspired with a will to “do something” and play their part in the war between good and evil, and some have taken action into their own hands. Although the QAnon conspiracy does not explicitly reference alt-right philosophy, there is significant overlap

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Cosentino, Gabriele. "From Pizzagate to the Great Replacement: The Globalization of Conspiracy Theories." In *Social Media and the Post-Truth World Order*, pp. 59-86. Palgrave Pivot, Cham, 2020.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

in the general themes; belief that the political establishment is corrupt; an ‘awakening’ of the oblivious disenfranchised masses; and a vilification of the liberal political regime.

### **The Manosphere:**

For many members of the alt-right, the starting point of their journey down the rabbit-hole of far-right radicalization began in the misogynistic online subculture known as the ‘manosphere’. The manosphere comprises various anti-feminist networks including; Men’s Rights Activists (MRAs) who contend that the mainstream media and legal system unfairly discriminate against men; Pickup Artists (PUAs), a community centered around techniques and strategies to manipulate women into having sex with them; Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOWs), who protest against women’s supposed dominance in society and advocate abstaining from relationships with women and; Involuntary Celibates (Incels), men who have been unable to find female sexual partners and engage in a self-deprecating narrative which asserts that sex with women define a man’s worth<sup>96</sup>.

Though misogyny and gender discrimination is not a new phenomenon, the online echo-chamber of the manosphere has amplified the voices of young, disaffected men, rendering these individuals more susceptible to radicalization. Recent terror attacks by men associated with these movements (such as Alek Minassian’s 2018 van attack and the UCSB mass shooting perpetrated in 2014 by Elliot Rodger<sup>97</sup>) prove that these forums are capable of galvanizing members into violence as an outlet for their suppressed sexual frustrations. In a video clip posted by Rodger before embarking on his killing spree, he proclaimed his desire for retribution, excoriating women for “unfairly” rejecting his sexual advances in favor of other men, relegating him to “a [celibate] existence of loneliness and insignificance”. In his 137-page manifesto, Rodger vowed to punish “every spoiled, stuck up, blond slut I see”, declaring “if I can’t have you, girls, I will destroy you”<sup>98</sup>. Rodger has since been posthumously canonized within the incel community, venerated as the patron saint of the incelsphere. Four years following Rodger’s murder-suicide, Alek Minassian pledged alliance to Rodger before ramming a rented van into a crowd of pedestrians in Toronto, killing 10. “The Incel Rebellion has already begun!”, declared Minassian in a FaceBook post preceding the attack, “We will overthrow all the Chads and Stacy’s! All hail the Supreme Gentleman Elliot Rodger!”<sup>99</sup>.

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<sup>96</sup> Ribeiro, Manoel Horta, Jeremy Blackburn, Barry Bradlyn, Emiliano De Cristofaro, Gianluca Stringhini, Summer Long, Stephanie Greenberg, and Savvas Zannettou. “The Evolution of the Manosphere Across the Web.” *arXiv: Computers and iety* (2020): 1-20

<sup>97</sup> Van Valkenburgh, Shawn P. “Digesting the Red Pill: Masculinity and Neoliberalism in the Manosphere.” *Men and Masculinities*, (2018).

<sup>98</sup> CNN. 2014. *Transcript of video linked to Santa Barbara mass shooting*. May 28. Accessed August 2020. <https://edition.cnn.com/2014/05/24/us/elliott-rodger-video-transcript/index.html>

<sup>99</sup> Van Valkenburgh, Shawn P. “Digesting the Red Pill: Masculinity and Neoliberalism in the Manosphere.” *Men and Masculinities*, (2018); “The Toronto Ramming Attack: The Driver Praised a Murderer From California;”, Ynet, April 25th, 2018, <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-5240365,00.html>

Due to their overlapping conspiratorial narratives of ‘male’ and ‘white’ victimhood, misogynistic online forums provide a lucrative recruiting ground for the alt-right. Further, the shared online platforms of both movements (4chan, 8chan, Reddit and Gab) allows white and male supremacists to cross-fertilize, merge and overlap<sup>100</sup>. Many alt-rightists have preyed on the deep-seated insecurity and feelings of sexual entitlement rife within the manosphere, appropriating those grievances to advance a white-supremacist political agenda. Other members of the alt-right have internalized and promoted the manosphere’s masculinist ideology of gender, themselves becoming active in the manosphere movement<sup>101</sup>. The interconnected relationship between the movement is aptly articulated by an alt-right blogger: “since the manosphere has a very broad appeal it is possible that [it] might serve as a stepping stone to guide formerly apathetic men towards the Alternative Right.”<sup>102</sup>

### Norse Paganism, Odinism and Wotanism

*“I’d love to see North America’s 100 million Aryan Christians convert to the religion invented by their own race and practiced for a thousand generations before the Jews thought up Christianity - Odinism! ... Odin! Odin! Odin! Was the battle cry of our ancestors; their light eyes ablaze with the glare of the predator, as they swept over and conquered the decadent multi-racial Roman Empire. And Valhalla does not accept Negroes. There’s a sign over the pearly gates there which reads, “Whites only.””*

*F. Glenn Miller, “A White Man Speaks Out”, 1999<sup>103</sup>*

Wotanism, or Odinism, is a racist variant of the neo-pagan Ásatrú, a polytheistic religion venerating ancient Norse gods and goddesses. Dissociated from Christianity due to its pacifist doctrine and Judaic roots, white supremacists are increasingly abandoning the Abrahamic faith in favour of the racially-based, warrior religion of yore<sup>104</sup>. For many members of the far-right, their discovery of Ásatrú, considered a pure, indigenously white tradition, has inspired a religious awakening. Though most US Ásatrúar (adherents of Ásatrú) eschew racism, asserting that gods transcend racial lines, other ‘folkish’ heathens (often adopting the title Wotanists)

<sup>100</sup> Lyons, Matthew N. “Ctrl-alt-delete: The origins and ideology of the alternative right.” *Political Research Associates* (2017).

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Quoted in: Lyons, Matthew N. “Ctrl-alt-delete: The origins and ideology of the alternative right.” *Political Research Associates* (2017).

<sup>103</sup> Miller, Frazier Glenn. “A White Man Speaks Out.” (1999), quoted in Weber, Shannon. “White Supremacy’s Old Gods: The Far Right and Neopaganism,” *Political Research Associates* (February 1, 2018), <https://www.politicalresearch.org/2018/02/01/white-supremacys-old-gods-the-far-right-and-neopaganism>

<sup>104</sup> Gardell, Mattias. *Gods of the blood: The pagan revival and white separatism*. Duke University Press, 2003



consider the warrior gods Odin and Thor as an embodiment of white supremacy, emphasizing that their faith is inextricably connected to a particular racial group: the 'folk'<sup>105</sup>.

Race within Wotanism is presented as a spiritual entity with religious significance, connecting the folk organism through the blood that flows through the veins of each individual of unmixed racial descent<sup>106</sup>. This, in essence, affords eugenics a spiritual importance and legitimizes white supremacy through religious credence.

Despite the seeming convergence of interests between Pagans and their radical right counterparts on political issues such as non-white immigration, racial separatism and anti-Americanism, this is undercut by Wotanism's vehement anti-Christian narratives, which serves to alienate the movement from the devoutly Christian far-right majority<sup>107</sup>.

The most prominent voice within racially-based paganism is Wotansvolk (Wotan being both a European name for Odin and an acronym for 'Will Of The Aryan Nation'), a group established by white-supremacist icon and Order<sup>108</sup> member David Lane, the wordsmith behind the notorious "14 words" slogan universally accepted by white supremacists<sup>109</sup>. The racist pagan beliefs propagated by Lane and adopted by the Wotansvolk is a composite of the conspiracy theories, anti-Semitism, populism, Klandom, skinhead culture and tenets of national socialism that existed in the white supremacist landscape, elevated to religious legitimacy through the appropriation of Norse pagan dogma<sup>110</sup>. By accumulating a bricolage fashioned out of decontextualized tidbits of information surrounding an ancient religion, the Wotansvolk "biologize spirituality"<sup>111</sup>, creating a modern racially-homogenous community which they claim emulates a society which had existed in a golden age.

**Lane preaches that nothing less than a total, uncompromising war will facilitate the implementation of his 14 words – security for the existence of white people and a future for white children.** He embraces and promotes the strategy of leaderless resistance, arguing for a tactical delineation between an open propaganda arm to "educate the Folk, to provide a man pool from which the covert or military arm can be [recruited]", and a "rigidly separated" paramilitary underground, operating in small autonomous cells in

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<sup>105</sup> White, Ethan Doyle. "Northern Gods for Northern Folk: Racial Identity and Right-wing Ideology among Britain's Folkish Heathens." *Journal of Religion in Europe* 10, no. 3 (2017): 241-273.

<sup>106</sup> Gardell, Mattias. *Gods of the blood: The pagan revival and white separatism*. Duke University Press, 2003

<sup>107</sup> Strmiska, Michael F. "Pagan Politics in the 21st Century: 'Peace and Love' or 'Blood and Soil'?" *Pomegranate* 20, no. 1 (2018).

<sup>108</sup> 'The Order' was an Aryan revolutionary guerilla group founded in 1983, whose name was inspired by the fictional paramilitary group depicted in *The Turner Diaries*. The group served to unite KKK members, Christian Identity religionists and Odinists in a single organization, united by a common cause of hastening the racial crisis in America so that a new Aryan golden age could be born.

<sup>109</sup> Gardell, Mattias. *Gods of the blood: The pagan revival and white separatism*. Duke University Press, 2003.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid. p.17



order to “hasten the demise of the system before it totally destroys our gene pool”<sup>112</sup>. The revolutionary action espoused and sanctified by Lane included bombs, guns, terror and destruction targeted against the agents of the system, and especially against those deemed ‘race traitors’. This philosophy has become a central tenet among the Wotansvolk, enshrining violence within the religious dogma, and therefore providing religious motivation to perpetrate acts of terror.

## Diagram: Far Right – Ideologies, Organizations and Influential Ideas in the Twentieth and Twenty First Centuries

The following two diagrams are designed to illustrate the complex, overlapping and interconnected web of ideologues, doctrines, organizations, and literary works that have influenced and defined the far-right ecosystem throughout the twentieth and twenty first centuries.

As reflected in Diagram 1, the far-right milieu of the twentieth century was managed and organized according to traditional, hierarchical organizational structures, the likes of which dictated the ideology, strategy and objectives of the movement.

Diagram 2 demonstrates the twenty-first century’s shift into a post-organizational far-right landscape, in which ideology has transplanted organization as the mobilizing force of the movement. The twenty-first century iteration of far-right extremism reflects an increasing emphasis on the individual. These lone extreme-right activists are ostensibly unaffiliated to any formal organization, and rather draw direction and inspiration from the various ideologies and influences that comprise the modern far-right ecosystem.

**The circles** in the diagrams represent the influences on the far right, whether organizations or ideologies. **The lines connecting the circles** point to the overlap or connection between the variegated ideas and ideological currents. Several groups may share certain narratives or doctrines, yet this does not suggest total ideological congruity on all matters. **A broken line** points to a moderate connection between disparate ideologies and organizations, but signifies that this connection is not a consensus amongst all members of a particular group or sub-group. For example, whilst some members of the Alt-Right ascribe to anti-American sentiment, others do not. **A Full line** points to an ideological/conceptual overlap that applies to most adherents of the ideology. For example, David Lane’s ‘Fourteen Words’ has served as a rallying cry for white

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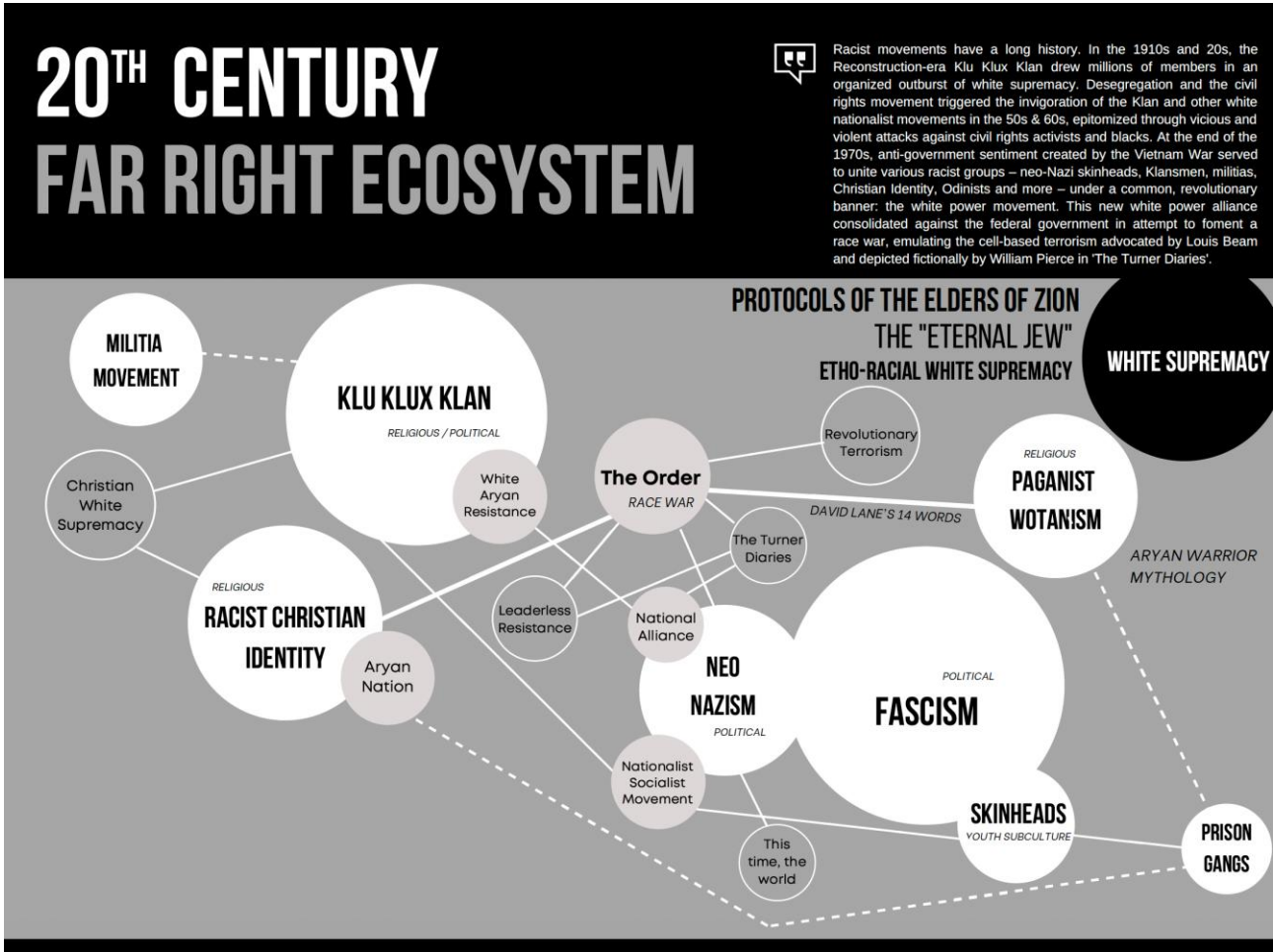
<sup>112</sup> Lane, David “The Auto-Biographical Portrait of the Life of David Lane and the 14 Word Motto,” (1994), quoted in *ibid.* p.200

supremacists across the ideological spectrum, invoked by Accelerationists, Wotanists, and White Replacement Theorists alike.

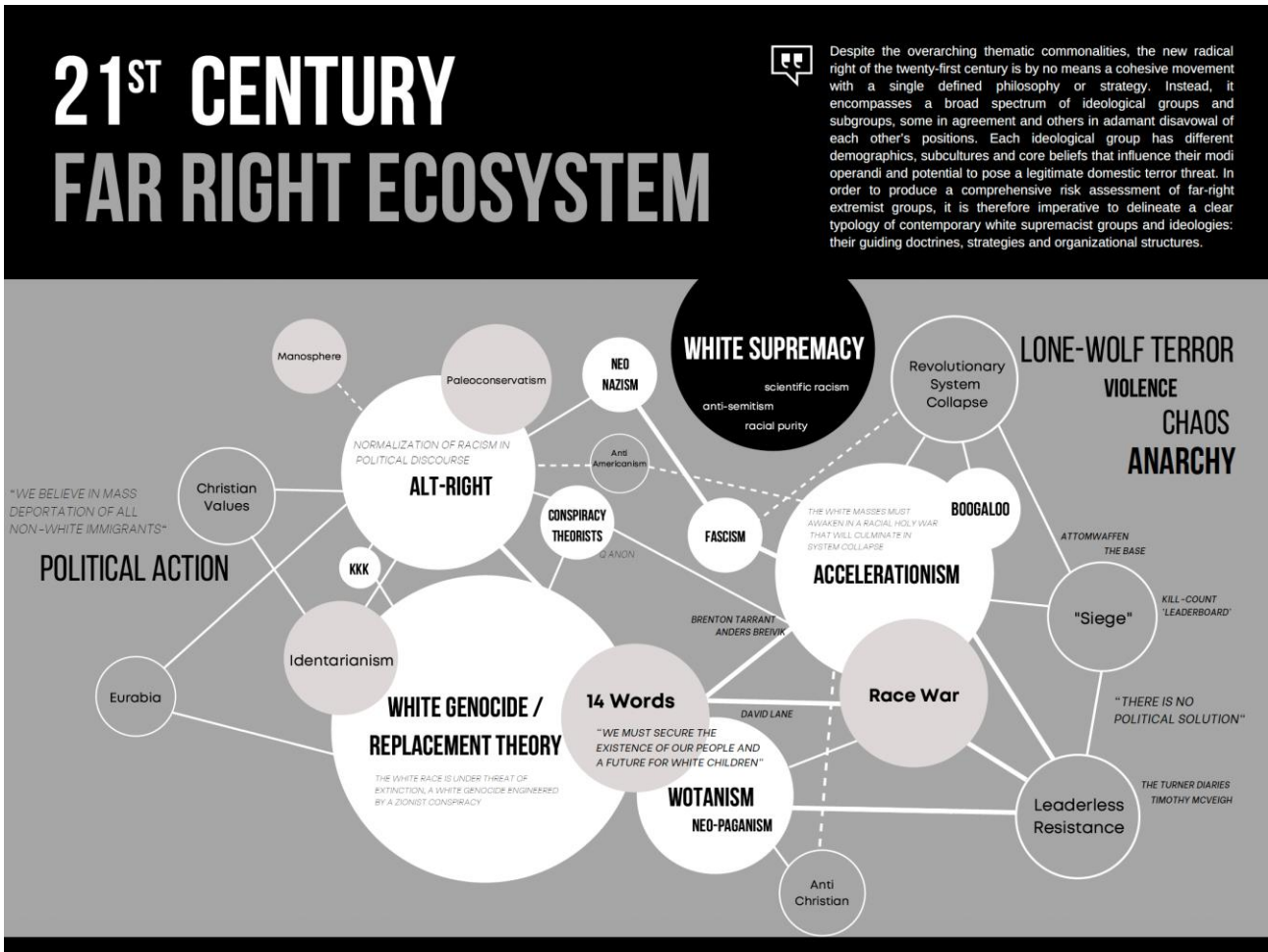
Though united by common, overarching doctrines of racial purity and white nationalism, there are significant disparities and competing outlooks within the movement that cause significant conflict and division between different ideological currents. These differences of opinion may be so significant that they preclude certain groups or ideologies to cooperate with one another. However, the common project of defending the white race and preventing the imminent white genocide offers a compelling common denominator to unite and cohere an otherwise disparate group of people. For example, it is fair to assume that it is unlikely for Wotanist groups to cooperate and collaborate with devout Christian Identity groups – yet this possibility cannot be wholly ruled out, as evidenced by the two groups collaboration in The Order.

Understanding the ideological underpinnings of each individual, group or movement facilitates an ability to predict the likely courses of action for the entity in question. The Alt-Right can be expected to operate within the boundaries of legitimate political activity, potentially through protests, provocations or political participation. Accelerationists, conversely, consider chaos, anarchy and violent revolution as the only viable means to attain their goals, and accordingly can be expected to operate through acts of terror.

Diagram 1: Far Right – Ideologies, Organizations and Influential Ideas (Twentieth Century)



**Diagram 2: Far Right – Ideologies, Organizations and Influential Ideas (Twenty First Century)**



## Chapter 3: Far Right – The Organizational Change

### Background – The Main Attributes of a Terrorist Organization

Since the emergence of modern terrorism in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, terrorist groups have predominantly operated according to a formal, centralized, organized operational paradigm. The rationale behind this organizational structure centered upon the perception that a revolution without the ideological and strategic guidance of a centralized leadership would be strategically unfeasible. This organizational vanguard was designed to coordinate and manage the collective effort, maximizing the movement's chances of achieving its political goals.

In the wake of September 11, 2001, the threat of global Islamist terrorism has taken center stage within the international arena. Islamist extremists. The global jihadist movement is rife with various terrorist groups with differing dogmas and aspirations, yet all seem to follow a similar organization-centric operational paradigm. This operational framework is centered upon a robust organizational design, based on three core principles: (1) a centralized command and control structure to direct the strategy and trajectory of the organization as a whole; (2) a military wing encompassing all military functions and operations, which includes the establishment, maintenance and cultivation of the group's offensive operational infrastructure (training combatants, procuring weapons and logistical equipment, target acquisition etc.) and the deployment of the military apparatus (tactical planning and execution of attacks); and (3) a guiding ideology that provides cohesion, purpose and justification for the movement's terrorist activities.

### The Post-Organizational Paradigm of the Contemporary Far Right (Leaderless Resistance)

The far-right terrorist paradigm diverges greatly from the centralized model espoused by their Islamist counterparts. The crux of the variance may be traced to the inherent differences in character between the groups' main theatres of operation. Jihadist organizations mainly operate in countries in which the efficacy of the local security apparatus is limited and their capacity to thwart terrorist activity within their territory is deficient (e.g. Somalia, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Iraq etc.). Conversely, far-right terrorist activity is mostly concentrated within the bounds of western countries with liberal-democratic values and highly-capable security services armed with ample resources and experienced personnel. At face value, counterterrorism agencies confronting a homegrown, domestic terror threat are ostensibly at an advantage, unencumbered by the cultural and linguistic challenges inherent to international terrorism. Furthermore, as the locus of the domestic threat remains within the borders of national jurisdiction, the intelligence and law enforcement

apparatuses are well equipped to collect intelligence, identify emerging threats, infiltrate domestic terrorist networks, conduct offensive counterterrorism operations and prosecute terrorist offenses.

However, in the contemporary threat landscape, the disintegration and atomization of the far-right extremist milieu poses a profound challenge to the national security establishment. The diffuse nature of the movement and its penchant for lone-wolf attacks and ‘leaderless resistance’ tactics of operations renders the far-right terrorist threat near impossible to identify, monitor and prevent. In stark contrast to centralized, organized terrorist groups with clear operational command and control structures, the post-organizational configuration of the modern far-right enables would-be terrorists to avoid detection, facilitated through the rapidly expanding online ecosystem of far-right, fascist, neo-Nazi and white supremacist extremists. The terrorist activities of radicalization, communication and coordination have migrated from the physical plane to the cybersphere, across a host of unregulated imageboards, discussion sites and messaging platforms. This vast, ideologically cohesive, transnational digital network has drastically expanded the sphere of terrorist activity, accelerating the radicalization process and the spread of ideological influence.

The strategy of ‘leaderless resistance’ was first popularized by Louis Beam, a former Klansman and Aryan Nations activist, in an essay published in the May 1983 *Inter-Klan Newsletter* (and republished again in 1992 by *The Seditonist*)<sup>113</sup>. In his essay, Beam argued that the pyramidal organizational structure traditionally employed by insurgent movements is “extremely dangerous for the participants for the participants when it is utilized in a resistance movement against state tyranny”, rendering the movement “easy prey for governmental infiltration, entrapment, and destruction”<sup>114</sup>. Beam thus proposes a “fundamental departure in theories of organization”, advocating for the disestablishment of organized right-wing terrorism in favor of autonomous phantom cells operating independently of one another toward a common goal, never reporting to a central headquarters or single leader for direction or instruction. A shared ideology, narrative and doctrine thus constitutes the foundation of the leaderless resistance strategy, enabling networks of disparate individuals to develop and maintain a collective identity without physical interaction. Without a centralized operational leadership, Beam stressed, it is incumbent upon the individual to “acquire the necessary skills and information to do what needs to be done”<sup>115</sup>. This self-sufficiency would ensure the durability and resilience of the movement, as even if one such small cell was infiltrated, exposed and destroyed, this would have little to no effect on the broader organization. “America”, concluded Beam, “is quickly moving into a dark long night of police state tyranny; where the rights now accepted by most as being inalienable will disappear. Let the coming night be filled with a thousand points of resistance”<sup>116</sup>.

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<sup>113</sup> Beam, Louis. "Leaderless resistance." *The seditonist* 12 (1992): 12-13.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 15

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.* 16

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 17

Beam's comments against the state reflect the evolution of the white power movement from one characterized by ultra-patriotism (manifest in reactionary Klan mobilizations and vigilante violence "to serve state and country") to a revolutionary insurgency against the 'Zionist Occupational Government' (ZOG) – the state<sup>117</sup>. The American extreme right officially declared war against the United States during the July 1983 Aryan World Congress, a convention of white power activists at the Aryan Nations' compound in Idaho<sup>118</sup>. Steadily, the extreme right underwent an organizational, operational and strategic transformation. The high-frequency, low-intensity "limited violence" against minority targets that had typified the earlier period (i.e. stabbing attacks, shootings, assault and destruction of property) was gradually replaced by a revolutionary campaign of violence and resistance against the state, further fueled by the standoffs between the FBI and white power activists at Ruby Ridge and Waco in 1992 and 1993, respectively<sup>119</sup>. The number of incidents over the course of the 1980s and 1990s significantly decreased, however, the lethality of the violence increased significantly: between 1981-1992, 130 terrorist attacks caused 81 deaths and injuries; whilst between 1993-1999 the number of attacks decreased to 82, yet resulted in more than 190 deaths or injuries<sup>120</sup>.

1995 constituted the "crescendo and climax of white power revolution"<sup>121</sup> in the **deadliest act of domestic terrorism in United States' history – the Oklahoma City bombing**. The attack, the first mass-casualty domestic terrorist act perpetrated by a lone actor, **served to usher in a new era of far-right extremism, the watershed moment marking the movement's transformation from a hierarchical, organized entity inflicting "limited violence" to an amorphous, diffuse and decentralized collective plotting "mass violence"**. The attacker, Timothy James McVeigh, was the manifestation of Louis Beam's vision – a dedicated lone activist operating on behalf of the 'white resistance'. McVeigh had no formal affiliation with any extremist group, but was an active denizen of far-right subculture and an avid reader of white power propaganda. McVeigh had modeled his attack on the blueprint provided in the racist dystopian novel, *The Turner Diaries*, considered "the bible of the radical right"<sup>122</sup>. **The bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City killed 168 people and injured nearly 700 others, proving the lethal success of the lone wolf strategy and thereby inspiring a new generation of far-right activists according to the notion of 'leaderless resistance'**. Leaderless resistance was adopted as the preferred modus operandi for right-wing terrorists, with McVeigh as the veritable paradigm of the strategy's efficacy. The mass attack, however, also served to alienate the more moderate voices of the far-right movement. Horrified by the indiscriminate murder of

<sup>117</sup> Belew, Kathleen. *Bring the war home: The white power movement and paramilitary America*. Harvard University Press, 201

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Hewitt, Christopher. *Understanding terrorism in America*. Routledge, 2003.

<sup>121</sup> Belew, Kathleen. *Bring the war home: The white power movement and paramilitary America*. Harvard University Press, 40

<sup>122</sup> Michael, George. "Blueprints and fantasies: a review and analysis of extremist fiction." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 33, no. 2 (2010): 149-170.



numerous women and children, membership drastically declined in white supremacist organizations, and public support for the movement plummeted<sup>123</sup>.

16 years later, Anders Behring Breivik's heinous double-massacre in Oslo and Utoya Island violently reiterated the lethal potential of leaderless resistance, casting himself as the conduit galvanizing a new generation of lone wolves. On July 22, 2011, Breivik, a thirty-two year-old white Norwegian man, set off a car bomb in the government headquarters in Oslo, killing eight and injuring many more. Disguised as a policy officer, Breivik then drove to the lake island of Utoya, the site of the annual summer camp for the Labour Party Youth organization. Over the span of one hour, Breivik calmly and systematically traversed the island, murdering 69 people in cold blood – most of the victims under 18 years old<sup>124</sup>. Breivik had meticulously planned the attacks. In the last pages of his 1,518-page manifesto, "2083: A European Declaration of Independence", Breivik describes in painstaking detail the nine-year process of plotting the massacre. His copious writings outline the long preparation phase in which he gathered the tools, funds and expertise needed to carry out the attacks, including his failed experiments in manufacturing the explosive device<sup>125</sup>. Breivik's manifesto, beyond detailing the ideological underpinnings for the attack, served an additional purpose, constituting a 'how-to guide' for would-be lone-actors: offering tips to circumvent law enforcement; recommending mental and physical exercises to build resilience; endorsing the internet and social media as a recruitment tool; and describing in detail how he manufactured the explosives used in the Oslo government building<sup>126</sup>. Breivik, like McVeigh, is worshipped as a saint and martyr within far-right extremist circles, cited by lone wolf attackers that followed as a source of their inspiration.

As the far-right transitioned from organized, centralized movements to a decentralized, nebulous network of lone wolves, the internet assumed new importance within the movement, embraced as "the tool for the White revolution"<sup>127</sup>. Within this new organizational paradigm, cybersphere replaced the physical realm as the primary operational environment for extremist activism, employed as a vector for community building, radicalization, mobilization and coordination. The World Wide Web provided the perfect platform through which to realize Beam's magnum opus, offering a means for radicalized individuals and organizations to circumvent the gatekeepers of mass communications and enabling the formation, propagation and mass

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<sup>123</sup> Hastings Deborah, "With militias in decline, is McVeigh a hero to anyone?", *Daily Herald*, May 2001  
[https://www.heraldextra.com/news/world/with-militias-in-decline-is-mcveigh-a-hero-to-anyone/article\\_21b5762b-8f2a-51c2-8741-8c42e37271b2.html](https://www.heraldextra.com/news/world/with-militias-in-decline-is-mcveigh-a-hero-to-anyone/article_21b5762b-8f2a-51c2-8741-8c42e37271b2.html)

<sup>124</sup> Gullestad, Siri Erika. "Anders Behring Breivik, master of life and death: Psychodynamics and political ideology in an act of terrorism." In *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 207-216. Routledge, 2017

<sup>125</sup> Alini, Erica. 2011. *The meticulous planning of the Oslo massacre: A timeline of Breivik's activities prior to the attack*. July 28. Accessed December 4, 2020. <https://www.macleans.ca/news/world/the-meticulous-planning-of-the-oslo-massacre/>

<sup>126</sup> Bakker, Edwin, and Beatrice De Graaf. "Preventing lone wolf terrorism: Some CT approaches addressed." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 5, no. 5/6 (2011): 43-50

<sup>127</sup> Duke, David. "The coming white revolution: Born on the Internet." *David Duke's Official International Web Site*. Online at <http://www.duke.org/writings/internet.html> 28 (1999).



circulation of extremist ideology to a global audience of prospective ‘lone wolf’ activists. **The new white power revolution would thus operate on two interdependent tiers: an overt propaganda arm to awaken the masses and unite the movement; and a covert underground of lone-wolf, racist warriors to engage in violent acts.**

The mass migration of the far-right to the cybersphere, compounded with their active exploitation of available encryption tools and anonymizing software as a means of counterintelligence, has amplified the threat of lone-wolf terrorism. The centrality of the internet within the leaderless resistance was, in fact, predicted by Breivik himself, the first internet-age lone wolf attacker: “Internet is the future!”<sup>128</sup>.

### **Far Right Parties and Their Contribution to the Rise of the Violent Far Right**

In recent years, several far-right political parties in Europe have attained significant popular support within both the public discourse and the political arena. Throughout Europe, the rising electoral success of far-right populist parties is striking. Parties previously relegated to the fringe have re-entered the political spectrum, enjoying representation and influence in parliaments all across Europe<sup>129</sup>.

The policies, agendas and modi operandi espoused by far-right political parties vary across countries according to the internal dynamics, social mores and cultural ethos of each constituency. However, though diverse, **far-right populist parties share a common, overarching ideological framework grounded upon xenophobia, nativism, anti-elitism and a tendency toward authoritarian governance.** Moreover, within the conglomerate of populist European political parties, Eurosceptic sentiment is rife, with mounting resistance to European integration and EU intervention in the internal affairs of its member states.

The results of the 2014 European Parliamentary elections reflected the rising tide of far-right populism within Europe’s political landscape<sup>130</sup>. The French National Front (FN), spearheaded by Marine Le-Pen,<sup>131</sup> obtained 25% of the electoral vote. The German National-Democratic (NPD), under the slogan “put on the gas”, achieved sufficient electoral support to secure the party’s first ever seat in the European Parliament. The UK Independence Party (UKIP) – predominantly a single-issue party focused on withdrawal from the EU – enjoyed a significant upsurge in popular support, with a 13% increase in electoral performance since the 2009

<sup>128</sup> Behring Breivik, Anders. "2083–A European Declaration of Independence." (2011). 680.

<sup>129</sup> BBC News, 2019, “Europe and Right-wing nationalism: A country-by-country guide” <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36130006>

<sup>130</sup> The European Parliament is the only EU body that is directly elected by European citizens. The number of representatives per country within the parliament are allocated according to the principle of degressive proportionality, whereby no single country may have fewer than 6 or more than 96 MEPs. Elected MEPs are grouped not by nationality, but by political affiliation.

<sup>131</sup> FN’s political agenda champions limitation on immigration, the prioritization of employment for French and departure from the EU and NATO.

elections. The Freedom Party of Austria (FPO) also substantially enlarged its share of the votes, attaining a 7% increase from their 2009 election result<sup>132</sup>.

In the subsequent 2019 EU Parliamentary elections, Marine Le Pen's party, renamed and rebranded as "Rassemblement National" (the National Rally), emerged triumphant, enlarging the parties electoral base by 500,000 votes and overtaking President Macron's party as the largest French party in the European Parliament. A demographic analysis of Le Pen's supporters reflected her party's wide appeal amongst young voters, with a significant proportion of the party's electoral success attributed to voters aged 18-24. This success has been attributed to Le Pen's 'de-demonization' strategy, implemented to soften the party's image and insert it into the French political mainstream. This normalization effort has included a condemnation of anti-Semitism and a repudiation of the virulent xenophobia and anti-Semitism that had characterized the party under the leadership of her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, with the younger Le Pen expelling the senior following offensive remarks referencing the Holocaust.

The Italian 'League' party led by Matteo Salvini also celebrated a resounding victory in the 2019 elections, securing 34.3% of the vote and cementing its position as Italy's biggest party in the European Parliament. Like Le Pen, Salvini's campaign overtly promoted populist rhetoric, including xenophobia, nativism and ardent Euroscepticism<sup>133</sup>. Additional far-right populist parties also celebrated large wins in the 2019 European parliamentary elections, including: the Fidesz party (Hungary); Freedom party (Austria); and Alternative For Germany party<sup>134</sup>. Following the crushing victory of his far-right Fidesz party in the domestic elections, new Hungarian Prime Minister, Viktor Orban, proclaimed his aspiration to "change Europe", and reorient the European right around his party's themes of anti-Islamism, anti-multiculturalism and sovereignism<sup>135</sup>. In Slovenia, Janez Jansa, a close ally of Viktor Orban and leader of the far-right, nativist Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS), was recently appointed Prime Minister amid the throes of the coronavirus pandemic. The rising tide of radical right populism has thus inundated both national and European levels of government, with the success of populist right-wing rhetoric securing the best election results for far-right, Eurosceptic parties in Europe thus far: 198 seats out of 751<sup>136</sup>.

<sup>132</sup> News agencies, elections to the European parliament: the far right drift, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014, <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4523657,00.html>

<sup>133</sup> Oni Asaf, "Elections to the European Parliament: The Political Center Eroded and the Fringes Strengthened", Globes May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <https://www.globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1001287215>

<sup>134</sup> Beck Eldad, "The European Jews Far Right Dilemma", Israel Today, May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, <https://www.israelhavom.co.il/article/661883>

<sup>135</sup> Anais de La Fonchais, "European Elections in Hungary: Orban's Strategy Paid Off", The New Federalist June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <https://www.thenewfederalist.eu/european-elections-in-hungary-orban-s-strategy-paid-off?lang=fr>

<sup>136</sup> Oni Asaf, "Elections to the European Parliament: The Political Center Eroded and the Fringes Strengthened", Globes May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <https://www.globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1001287215>

In May 2019, the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, compared the growing influence of nationalist, far-right leaders in Europe to the rise of the Nazi Party in the 1930s<sup>137</sup>. According to Dieng, several crises facilitated this populist resurgence in Europe, including the social and economic insecurities in France that precipitated the anti-establishment “Yellow Vests” protests and provided the impetus for anti-Semitic and anarchist forces to exploit the movement, encouraging violence and inciting anti-Semitic, xenophobic rhetoric. Furthermore, England’s ‘Brexit’ and the riots for Catalunya’s independence constitute “the tip of the iceberg”, reflecting the rising tide of nationalist sentiment across Europe<sup>138</sup>. The growing success of far-right parties may be attributed to their ability to capitalize on national and international crises, exploiting mounting popular discontent surrounding the immigration wave of over 1,000,000 Muslim refugees in 2015, the limitations on sovereign state powers imposed by supranational institutions (primarily the EU), socio-economic grievances and, recently, the global coronavirus health crisis. With businesses, economies and societies paralyzed by the pandemic, far-right parties claimed COVID-19 as indisputable proof of the inherent failures of globalization and multiculturalism, professing their populist ideology of closed borders and restricted immigration as the only solution to the current predicament.

The populist politicians and party-members who have infiltrated the mainstream political sphere have not shied from overtly racist rhetoric when discussing the COVID-19 pandemic. In a briefing to the EU, Hungarian Prime Minister Orban proclaimed that illegal immigrants pose a biological threat to Hungarians, claiming a “certain link between coronavirus and illegal immigrants”. Orban added that security forces would employ forceful action against all attempts of illegal entry into Hungary as a justified means of ‘self-defense’. Marine Le Pen similarly criticized the “religion of the borderlessness of the leaders of the European Union”, arguing that “a border protects populations” and calling for French Prime Minister Macron to close the borders with Italy “before it will be too late”. The Swiss right-wing People’s Party (SVP) leaders also called for a complete and hermetic border closure as a safeguard against COVID-19<sup>139</sup>.

The wide appeal of populist politics has not been limited to the European continent, however. Nor has xenophobic and racist rhetoric surrounding the coronavirus pandemic. Across the Atlantic, the ascendancy of Donald J. Trump, whose 2016 presidential campaign espoused archetypical populist narratives infused with xenophobic fear mongering against Muslims and Mexicans, anti-elitism, paranoid conspiracy theories and isolationist “Make America Great Again” nationalism, attests to the transnational potency of the populist promise. The contentious and divisive rhetoric that had typified Trump’s campaign continued throughout his presidency. As COVID-19 spread across the United States, Trump adopted overtly racist terms for the virus,

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<sup>137</sup> Liram Koblenz-Stenzler, “The Far Right Leverages COVID-19 Pandemic to Gain Influence and Encourage Violence”, International Institute For Counterterrorism April, 2020, <https://www.ict.org.il/images/Far%20Right%20Leverages%20COVID-19%2028-04-2020.pdf>

<sup>138</sup> Ibid

<sup>139</sup> Ibid

such as the “Chinese Virus” and the “Kung Flu”, fueling widespread xenophobia and racist sentiment against Asian Americans. In June, citing the public health crisis, Trump announced severe and sweeping restrictions to legal immigration, as well as the suspension of the issuance of work visas until the end of 2020<sup>140</sup>.

**This global rise of far-right populism politics presents a twin threat for minorities: (i) extremist views are increasingly legitimized within mainstream political discourse** – far-right parties have embarked on a concerted effort to normalize xenophobic and racist ideology through the current-affair issues of immigration, economic deprivation and unemployment, making extremist ideology palatable to the mainstream population. By mobilizing these issues, far right parties exploit the anxieties of the general public, radicalizing public discourse and dragging the political system further to the right. **(ii) Disappointment in the 'results' produced by far right parties may anger more radical supporters, escalating their potential to resort to physical violence** - as far-right and populist parties soften their rhetoric and policies in attempt to appeal to the moderate majority, their more hawkish supporters are increasingly alienated, dissatisfied with the parties' failure to deliver on their promised solutions. With their hopes for a political solution dashed, these individuals lose faith in democracy and the political establishment, and begin to conceptualize violence as the only viable solution to their grievances. Physical violence and acts of terror are thus legitimized as the only remaining option. Anders Breivik, for example, had once been an active member of the Norwegian Progressive Party (FrP), and, frustrated with the party's inability to realize his desired outcome, he ultimately became convinced that it was impossible to achieve his goals through democratic means, turning instead to violence<sup>141</sup>.

**It seems evident that the political arena provides a parallel platform for far-right activity. As of today, it is difficult - if not impossible - to prove a direct correlation between the electoral success of far-right political actors and the intensification of far-right terrorism. However, both are manifestations of the same pervasive ideology, seeking similar goals through different means. Although far-right parties and politicians act to achieve their aims within the boundaries of the law, they provide a means to normalize extremist discourse within the mainstream political landscape under the facade of a softened rhetoric, thereby emboldening more radical individuals and groups in their pursuit of a solution outside the confines of legitimate, legal action.**

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<sup>140</sup> Bloomberg, “Banking on US Work Visa? Trump Will Make Your Lives Difficult”, The Marker, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 <https://www.themarker.com/wallstreet/1.8938154>; Simon Shuster, European Politics Are Swinging to the Right, September 22 2016, <https://time.com/4504010/europe-politics-swing-Right/>; Bloomberg, “Banking on a US Work Visa? Trump Will Make Your Lives Difficult”, The Marker, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 <https://www.themarker.com/wallstreet/1.8938154>;

<sup>141</sup> BBC News, “Profile: Anders Behring Breivik”, BBC, April 2012 <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-14259989>

## The Far-Right Operational Arena: Differences Between the US and Europe

By virtue of the digital era and the rising popularity of social media and online forums, American far-right movements and organizations have embraced the internet as their primary field of operations, **disseminating propaganda and inciting against** their identified enemies (i.e. Jews, Muslims, LGBTQ, non-whites, women and so-called “race traitors”). Leveraging First Amendment rights of freedom of speech to their benefit, American far-right groups are able to promote their violent ideologies, recruit members and incite violence within the bounds of the law. Accordingly, as long as groups avoid direct incitement to unlawful action or unambiguous threats of violence, their content is protected under the US constitution, and no legitimate legal cause exists to restrict or prohibit their activity – even if the constitutionally-protected speech contributed to the radicalization of individuals to commit acts of violence.

Accordingly, many extremist websites have taken to employing 'disclaimers' to safeguard against potential legal liability, as evidenced by the IKA (Imperialist Klans of America) - a modern iteration of the KKK. The IKA was established in 1996 by Ron Edwards, previously the head of the Kentucky branch on the KKK. Like its predecessor, the IKA promotes and propagates white supremacist ideology, employing theological, historical and scientific justifications to legitimize their brand of racism. In 2006, two affiliates of the organization violently assaulted Jordan Gruver, a sixteen year-old native American, breaking his arm, his jaw, and inflicting permanent nerve damage. Gruver was also diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder as a result of the attack. In response to the assault, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) filed a civil lawsuit against the Klansmen, the IKA and Edwards himself, contending that the movement’s encouragement of hatred and violence had directly provoked the hate crime. The jury ordered Edwards and two former Klansmen to pay Gruver \$1.5 million for lost wages and medical expenses, as well as compelling Edwards to pay an additional \$1 million for punitive damages<sup>142</sup>. Subsequently, the IKA website featured a conspicuous disclaimer: “any member committing any illegal act does so on their own”<sup>143</sup>.

Recently, amid the countrywide protests following the murder of George Floyd, a trove of 300 hacked documents from over 250 law enforcement agencies revealed detailed intelligence assessments indicating that “the majority of the violence and vandalism appears to be perpetrated by opportunistic, individual actors” associated with ethnically or racially motivated violent extremism<sup>144</sup>. Though not yet thoroughly

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<sup>142</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center, “IMPERIAL KLANS OF AMERICA” <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/imperial-klans-america>

<sup>143</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center, “IMPERIAL KLANS OF AMERICA” <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/imperial-klans-america>

<sup>144</sup> Devereaux Ryan, “Leaked Documents Show Police Knew Far-Right Extremists Were The Real Threat At Protests, Not “Antifa””, *The Intercept*, July 15 2020, <https://theintercept.com/2020/07/15/george-floyd-protests-police-far-right-antifa/>

analyzed, Michael German, a former FBI agent and an expert on domestic terrorism, asserted that the documents illustrated the politicization of counterterrorism. Despite overwhelming evidence, the purported threats from the far-left are consistently overblown: incidents of “soft”, limited violence perpetrated by the left – such as vandalism – are often sensationalized and framed as terrorism; whilst far-right groups, who have been targeting and killing law enforcement and civilians for generations in a pernicious legacy of “hard”, mass violence, are overlooked. Notwithstanding the apparent spate of intelligence confirming that far-right activists were encouraging followers to capitalize on the protests to spread racial hatred, target law enforcement and ignite a racial civil war, the Trump administration continued to emphasize Antifa, anarchists and far-left organizations as the most significant threat to law enforcement and public safety. The leaked materials reveal that on May 29, two days before Trump announced his intention to designate Antifa as a terrorist organization, the Department of Homeland Security had issued an open source intelligence report warning that white supremacist channels on Telegram were urging followers to exploit the rampant unrest by targeting police with Molotov Cocktails, chainsaws and firearms. Despite the materialization of these threats – several incidents of Molotov Cocktail use during protests were reported in the following weeks – the Trump administration made no mention of groups in the far-right, nor were any far-right organizations or entities singled out as a definitive terrorist threat<sup>145</sup>.

**In contrast to their American counterparts, far-right movements in Europe face significant constraints in their ability to operate above ground, due to the strict limitations on hate speech in the EU.** In 2016, the European Commission implemented a code of conduct on countering illegal hate speech online, a voluntary commitment between the EU and major IT companies (including Facebook, Google, Microsoft, Twitter and YouTube) to remove racist and xenophobic hate speech from online platforms<sup>146</sup>. Signatories to the code commit to swiftly reviewing flagged content within 24 hours, removing all forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia, including incitement to violent or hatred of minority groups. On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, the European Commission published its fifth bi-annual evaluation of the implementation of the Code, claiming overall positive results, with **71% of the content classified as illegal hate speech removed**<sup>147</sup>.

The EU Framework Decision on Combatting Racism and Xenophobia (2008) also prohibits the public dissemination of tracts, pictures or other materials containing expressions of racism and xenophobia – including music. Composing, recording or performing “white power music” (music promoting white supremacy and celebrating violence) is illegal in Europe, spurring the emergence of a lucrative black market

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<sup>145</sup> Devereaux Ryan, “Leaked Documents Show Police Knew Far-Right Extremists Were The Real Threat At Protests, Not “Antifa””, *The Intercept*, July 15 2020, <https://theintercept.com/2020/07/15/george-floyd-protests-police-far-right-antifa/>

<sup>146</sup> European Union, “The EU Code of conduct on countering illegal hate speech online” [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-code-conduct-countering-illegal-hate-speech-online\\_en/](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-code-conduct-countering-illegal-hate-speech-online_en/)

<sup>147</sup> European Union, “Commission publishes EU Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online continues to deliver results”, June 2020 [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_20\\_1134](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_1134)

for American skinhead music in European countries<sup>148</sup>. **The EU's strict regulations restricting hate speech have driven the European far-right underground, where they forge clandestine communities in the deeper and darker corners of the cybersphere.** Due to the inherently covert nature of the European far-right, significantly less information is available surrounding their activities in comparison to those operating in the US.

Several American far-right organizations have established operational 'cells' in the European continent, including the **Atomwaffen Division** (see case study below) and the **American neo-Nazi skinhead organization, Hammerskin Nation**. The operability of these cells is limited, however, some indications suggest that the Atomwaffen Division has attempted several acts of racist vandalism and disparate attacks against minorities across Europe<sup>149</sup>.

The *modi operandi* of the American and European **Hammerskin Nation** chapters appear relatively uniform, committed to maintaining the international unity of their Aryan movement by congregating in organized events and concerts, such as the annual 'Summer of Hate' and 'Hammerfest' music festival. Many Hammerskin Nation members have been convicted of violent crimes against minorities. In 2012, army veteran Wade Michael Page, later identified as a prominent member of the white power music scene, fatally shot six and wounded four others in a Sikh temple in Milwaukee. Page had been inducted as a full member of the Northern Hammerskins in October 2011<sup>150</sup>.

Unlike the Hammerskin Nation, there appears to be little similarity between the various chapters of the **Atomwaffen Division**. Whereas in the US, Atomwaffen has been directly linked to various cases of murder, the movement's German branch, for example, (Atomwaffen Division Deutschland) has thus far resigned itself to scare tactic strategies, sending death threats to members of the German parliament and minority communities (e.g. a Turkish neighborhood in Cologne)<sup>151</sup>.

Whilst these organizations are excluded from the legal, legitimate public discourse within their respective countries, they share significant ideological congruity with the electorally-sanctioned political voices of aforementioned far-right populist parties. Elected officials within the European political landscape have professed views that could easily be mistaken as the expressions of Hammerskins or Atomwaffen members. For example, the National Rally (formerly the National Front) in France, established by Jean-Marie Le Pen in

<sup>148</sup> Holthouse David, "MOTLEY CREWS: WITH DECLINE OF HAMMERSKINS, INDEPENDENT SKINHEAD GROUPS GROW", *SPLC* 2006 Fall Issue, October 2006 <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2006/motley-crews-decline-hammerskins-independent-skinhead-groups-grow>

<sup>149</sup> SPLC, "ATOMWAFFEN DIVISION", <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/atomwaffen-division>

<sup>150</sup> Elias Marilyn, "SIKH TEMPLE KILLER WADE MICHAEL PAGE RADICALIZED IN ARMY", 2012 Winter Issue SPLC, November 2012 <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2012/sikh-temple-killer-wade-michael-page-radicalized-army>; ADL, "American White Supremacist Groups Exploiting International Connections", March 2020 <https://www.adl.org/blog/american-white-supremacist-groups-exploiting-international-connections>

<sup>151</sup> Connor Richard, "What is the Atomwaffen Division?", DW, November 2019 <https://www.dw.com/en/what-is-the-atomwaffen-division/a-51106179>



1972, has, **since its inception, promoted an ardently conservative, right-wing, and often racist ideology against minorities in France.** Le Pen himself repeatedly made controversial and offensive remarks regarding the Holocaust, proclaiming “the gas chambers in Auschwitz were a minor detail in the Second World War”<sup>152</sup>. The senior Le Pen was indicted and convicted in 2016 of contesting crimes against humanity, and compelled to pay a €30,000 fine<sup>153</sup>. Jean-Marie retired in 2010, and was replaced in 2011 by his daughter Marine, who has staunchly rejected her father’s brand of anti-Semitism. **Though more moderate in relation to French Jews, the junior Le Pen has expressed extreme views regarding France’s rapidly growing Muslim population.**

### Case Study: National Action Organization – an Example of a European Far Right Organization

National Action is a neo-Nazi group that was founded in 2013, operating and recruiting across the United Kingdom. In December 2016, National Action became the first far-right group to be proscribed as a terrorist organization since the Second World War, following the group’s continued encouragement of violent action and expressed support for Thomas Mair, the British far-right activist responsible for the murder of Labor Party parliament member, Jo Cox<sup>154</sup>.

National Action members have been connected to numerous offenses against minorities across the UK. One such incident is the attempted murder of Sikh dentist, Dr Sarandev Bhambra, by NA member Zack Davies, who claimed to have committed the attack to avenge the murder of Lee Rigby – a British officer murdered by two Muslim immigrants in 2013<sup>155</sup>. Despite being banned, the terrorist group has remained undeterred, seeking new, clandestine methods of operation to recruit members and promote violent activism<sup>156</sup>. Since 2016, numerous British citizens have been convicted for their continued membership of the banned organization, the most recent case in June 2020 concerning the young parents of a baby named Adolf<sup>157</sup>.

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<sup>152</sup> Jean-Marie Le Pen”, Britannica <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jean-Marie-Le-Pen>; Chrisafis Angelique, “Jean-Marie Le Pen fined again for dismissing Holocaust as ‘detail’”, The Guardian, April 2016 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/06/jean-marie-le-pen-fined-again-dismissing-holocaust-detail>

<sup>153</sup> France’s far-Right Jean-Marie Le Pen convicted for Holocaust denial”, DW, April 2016 <https://www.dw.com/en/frances-far-right-jean-marie-le-pen-convicted-for-holocaust-denial/a-19168158>

<sup>154</sup> Dr. Allen Chris, “Commission for Countering Extremism National Action: links between the far Right, extremism and terrorism”, University of Leicester, August 2019 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/834342/Chris\\_Allen\\_-\\_National\\_Action\\_Post\\_Publication\\_Revisions.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/834342/Chris_Allen_-_National_Action_Post_Publication_Revisions.pdf)

<sup>155</sup> BBC News, “Lee Rigby revenge attacker Zack Davies given life sentence”, September 2015 <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-north-east-wales-34218184>

<sup>156</sup> Sherriff Lucy, “Meet New Neo-Nazi Group National Action Which Just Wants To ‘Piss People Off’”, HuffPost, March 2014 [https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2014/03/06/new-neo-nazi-group-national-action\\_n\\_4910260.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2014/03/06/new-neo-nazi-group-national-action_n_4910260.html); De Simone Daniel, “National Action: The new parents and the neo-Nazi terror threat”, BBC NEWS, November 2018 <https://www.bbc.com/news/stories-45919730>

<sup>157</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/stories-45919730>



Prior to the group's proscription, the National Action operated an active website, employed to disseminate propaganda and newsletters detailing the organization's activity in the previous year<sup>158</sup>.



Zach Davies' Photo With the Organization's Emblem Prior to His Attack<sup>159</sup>

A comparison of far-right movements operating in the U.S. and in Europe reveals the significance of domestic factors such as national history, governmental framework and political culture on the organizational and operational paradigms employed by the movements. **In the US, far-right activity is relatively overt and conspicuous**, facilitated by the American constitutional protection of the freedom of speech, providing legal legitimacy to hateful, violent and extremist expressions as long as there is no direct incitement to unlawful action. This provides American far-right entities with significant operational agility, allowing activists to employ a wide range of strategies and tactics to achieve their means. **Conversely, in Europe there is an apparent dichotomy within the realm of far-right activity** – on one side of the operational spectrum, far-right political parties act above ground within the limitations of the democratic system and accepted legal regime, injecting far-right ideas into mainstream discourse through the façade of “softened” rhetoric. On the other, operate clandestine far-right groups and individuals, a darker, more violent and radical community driven underground by the stringent legal limitations imposed by the EU.

## White Supremacy Organizations and Radicalization of Potential Attackers

In order to facilitate a coherent understanding of the modus operandi employed by the contemporary white supremacist movement, **parallels may be drawn with the *Dawah* activities of Islamic terrorist organizations.** *Dawah* is a religious imperative in the Muslim faith, referring to the non-violent missionary practice of religious and ideological proselytization, aiming both to convert non-Muslims to Islam and to strengthen the

<sup>158</sup> Dr Jackson Paul, “#hitlerwasRight: National Action and National Socialism for the 21st Century”, *Journal for Deradicalization*, <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/7> Rightn

<sup>159</sup> De Simone Daniel, “National Action: The new parents and the neo-Nazi terror threat”, *BBC NEWS*, November 2018 <https://www.bbc.com/news/stories-45919730>

faith of secular Muslims, uniting the *Ummah* according to the ideals and principles of Islam. Similarly, the white supremacist movement in the United States operates in the same manner to recruit “white/Aryan” Americans, employing propaganda tactics to recruit and radicalize vulnerable individuals via narratives that appeal to personal identity crises, a need for belonging and a desire to connect with like-minded people. **Through the exploitation of personal and collective grievances, conflicts of identity, emotional vulnerabilities and crises of insecurity, both jihadist and far-right movements frame their extremist ideologies as the solution to their target audience’s problems** (for example, the anti-Semitic ‘Zionist Occupational Government’ conspiracy narrative propagated by the far-right claiming Jews secretly control the international banking system, and thus Western governments, inflicting economic crises and encouraging immigration in a plot to eradicate the white race).



A message on a white supremacy group’s Telegram channel “Today in America, Jews make up only 3% of the population, yet they dominate both business and politics” (Telegram)

The ideological differences between the various groups and subgroups within the far-right milieu are relatively minor, but **sufficient to justify the atomization of the movement into heterogeneous, separate groupuscules**. These ideological fault lines generally manifest in **differing conceptions of the source of the 'problem', the perceived enemy and the groups proposed solutions and course of action for effecting change**. For example, those who promote racial holy war and systemic collapse in order to establish their desired outcome of a white ethnostate (Accelerationism), are **likely to commit attacks of a differently sort and against different targets** than activists who consider preservation of the white race and culture as their prime operational objective (White Replacement Theory).

Amid the variety of ideological tendencies and conceptual themes within the contemporary far-right movement, fascist and Nazi ideologies have endured as powerful and preeminent themes within the modern white-supremacist narrative, promoted as the ultimate framework for the preservation of the white race.

This idealization of Nazi Germany is evident in many groups' adoption of Nazi symbols, imagery and rhetoric as an expression of their virulent *Weltanschauung*. Other groups emphasise a 'patriotic,' American white nationalism through the demonization of and incitement toward African Americans and other non-white American minority groups. **Despite the diversity of themes, goals and narratives, the various iterations within the American white supremacist milieu are united under the overarching themes of xenophobia, the myth of white genocide/replacement and their commitment to a revolutionary "Racial Holy War" (RaHoWa) to restore white supremacy in the United States and Europe and establish a racially pure white ethnostate.**

**Different groups, however, promote different methods to facilitate the realization of this goal.** For example, some American far-right organizations with a transnational presence across the US, Europe and beyond (such as the Atomwaffen Division) **aim to operationalize strategic violence against common targets in order to inflame racial tensions, sow chaos and catalyze systemic breakdown in an anarchic race war that will then inaugurate the white ethnostate.** Conversely, other localized groups, usually chapters of larger organizations deployed across the US, **operate in their immediate geographical domain in order to effectuate their desired change in their local arena** (for example, the various KKK extensions across the United States, such as the Southern Mississippi White Knights, Ohio Knights and White Knights of Texas)<sup>160</sup>. These regional chapters seem to emerge as a response to local frustrations, however, by virtue of the borderless connectivity of far-right online networks, many engage in coordinated activities across the U.S., transcending the limitations of regional state borders.

**White supremacist groups, extremist right-wing terrorist organizations and far-right populist political parties may thus be classified according to three core parameters:**

**Attitude towards Violence** – promotes, supports, neutral or rejects its efficacy in furthering the interests of the far-right.

**Attitude towards Government** – seeks to effect change from within the existing political establishment, or, conversely, seeks anarchic systemic collapse.

**Attitude towards Democracy** – supports implementing changes to the existing democratic system, or rather, promotes the establishment of a fascist ethnostate modelled on the Fourth Reich.

**Classifying the various manifestations of the far-right phenomenon according to the above parameters whilst considering their operational capacities in terms of resources, strategic capabilities and popular**

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<sup>160</sup> ADL, "DESPITE INTERNAL TURMOIL, KLAN GROUPS PERSIST", June 2017  
[https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/CR\\_5173\\_Klan%20Report\\_vFFF2.pdf](https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/CR_5173_Klan%20Report_vFFF2.pdf): SPLC, "KU KLUX KLAN"  
<https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/ku-klux-klan>

support can provide law enforcement and security agencies with an effective framework through which to evaluate the prospective threat posed by these groups to national security and the general public. The efficacy of this analytic framework is tested below through its application in two separate case studies, examining two divergent manifestations of the American far-right: The American Nazi Party, an overt, above-ground white supremacist political association operating primarily through the weaponization of propaganda; and the Atomwaffen Division, a clandestine accelerationist network which venerates extreme, mass violence through the strategic doctrine of leaderless resistance.

### Case Study I: The American Nazi Party – an Above Ground Far-Right Organization

In 1959, only 14 years following the atrocities of the Second World War, George Lincoln Rockwell formed the American Nazi Party. Since its inception, the group adopted a modus operandi of “limited violence”, seeking to preserve the “mongrelization” of “traditional America” through public demonstrations, demagoguery, newsletters and defiant opposition to the emerging civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King to end racial segregation<sup>161</sup>. Though a relatively small organization, Rockwell and his American Nazi Party served to lay the foundations for the contemporary ‘White Power’ movement in the United States. Most present-day far right ideologues and leaders were either former members or at least philosophical descendants of Rockwell and the ANP, including David Duke (former KKK Grand Wizard), William L. Pierce (author of *The Turner Diaries*) and James Mason (author of *Siege* and senior ideologue/adviser to the Atomwaffen Division<sup>162</sup>). The party went through different iterations throughout the years following Rockwell’s assassination by former follower John Palter in 1967<sup>163</sup>, due to various ideological divisions between members.

Since 2008, the ANP has been revived under the leadership of Rocky J. Suhayda, a former member of Rockwell’s original organization. Rockwell’s mantle to ‘awaken the white masses’ in a unified Aryan revolution has been carried on by the reinvigorated ANP, which **seeks to influence its target audience through a powerful propaganda narrative of white unity, pride and solidarity**. The current iteration of the movement has embraced the internet as a means to propagate this White Power narrative, operating a website and an online publication, *‘The White Worker’*, presenting a modern, American, Nazi commentary of current events. This continuation of Rockwell’s legacy and repetition of the foundational ideological doctrine is essential to sustain the relevance and significance of the modern American Nazi Party: in the current far-right milieu, ideology has eclipsed organization as the unifying glue binding the movement together<sup>164</sup>.

<sup>161</sup> Obermayer, Herman. *American Nazi Party in Arlington, Virginia 1958-1984*. Herman J. Obermayer, 2012

<sup>162</sup> Becket Lois, “George Lincoln Rockwell, father of American Nazis, still in vogue for some”, *The Guardian*, August 2017 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/27/george-lincoln-rockwell-american-nazi-party-alt-Right-charlottesville>

<sup>163</sup> BBC, “1967: ‘American Hitler’ shot dead”, *BBC*, August 1967 [http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/august/25/newsid\\_3031000/3031928.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/august/25/newsid_3031000/3031928.stm)

<sup>164</sup> American Nazi Party, “The White Worker” <https://www.americannaziparty.com/the-white-worker/>

Prior to the election of Donald Trump to the presidency of the United States in 2016, ANP leader Rocky Suhayda voiced his support for Trump on his radio program, proclaiming the prospect of a Trump Administration as a “real opportunity for white nationalists” to “build upon”<sup>165</sup>. This statement reflects the willingness of the American Nazi Party to implement change from within the existing political establishment and their conception of political activism as a legitimate tool through which to actualize their goals.

The propaganda proliferated by the American Nazi Party is designed to mobilize and appeal to a wider audience, adopting messages expected to resonate with the moderate majority and facilitate their radicalization. **Rather than emphasizing the esotericism of Nazism, the ANP seeks to broaden the appeal of their worldview and embed their ideology in the American political mainstream. This organizational objective is entirely incongruent with that of the Atomwaffen Division, a movement entirely disaffected with the current political establishment, and rather calls for total system collapse through the acceleration of an anarchic racist revolution.**

#### Case Study II: Atomwaffen Division – an Underground Far-Right Organization

The Atomwaffen Division is an accelerationist organization founded 2015 by Brandon Russel, premised upon the quasi-religious doctrine of ‘esoteric Hitlerism’. AWD rejects any effort to implement change through the ballot box or through political engagement. Instead, **the movement preaches the total destruction of the corrupt governmental state apparatus, celebrating terrorist violence** (against government targets as well as civilian) **as the only viable tactic to accelerate the system’s demise**. Since its establishment in 2015, the organization has established chapters and affiliates across Europe, strengthening its transnational linkages through expansive global online social networks. Although available information indicates that AWD is still a small organization – estimated to have 60-70 members – it represents the apex of extremist radicalization, with a publicly declared intention to escalate their campaign of violent terrorism to spread awareness through “unconventional means”<sup>166</sup>.

**Atomwaffen derives its ideological dogma from James Mason’s *Siege*, written in the 1980s, which cites the collapse of Rockwell’s political strategy as proof of that any endeavor to effect change from within the parameters of the existing political structure would be destined to fail. *Siege*, preaching “leaderless, cell-structured terrorism and white revolution”, implores far-right activists to engage in clandestine guerilla**

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<sup>165</sup> Pengelly Martin, “American Nazi Party leader sees ‘a real opportunity’ with a Trump presidency”, The Guardian, August 2016  
<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/aug/07/american-nazi-party-leader-trump-opportunity>

<sup>166</sup> SPLC, “ATOMWAFFEN DIVISION”, <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/atomwaffen-division>

**war against the system and its supporters, fetishizing violence and terrorism**<sup>167</sup>. After having discovered Mason's blueprint for violent accelerationism, Atomwaffen members tracked him down, designating the veteran neo-Nazi as the movement's honorary ideological figurehead, mentor and **role model for the organization's members and supporters**<sup>168</sup>. *Siege* is considered 'required reading' for all prospective AWD members.

**Atomwaffen's veneration of terrorist violence transcends ideological boundaries, even celebrating terrorist acts perpetrated by Islamist jihadists as a welcome blow against the system. Recent propaganda produced by the group have featured images of Osama Bin Laden as "The Islamic Example", lauding the culture of martyrdom and insurgency within jihadist organizations as one to admire and emulate within their own white-supremacist terror movement**<sup>169</sup>.



A photo of Osama Bin Laden posted by Atomwaffen division<sup>170</sup>

**Atomwaffen has thus far been accused of eight murders, numerous assaults several accounts of rape, kidnapping and torture.** There is also information indicating that the group has been successful in their stated intention to recruit members from the US military, enlisted to provide military experience and professional combat training to prepare the group for attacks against civilians and the government. AWD allegedly has successfully recruited numerous US army veterans, as well as several active duty personnel<sup>171</sup>. Despite the organization's expressed violent intentions, the group has yet to successfully coordinate a mass-casualty terrorist attack (as opposed to the lone wolf attacks by perpetrators adhering to the same accelerationist ideology). Atomwaffen's strategy of harassment also suggests an organizational imperative to incite fear and

<sup>167</sup> Jacob Ware, "Siege: The Atomwaffen Division and Rising Far-Right Terrorism in the United States", *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20 (2008): 417.

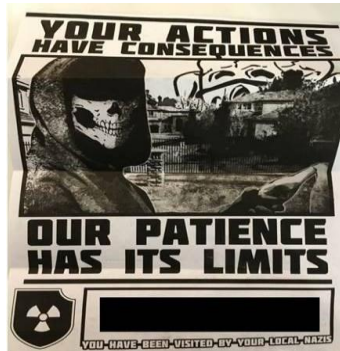
<sup>168</sup> SPLC, "JAMES MASON", <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/individual/james-mason>

<sup>169</sup> Makuch Ben and Lamoureux Mack, "Neo-Nazis Are Glorifying Osama Bin Laden", *Vice*, September 2019 [https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/article/bjwv4a/neo-nazis-are-glorifying-osama-bin-laden](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/bjwv4a/neo-nazis-are-glorifying-osama-bin-laden)

<sup>170</sup> Ibid

<sup>171</sup> Mathias Christopher, "Exclusive: Army Investigating Soldier's Alleged Leadership In Neo-Nazi Terror Group", *Huffpost*, May 2019 [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/atomwaffen-division-army-soldier-investigation-corwyn-storm-carver\\_n\\_5ccb5350e4b0e4d7572fde38](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/atomwaffen-division-army-soldier-investigation-corwyn-storm-carver_n_5ccb5350e4b0e4d7572fde38)

anxiety among its identified opponents, reflected in AWD members' coordinated intimidation efforts to threaten journalists, clerics and former high-ranking government officials. This included a swastika-laden poster affixed to the bedroom window of an Arizona Jewish journalist, reading "You have been visited by your local Nazis"<sup>172</sup>



"Your actions have consequences; our patience has its limits"<sup>173</sup>

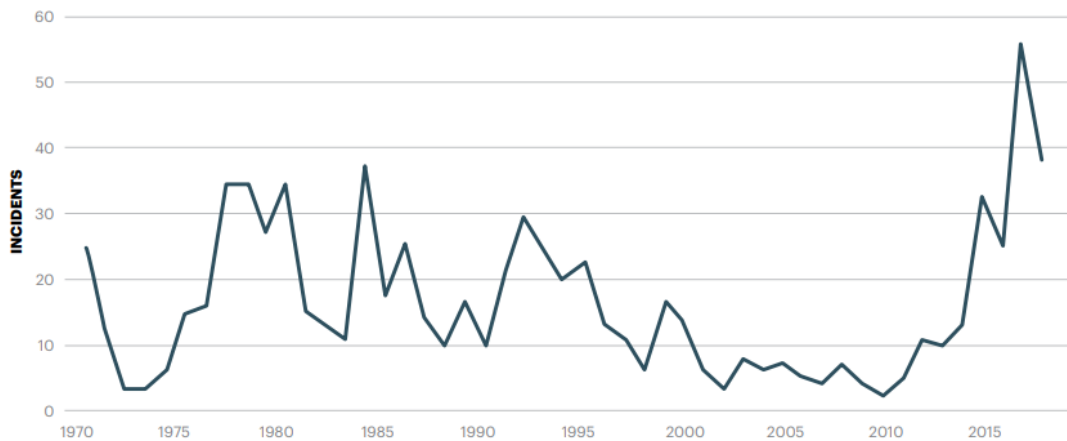
<sup>172</sup> Jaclyn Peiser, "A neo-Nazi threatened Jewish and Black journalists. He faces five years in prison.", *The Washington Post*, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/09/09/neo-nazi-guilty-journalist-threats/>

<sup>173</sup> ADL Nevada, "Five Alleged Atomwaffen Members Arrested for Swatting, Intimidation", February 2020 <https://lasvegas.adl.org/five-alleged-atomwaffen-members-arrested-for-swatting-intimidation/>



## Chapter 4: Evolution in the Modus Operandi of Far-Right Activists

Between 1970-2018 far-right activists have perpetrated approximately 746 attacks, claiming the lives of 688 victims (whereby 138 attacks culminated in the death of at least one victim)<sup>174</sup>.



The Number of Terrorist Attacks in the West 1970-2018 (Source: Global Terrorism Index, P. 46)

An analysis of the attacks reflects that between **1970-1995** the number of attacks perpetrated by far-right terrorists remained relatively stable, averaging a total of 18 attacks per year. As of **1995**, far-right terrorism underwent an observable decline, with the number of attacks dropping to an average of 6.5 attacks per year over the span of 15 years. Since **2011**, a notable increase is evident in the number of far-right attacks, with a total of 185 incidents recorded between 2011 and December **2018**<sup>175</sup>. Simultaneously, the number of casualties caused by each attack also increased: In **2017**, 11 people were killed by far-right attacks; In **2018**, some 26 were killed (a 52% increase in lethality); and by the end of September **2019**, 77 deaths were attributed to far-right terrorism<sup>176</sup>.

**Further analysis illustrates that the primary modus operandi employed by far-right assailants in the past decade has been that of the “lone wolf”, reflecting the growing potency of ideology to mobilize and unite aspiring militants in place of a structured organizational framework**<sup>177</sup>. This points to a fundamental change within the organizational patterns of the far-right, indicating that the movement has rejected the traditional (and pregnable) hierarchical organizational paradigm in favor of borderless, online networks of inspiration

<sup>174</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace, Global Terrorism Index 2019, *START*, <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2019/11/GTI-2019web.pdf>, 46.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid, 46.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, 46.



and radicalization, creating an transnational extremist community that exists largely beyond the reach of law enforcement and counterterrorist agencies.

**The data presented in the Global Terrorism Index illustrate two prominent and interconnected trends in the trajectory of far-right modus operandi, influencing both the number of attacks and their degree of lethality: first, a shift from "limited" (soft) violence to mass casualty attacks (hard violence); and secondly, an evolution from a hierarchical organizational paradigm to that of decentralized lone wolf terrorism.** These parallel trends are inherently interrelated, in that the transition from organizationally orchestrated attacks to independent, lone-wolf terrorism constituted the direct catalyst causing the progression from limited to mass violence. This negates the established assumption that organizationally mobilized violence is more sophisticated, by virtue of their access to ample resources, manpower and experienced leadership, thereby enhancing their capacity to execute complex attacks with more destructive effects. However, despite the inherent operational limitations of lone wolf terrorists, who operate with significantly less training and resources than their organizational counterparts, individual attackers enjoy significant advantages, free from the constraints of an established chain of command. With no hierarchical organization to disrupt, no identified network to infiltrate and no communications to intercept and monitor, lone wolves benefit from greater clandestinity and unpredictability, able to plan attacks under the radar of law enforcement, mitigating their chances of being caught.

A primary challenge facing counterterrorist agencies when contending with far-right attackers is the ability of the assailant to blend in seamlessly within his targeted environment. An analysis of multiple incidents of lone wolf terrorism revealed that far-right perpetrators are generally more discreet as they plan and prepare for their attack, and further, many domestic terrorists are unknown to authorities prior to their attack, with no criminal record or links to known extremists. Islamic terrorists on the other hand are generally more conspicuous within a Western crowd, and also tend to be less discreet regarding their intentions, sharing their plans with friends and family both online and offline. A comparative analysis of far-right terrorists and Islamic jihadists shows that only 18% of the far-right attackers shared their intentions with friends and family, as opposed to 45% of their jihadist counterparts<sup>178</sup>.

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<sup>178</sup> Laville Sandra Rightwing "'lone wolves' kill more than Islamic terrorists acting alone, says report", *The Guardian*, June 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/22/Rightwing-lone-wolves-islamist-extremists-report-thinktank-rusi>; Mekhennet, Souad. "Interpol Official Warns of Dramatic Rise in Extremist Right-Wing Violence." *The Washington Post*. Feb 25 2020, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/nationalsecurity/interpol-official-warns-of-dramatic-rise-in-extremist-Right-wingviolence/2020/02/24/174a8394-5725-11ea-9b35-def5a027d470\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nationalsecurity/interpol-official-warns-of-dramatic-rise-in-extremist-Right-wingviolence/2020/02/24/174a8394-5725-11ea-9b35-def5a027d470_story.html)

## Transition From ‘Organized’ to ‘Lone Wolf’ Terrorism

In the 1980s and 1990s, prior to the internet era, terrorist radicalization and recruitment depended on face-to-face interaction, requiring a coherent organizational framework to coordinate the effort. Terror attacks were perpetrated in the name of the organization as a means of obtaining the organization’s stated objectives, as was the case in the murder of Jewish radio host, Alan Berg, by white supremacist terror organization The Order in the 1980s (see case study below). The rapid development of internet communication in the mid-1990s caused a paradigm shift in the far-right movement, providing a conduit for information circulation with greater interconnectivity between disparate members, ubiquitous access and almost total anonymity. The far-right movement was quick to recognize the power of virtual communications, embracing the World Wide Web as a mechanism through which to disseminate their propaganda to potential sympathizers across the globe.

In the early days of white supremacist online activism, Stormfront.org emerged in the early 1990s as a powerful conduit for the dissemination of “White Pride World Wide”. Initially a small online bulletin board connecting dedicated white supremacists, Stormfront grew into a global virtual meeting ground, containing propaganda materials and ‘Hot Links’ to like-minded ‘news’ pages, ‘educational’ sites and a range of content and services including white supremacist music, video games and “whites only” dating services<sup>179</sup>. As other extremists followed with websites of their own, propagandists camouflaged their cyber racism through ‘cloaked websites’ posing as fund-raising sites, political campaigns or social movement activism with a deliberately disguised white supremacist agenda – an early manifestation of today’s fake news phenomenon<sup>180</sup>. From the mid-1990s, the far right further expanded their online presence through a network of web-forums, used to disseminate propaganda and recruit new members. In recent years, far right activists have become even more sophisticated in their exploitation of emerging online mediums, employing mainstream social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter to circulate their message amongst a wider target audience. As major social media sites began tightening their regulations regarding hate speech and other harmful and offensive content on their platforms, far right activists migrated to unmoderated, unregulated fringe platforms such as 4chan, 8chan, Telegram, Discord, Gab, that enable both free speech and total anonymity<sup>181</sup>.

The encrypted messaging app, Telegram, has gained wide popularity among far-right extremists, emerging as a safe-haven for the dissemination of white supremacist propaganda, racist memes, violent videos and

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<sup>179</sup> Conway, Maura, Ryan Scrivens, and Logan Macnair. 2019. ICCT Policy Brief Right-Wing Extremists’ Persistent Online Presence: History and Contemporary Trends. The Hague, p.6-15

<sup>180</sup> Daniels, Jesse. 2009. *Cyber Racism: White Supremacy Online and the New Attack on Civil Rights*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.

<sup>181</sup> Conway, Maura, Ryan Scrivens, and Logan Macnair. 2019. ICCT Policy Brief Right-Wing Extremists’ Persistent Online Presence: History and Contemporary Trends. The Hague, p.6-15

instructions for carrying out attacks and evading detection from law enforcement authorities. The platform hosts several, interconnected far-right channels, constituting a virtual rabbit hole for radicalization. Recently, amid this online ecosystem of far-right Telegram echo-chambers, a new and unique pattern of propaganda dissemination has been observed on channel 'Archtype X' (established in August 2020), the self-professed "first Artificial intelligent fascist"<sup>182</sup> (sic). The content on the channel is entirely produced by an "A.I bot", generating propaganda through algorithmic machine learning of fascist and racist content written by the likes of Adolf Hitler and James Mason. Through the consumption of this hateful literature, the algorithm learns to imitate the writers, creating new material to be consumed and disseminated.

According to Interpol's Secretary General, Jurgen Stock, the internet, and particularly social media, has functioned as a "sort of incubator" for far-right ideas<sup>183</sup>. **The power of the internet has the capacity to transform terrorist attacks into performance art of 'propaganda by the deed', inspiring others to imitate and emulate the actions depicted in manifestos, videos and live-streams. The virtual ecosystem of the far-right extremist milieu has amplified the threat of the leaderless resistance, more effectively inspiring and encouraging aspiring lone actors to mobilize to violent action<sup>184</sup>.**

Over the past few years, inspired by Breivik's advice to "explain what you have done in an announcement distributed prior to operation", several far-right terror attacks perpetrated by lone wolves have been accompanied by detailed manifestos outlining the motives, ideology, and tactics underlying the attack<sup>185</sup>. In some cases, attacks are live-streamed and broadcasted in real time on social media (such as the Christchurch Massacre in 2019) as a perverted call-to-arms for others to learn and emulate their actions. Secretary General Stock maintains that this phenomenon of mass casualty attacks by lone wolves is not expected to abate, and rather, is only likely to intensify<sup>186</sup>.

**As far-right extremist networks continue to proliferate and expand within the cybersphere, promoting radical ideologies, disseminating propaganda materials and glorifying lone wolf terrorists as martyrs, organizational affiliation has become redundant. Instead, ideology has emerged as the primarily agent of unification and mobilization. Perpetrators of far-right terror no longer do so on behalf of an organization**

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<sup>182</sup> Archtype X Telegram Channel

<sup>183</sup> Mekhennet, Souad. "Interpol Official Warns of Dramatic Rise in Extremist Right-Wing Violence." The Washington Post. Feb 25 2020, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/interpol-official-warns-of-dramatic-rise-in-extremist-right-wing-violence/2020/02/24/174a8394-5725-11ea-9b35-def5a027d470\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/interpol-official-warns-of-dramatic-rise-in-extremist-right-wing-violence/2020/02/24/174a8394-5725-11ea-9b35-def5a027d470_story.html)

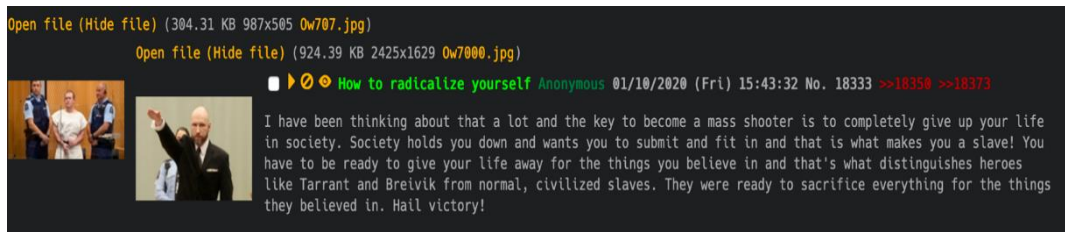
<sup>184</sup> Hoffman, Bruce, and Jacob Ware. 2019. "Are We Entering a New Era of Far-Right Terrorism?" War on the Rocks.

<https://warontherocks.com/2019/11/are-we-entering-a-new-era-of-far-right-terrorism/>. Koehler, Daniel. 2016. "Right-Wing Extremism

<sup>185</sup> Ware, Jacob. 2020. ICCT Policy Brief Testament to Murder: The Violent Far-Right's Increasing Use of Terrorist Manifestos. The Hague, p.4

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

in order to further organizational objectives. Rather, individuals are motivated and mobilized to violence in the name of a common ideology.



The key to become a mass shooter is to completely give up your life in society. This is what distinguishes heroes like Tarrant and Breivik (Source: Neinchan)



Names of lone attackers who have been 'canonized' as martyrs of the far-right (Source: Telegram)

In reviewing the motivations and radicalization processes of numerous lone wolf attackers, the potency of the propaganda materials disseminated within far-right circles becomes glaringly evident. For some perpetrators, a single document – James Mason's *Siege*<sup>187</sup> – was suffice to plant the seed of violent action within the mind of the reader, convincing the attacker that their actions would spark a chain reaction of chaos and anarchy, accelerating the civil war that would culminate in the ultimate collapse of the current social order. *Siege* was cited by Brenton Tarrant as the main ideological inspiration his Christchurch attack in 2019<sup>188</sup> which in turn provided the impetus for John Ernest's attack on the Poway Chabad House in

<sup>187</sup> See expansion on page 19

<sup>188</sup> See expansion on the next page

California<sup>189</sup> (elaborated further below). **This domino effect of far-right terror attacks, inspired by the actions of their glorified predecessors, directly correlates with the observed increase in far-right terrorism since 2011 - with Anders Breivik's 2011 Norway attacks constituting the initial trigger<sup>190</sup>.**

## **Individual Attackers – Attacks in the Name of Ideology**

**The 'patient zero' triggering the global contagion of far-right extremist terror was 33 year-old Anders Breivik, perpetrator of the 2011 terror attack in Oslo that claimed the lives of 77 people.** Just as Timothy McVeigh inaugurated the shift from limited violence to mass casualty attacks through his 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, Breivik established the blueprint for far-right extremist violence in the internet era, initiating a chain reaction of copycat terrorists, inspired by the published manifestos of the lone wolves before them<sup>191</sup>.

**Breivik** was a member of an online neo-Nazi forum called Nordisk. He also openly and actively expressed his views online, preaching hateful rhetoric on mainstream social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. Prior to his attack, Breivik published a 1,516-page manifesto online, in which he beseeched all white Christians in Europe to unite in a modern-day crusade against the Muslim takeover of Europe, damning the incumbent Labor Party for betraying Norway by supporting Muslim immigration, and pledging to punish the party for their sins<sup>192</sup>.

In 2016, on the fifth anniversary of Breivik's attack, 18 year-old **David Ali Sonboly**, a German of Iranian descent, killed nine people in a shooting rampage at a McDonald's restaurant and a nearby mall in Munich, mostly frequented by immigrant families. The gunman, who committed suicide immediately after his killing spree, had allegedly been obsessed with mass shooting attacks, using a picture of Anders Breivik as his profile picture on the WhatsApp messaging service<sup>193</sup>.

In 2018, 46 year-old **Robert Bowers** opened fire in the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA, in a murderous rampage that killed 11 and injured 6<sup>194</sup>. Bowers was armed with a semi-automatic rifle and three

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<sup>189</sup> Byman, Daniel. 2020. "Riots, White Supremacy and Accelerationism." The Lawfare Institute. <https://www.lawfareblog.com/riots-white-supremacy-and-accelerationism>

<sup>190</sup> Democracy Index, P. 46

<sup>191</sup> Bjørge, Tore, and Jacob Aasland Ravndal. 2019. ICCT Policy Brief Extreme-Right Violence and Terrorism: Concepts, Patterns, and Responses. *The Hague*. P. 13-14

<sup>192</sup> "Profile: Anders Behring Breivik", *BBC*, April 12 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-14259989>

<sup>193</sup> "Germany: 2016 Munich attack had 'radical Right-wing' motives, say police", *DW*, <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-2016-munich-attack-had-radical-right-wing-motives-say-police/a-50991641>; January 1st, 2018, <https://www.israelhayom.co.il/article/399607> "The Killer Was Obsessed With Mass Shooting"

<sup>194</sup> Ibid

additional handguns. Upon bursting into the synagogue, which was hosting a brit milah (a ritual circumcision ceremony following the birth of a baby boy), Bowers opened fire upon the congregants, yelling “all Jews must die!”. The gunman was not affiliated with an identifiable extremist organization, however, Bowers’ social media activity reflect his deep immersion in the vitriolic online communities of the far-right. Bowers was a regular and active poster of white supremacist and anti-Semitic content on Gab, railing against the ‘Zionist Occupied Government’ and the Jewish conspiracy to eradicate the white race. Hours before his attack, Bowers posted one last message to his followers, reviling the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (a Jewish nonprofit organization which provides humanitarian aid to refugees) for “[bringing] invaders in that kill our people”. Bowers last, harrowing comment has since become a rallying cry within far-right extremist circles: “I can’t sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. *Screw your optics, I’m going in*”<sup>195</sup>.

In 2019, 29 year-old **Brenton Tarrant**, an Australian national living in New Zealand, live-streamed his brutal mass murder in two Christchurch mosques, broadcasting his massacre to the world in real time. Tarrant’s attack claimed the lives of 51 Muslim in their sacred place of worship, as well as injuring an additional 49. Like Breivik and Bowers, Tarrant alerted his ideological compatriots of his imminent attack on the 8chan imageboard, posting links to his 74-page manifesto ‘*The Great Replacement*’, and to the live-stream feed. Tarrant’s post included an accompanying image, reading “*screw your optics, I’m going in*” – a direct reference identifying Bowers as a source of inspiration for Tarrant’s own radicalization. In his manifesto, Tarrant explained his motivations for the attack, expressing his desire to “show the invaders that our lands will never be their lands, out 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”. Tarrant also cited Anders Breivik as a core source of his inspiration, claiming to have received a “blessing” from “Knight Justiciar [Breivik]” prior to his attack. Tarrant also claimed that it had been a number of key events that spurred his realization “that a violent, revolutionary solution is the only possible solution to our current crisis”, namely: an Islamic terror attack on April 7th, 2017 in which a young Swedish schoolgirl was murdered on the way to meet her mother after school; the victory of Emmanuel Macron in the 2017 French Elections; and lastly, his 2017 visit to France, during which he witnessed what he considered the ‘invasion’ of Muslim immigrants in the West<sup>196</sup>.

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<sup>195</sup> Tibon Amir, Landau Noa “11 People Killed in a Shooting Incident in a Synagogue in Pittsburgh, the Shooter Arrested”, Haaretz, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 <https://www.haaretz.co.il/news/world/america/1.6595481>

<sup>196</sup> News Agencies “I Got the Inspiration From the Norway Massacre”: The New Zealand Shooter Slaughtered Parishioners”, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Maariv, <https://www.maariv.co.il/news/world/Article-689636>

**Tarrant's attack in New Zealand of all places, a country with almost no history of terrorism, exemplifies the global reach of the far-right phenomenon and the increasingly transnational nature of far-right extremist terror.<sup>197</sup>.**

In April 2019, just six weeks after the Christchurch massacre and on the last day of the Jewish Passover holiday, 20 year-old **John Earnest** entered a Chabad synagogue in Poway CA, armed with a semiautomatic rifle, and opened fire. The shooting claimed the life of one female victim and injured three more. Shortly before the attack, Earnest posted his own manifesto, titled '*An Open Letter*', to the 8chan imageboard, in which he cites Brenton Tarrant's attack as the catalyst driving him to plan his own mass murder, as well as identifying Robert Bowers as an additional source of inspiration. In emulation of Tarrant's template, Earnest also attempted to broadcast his attack on Facebook, but fortunately, the live-stream link failed. Earnest also claimed responsibility for an arson attack on the Dar-ul-Arqam mosque in Escondido, California, perpetrated 9 days after Tarrant's attack. In the parking lot of the burning mosque, Earnest had scrawled graffiti paying tribute to the Christchurch terrorist, reading: "For Brenton Tarrant"<sup>198</sup>.

Also in 2019, 21 year-old **Patrick Crusius** drove 10 hours from his home in Allen, Texas to a crowded shopping center in the border city of El Paso, in a calculated and targeted attack against Hispanic and Latino immigrants. Armed with an assault rifle, Crusius fatally shot 22 people and injured dozens more. Like his predecessors, Crusius published a manifesto on 8chan titled '*The Inconvenient Truth*', declaring his "support [for] the Christchurch shooter and his manifesto" as well as justifying his attack as "a response to the Hispanic invasion of Texas"<sup>199</sup>. Crusius later told investigators during his interrogation that he had intended to shoot as many Mexicans as possible<sup>200</sup>.

**As illustrated through this chronology of events, the incidence of far-right-inspired terrorism by lone wolf attackers has dramatically escalated in recent years: from only 5 attacks total in the period between 2010-2014, to a thrice multiplied total of 15 attacks between 2015-2019<sup>201</sup>.**

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<sup>197</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace, Global Terrorism Index 2019, *START*, <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2019/11/GTI-2019web.pdf>, p.44

<sup>198</sup> News Agencies "The Shooter at the California Synagogue: a 19 Years Old Nationalist Who Had Torched a Mosque", April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019 <https://news.walla.co.il/item/3232747>

<sup>199</sup> Patrick Crusius, "The Inconvenient Truth", August 2019, <https://randallparker.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/The-Inconvenient-Truth.pdf>

<sup>200</sup> Bar, Neta, "I Wanted to Shoot as Many Mexicans as Possible: At Least 20 Dead in a Texas Shooting Attack", YNET August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019, <https://www.israelhayom.co.il/article/679621>

<sup>201</sup> Ravik Jupskas, Anders, Jacob Aasland Ravndal, and Tore Bjørgo. 2020. "How Right-Wing Violence in Western Europe Changed in 2019." *Sciencenorway*. <https://sciencenorway.no/blog-extremists-researchers-zone/how-Right-wing-violencein-western-europe-changed-in-2019/1694285>.



## Case Study: The Organization as the Locus of Terrorist Mobilization in the Pre-Internet Era – The Order and the Murder of Alan Berg

The Order, also known as 'the Silent Brotherhood', was a small, semi-autonomous, millenarian white supremacist terrorist organization, active in the United States between 1983-1985. An offshoot of the Aryan Nations, The Order comprised a motley amalgam of the diverse movements within the extreme right, combining elements of Christian Identity, Wotanism, revolutionary anti-establishmentism, secular white nationalism and Nazism<sup>202</sup>. The group comprised 24 members – including founding member Robert J. Matthews (later killed in December 1984 during a shootout with the FBI) and infamous far-right ideologue David Lane – all united in their sworn commitment to foment racial revolution, overthrow the political system and "bring total victory the Aryan race"<sup>203</sup>. The Order was formed according to a loose hierarchical cell structure, with Matthews at the apex as leader and strategist. Originally referred to simply as 'the action group', the group came to refer to themselves as 'The Order', modeled after the revolutionary terrorist cell depicted in National Alliance leader William Pierce's apocalyptic racist novel *The Turner Diaries*, in which a small white supremacist insurgent group embarks on a violent uprising which leads to the overthrow of the 'Zionist Occupied' US government in a revolutionary race war, culminating in the systematic extermination of non-whites. Pierce's novel (written under the pseudonym 'Andrew Macdonald') directly inspired several far-right extremists, most notably of which being Timothy McVeigh, whose 1995 Oklahoma City bombing was a twisted real-life reenactment of the FBI Headquarters bombing portrayed in the book. Like McVeigh, Matthews was deeply inspired by the novel and used it as a template for his organization's operations, assuming the same mission as his fictional heroes - an armed revolution against the system ending with the 'purification' of the population and the institution of a white authoritarian ethnostate.

Following the self-financing model of their fictitious namesakes, The Order embarked on criminal 'fundraising' efforts including armed robbery and counterfeiting operations in order to sponsor the coming insurgency. Through this criminal enterprise, the group amassed nearly \$4 million dollars, which they committed to the purchase of arms, the salaries of key members and other organizational expenses, as well as distributing a significant amount of their takings to the various groups involved in the larger white supremacist movement<sup>204</sup>. These financial resources provided a basis for The Order's campaign of political violence and terrorism, which included the publication of a hit list comprising prominent, high-profile politicians, activists and media personalities, which the group then disseminated through various means.

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<sup>202</sup> Winter, Aaron "The Order." In *Religion and Violence: An Encyclopedia of Faith and Conflict from Antiquity to the Present*. ME Sharpe Inc., 2011. 542-546

<sup>203</sup> Kaplan, Jeffrey, et.al. *Encyclopedia of White Power: A Sourcebook on the Radical Racist Right*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.

<sup>204</sup> Vysotsky, Stanislav. "A Marriage of Hate and Terror: The Inevitable Rise of The Order." (2004).



Alan Berg's name was also on that list<sup>205</sup>. Berg, a popular Jewish radio talk-show host in Denver, Colorado, was an attorney with liberal views who grew up in a mixed Jewish-African American neighborhood in Chicago. Berg was notorious for baiting and antagonizing racists, anti-Semites and right white extremists, including members of The Order, live on the air. Berg quickly provoked the ire of the white supremacist movement, becoming the targets of numerous physical threats by far-right and white supremacist activists, including an on-air death threat in 1979 by local KKK leader Fred Wilkins who had burst into the radio studio whilst Berg was broadcasting with a gun. On June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1984, several members of the order, including Robert Matthews, Bruce Pierce, David Lane and Richard Scutari, ambushed Berg on the driveway outside his home and shot him to death<sup>206</sup>. A manhunt for Matthews quickly ensued, culminating in the shootout with the FBI that made Matthews a martyr to the white supremacist movement. The murder weapon was later found in the possession of another white supremacist affiliated with a separate organization - The Aryan Nation<sup>207</sup>.

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<sup>205</sup> Jimison Robert, "How the FBI smashed white supremacist group The Order," CNN, August 2018; A radio host is gunned down for his controversial views, HHISTORY. <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/a-radio-host-is-gunned-down-for-his-controversial-views>; Smith Layra, This brash Jewish radio host was murdered by white supremacists for denouncing anti-Semitism, TIMELINE, November 2017, <https://timeline.com/alan-berg-jewish-murder-denver-57f54b2989dd>; Timothy McVeigh Oklahoma City Bombing, YOUTUBE, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6mIAAkzlpk&feature=youtu.be>

<sup>206</sup> A radio host is gunned down for his controversial views, HHISTORY. <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/a-radio-host-is-gunned-down-for-his-controversial-views>

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.; Smith Layra, This brash Jewish radio host was murdered by white supremacists for denouncing anti-Semitism, TIMELINE, November 2017, <https://timeline.com/alan-berg-jewish-murder-denver-57f54b2989dd>; Timothy McVeigh Oklahoma City Bombing, YOUTUBE, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6mIAAkzlpk&feature=youtu.be>

## Chapter 5: Far Right – Future Processes and Trends

In recent years, amid the backdrop of a myriad economic, political and social crises - both domestic and global - the far-right phenomenon has gained momentum, expanding both in power and in scope of activity. By exploiting societal grievances and the growing climate of insecurity, the far-right movement has amassed greater influence, both in the mainstream, through the rise of far-right parties within the boundaries of the national political establishment, and on the fringe, by virtue of radical far-right extremists and their mobilization of potent and pervasive ideological frameworks. This phenomenon has precipitated a rising threat emanating from two forms of violence: 'limited violence' (soft violence), mostly employed through the direction and encouragement of far-right organizations; and 'mass violence' (hard violence), perpetrated by lone wolves radicalized by far-right ideologues and ideologies on online forums and social media in a vicious cycle of copycat terrorism and 'propaganda of the deed'. As far-right extremism continues to grow both in popularity and lethality, the movement itself has transformed and decentralized. Far-right terrorism, once perpetrated under the leadership and guidance of established, hierarchical organizations, is now almost exclusively perpetrated by lone wolf actors, propelled to violent action by the powerful force of ideology.

Over the past years, after several sporadic mass casualty attacks by lone actors across the world, the rising security threat posed by lone wolf terrorism has become blatantly evident. This new wave of lone wolf attacks has been facilitated, amplified and accelerated by rapid developments in modern technology. In the past, potential lone wolves self-radicalized through written propaganda materials, movies, political discourse and negatively construed current events, mobilized through an organizational infrastructure that planned and coordinated attacks in accordance with their organizational interests. Today, the ubiquity and interconnectivity of the internet has dramatically expanded the traditional spheres of influence beyond the boundaries of the physical world, providing a conduit for the dissemination of radicalizing propaganda material, training manuals, tactical guidance and information regarding potential targets with the brush of a keystroke. An organizational infrastructure, once the primary locus of terrorist radicalization and mobilization, has been rendered redundant. In this age of instantaneous, borderless, immediate connectivity, ideology has replaced the organization as the locus of terrorist activity, uniting disparate, disaffected individuals in a global community and encouraging would-be lone attackers with the promise of glorification, celebration and sanctification.

The rising 'popularity' of the lone wolf terrorist strategy also stems from the inherent difficulties in identifying, monitoring and thwarting attacks by self-radicalized lone actors with no organizational affiliation. Though hierarchical terrorist organizations operate covertly, employing precautionary measures such as

compartmentalization and regulated practices for information sharing to avoid detection by law enforcement, organizational structures remain vulnerable to penetration. Lone actors, operating clandestinely with no contact or collaboration with others, are more likely to evade detection and arrest than group-based terrorist actors. The pregnability of organized group structures is exemplified through the successful frustration of a terrorist plot by far-right group ‘The Base’ in January 2020. The Base is a militant, white-supremacist, accelerationist organization<sup>208</sup> founded in 2018, with various autonomous chapters and cells across the US (Maryland, Georgia, New Jersey, Michigan and Wisconsin), as well as maintaining a significant online presence to propagandize, recruit and incite<sup>209</sup>. The group appears to admire and draw inspiration from jihadist tactics and activities, sharing its name with Al Qaeda, which translates as ‘the base’ in Arabic. In January, members of The Base’s Maryland cell concocted an elaborate terrorist plot targeting an upcoming gun-rights rally in Richmond, VA, hoping to spark a wave of violence that would set off a “full blown civil war” and liberate the white race from the oppression of the Zionist Occupied Government. Fortunately, the group had been the target of a long-term FBI investigation, involving monitoring of the organization’s chat rooms, hidden recording devices and video surveillance placed in apartments of affiliated members, and at least one undercover agent who infiltrated the group. After members were recorded discussing their planned attack, the FBI was able to foil the impending attack and arrest the operatives<sup>210</sup>.

Recognizing the power of social media for furthering an ideological agenda, far-right terrorist organizations have escalated their efforts within the digital information space, tailoring the extremist message directly to appeal to identified potential supporters in individualized recruitment campaigns . The Atomwaffen Division (described in detail in chapter 2), is a quintessential example of the value of the internet as a vector of radicalization and recruitment for the far-right movement. The Atomwaffen Division is estimated to comprise between 80 and 100 formal members in the US, as well as several dozen additional members in chapters across the world<sup>211</sup>. Ostensibly, the movement appears relatively small. These numbers, however, are highly misleading. Atomwaffen was formed in 2015 in a now-defunct private fascist forum, Iron March, which was shut down in 2017 after unabating cyber-attacks by internet hacktivists designed to disrupt the site. Atomwaffen emerged as a manifestation of the ideological credo promoted on Iron March, soon becoming synonymous with the 1200-member network on which it was formed. Though not all Iron March users

<sup>208</sup> Accelerationism is an ideological current grounded upon the conception that the current political system is irreparably corrupt, and accordingly, seeks to accelerate the collapse of the current social order by promoting chaos and anarchy, primarily through acts of terror, in order to build a new fascist ethnostate.

<sup>209</sup> Macfarquhar, Neil, and Goldman, Adam. “A New Face of White Supremacy: Plots Expose Danger of the ‘Base’”, 22 January, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/22/us/white-supremacy-the-base.html>; Beauchamp Zack, Accelerationism: the obscure idea inspiring white supremacist killers around the world, November 18 2019, <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/11/11/20882005/accelerationism-white-supremacy-christchurch>; Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed; Hodgson, Samuel, and Clarke, Colin P., “The Growing Threat Posed by Accelerationism and Accelerationist Groups Worldwide”, April 20, 2020, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2020/04/the-growing-threat-posed-by-accelerationism-and-accelerationist-groups-worldwide/>

<sup>210</sup> Macfarquhar, Neil, and Goldman, Adam. “A New Face of White Supremacy: Plots Expose Danger of the ‘Base’”, 22 January, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/22/us/white-supremacy-the-base.html>

<sup>211</sup> Ware, Jacob. “Siege: The Atomwaffen Division and Rising Far-Right Terrorism in the United States”, July 2019, <https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/ICCT-Ware-Siege-July2019.pdf>

formally became members of the Atomwaffen Division upon its establishment, the registered members of the fascist forum ascribed to the same violent accelerationist ideology, distinguishing themselves from ‘moderate’ white nationalists and Alt Right members in their vocal commitment to extreme, insurrectionary violence<sup>212</sup>. By effectively utilizing new technology and social media to amplify their message and assert their existence, Atomwaffen has dramatically expanded its influence beyond the group’s formal membership, creating a widespread virtual network of supporters and potential copycats. It should be noted, that although this unabashed online activism may expose the organization to infiltration by security services and law enforcement, this extremist discourse on social media remains a widespread phenomenon in much wider circles than that of the organization’s membership.

### **Infiltration of Intelligence and Law Enforcement Agencies Into Far-Right Organizations**

The traditional structure of terrorist organizations presents significant challenges to counterterrorist efforts of interception and infiltration. Moreover, terrorist organizations are cognizant of these efforts by security services to infiltrate their rank – an awareness which has been heightened by successful efforts of undercover intelligence agents, disguised as supporters, to penetrate private online forums and expose their contents, as evidence by the mass leaks of dozens of closed Discord servers associated with far-right terrorist organizations, among them the aforementioned Ironmarch forum. Accordingly, the process for accepting new members into these private online discussion groups has become increasingly rigid, requiring a stringent vetting process for each aspiring candidate<sup>213</sup>.

Yet, these and other security measures, such as compartmentalization and a shift to cell-based organizational structures, cannot solve the pregnability problem altogether. As such, far-right organizations have enhanced their internal security practices, migrating to encrypted chat applications such as Telegram or Hoop. A recent study conducted in March 2020 revealed that 80% of a select sample of 374 Telegram channels and groups associated with the far-right were established after the Christchurch massacre (March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019). This data attests to a noticeable surge in the use of encrypted communications services as a haven for far-right activity<sup>214</sup>. These encrypted communications channels provide far-right organizations with an uncensored, anonymous conduit through which to communicate internally amongst group members, as well as with other organizations and activists that are not connected formally with the organization.

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<sup>212</sup> <https://www.ironmarch.exposed/>

<sup>213</sup> <https://whispers.ddosecrets.com/>

<sup>214</sup> Bedingfield, Will, “How Telegram Became a Safe Haven for Pro-Terror Nazis”, March 1, 2020, <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/hope-not-hate-telegram-nazis>

The increased use of Telegram and Hoop as well as other alternative social media platforms, imageboards and fringe forums illustrate an important development in far-right online activity. Detecting, monitoring and removing activity and communications by far-right members on these platforms (both by 'official' members of the movement or by ideological affiliates) is especially difficult. Lone wolves are thus free to navigate and interact on these platforms with a low risk of exposure, able to obtain access to propaganda material, training manuals on terrorist tactics and weaponry, join terrorist organizations and coordinate attacks with other likeminded individuals under the secure cloak of anonymity. Within these virtual networks of the far-right, a single platform can provide an ardent activists with the means to engage with multiple forums, channels and organizations simultaneously, as exemplified by Ethan Meltzer. Meltzer, a 22-year old private in the US military, had used Telegram to contact neo-Nazi and white supremacist organizations including the Order of the Nine Angels (O9A) and the Rapewaffen Division (an affiliated chapter of Atomwaffen), providing sensitive information about his unit's movements and capabilities in a plot to cause "the deaths of as many of his fellow servicemen as possible"<sup>215</sup>.

These encrypted channels, together with the Chan imageboards that are increasingly associated with the far-right (4chan and 8chan)<sup>216</sup>, constitute free and anonymous realms for the proliferation of racist rhetoric and incitement of violence beyond the reach of the media gatekeepers. Nevertheless, diligent surveillance and observation of these anonymous online platforms has enabled intelligence and law enforcement agencies to successfully infiltrate these groups. This has driven a movement-wide initiative of 'counterintelligence' and 'information security', with many far-right activists migrating to other online channels, some even returning to mainstream platforms, conducting discussions via Instagram private messenger.

An additional process typifying the far-right milieu in recent years has been the movement's warming relations with the Russian government. This connection has yet to be thoroughly researched or definitively proven, however, the currently available information strongly suggests that Russia has been mobilizing far-right organizations to promote its interests. For example, the **Russian Imperial Movement**, a Russian white-supremacist group, offers paramilitary training to white supremacist organizations both within and outside of Russia, exporting several hundred volunteers to fight in conflict regions such as eastern Ukraine and Libya in defense of the interests of the Russian government.<sup>217</sup> The RIM adheres to a monarchist, ultranationalist ideology which aims to restore Russia's tsarist past and reinstate the Russian royal family to rule. It is thus perceived as ideologically opposed to the Russian government and the incumbent Putin regime. However,

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<sup>215</sup> Owen, Tess, "U.S. Soldier Linked to Satanic Neo-Nazi Group Allegedly Plotted 'Murderous Ambush' on his Own Unit", 23 June, 2020, [https://www.vice.com/en\\_au/article/4ay389/us-soldier-linked-to-satanic-neo-nazi-group-allegedly-plotted-murderous-ambush-on-his-own-unit](https://www.vice.com/en_au/article/4ay389/us-soldier-linked-to-satanic-neo-nazi-group-allegedly-plotted-murderous-ambush-on-his-own-unit)

<sup>216</sup> Anonymous forums in the English language

<sup>217</sup> Dixon, Robyn, "Inside White-Supremacist Russian Imperial Movement, Designated Foreign Terrorist Organization by U.S. State Department", 13 April, 2020, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/russia-white-supremacist-terrorism-us/2020/04/11/255a9762-7a75-11ea-a311-adb1344719a9\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/russia-white-supremacist-terrorism-us/2020/04/11/255a9762-7a75-11ea-a311-adb1344719a9_story.html)

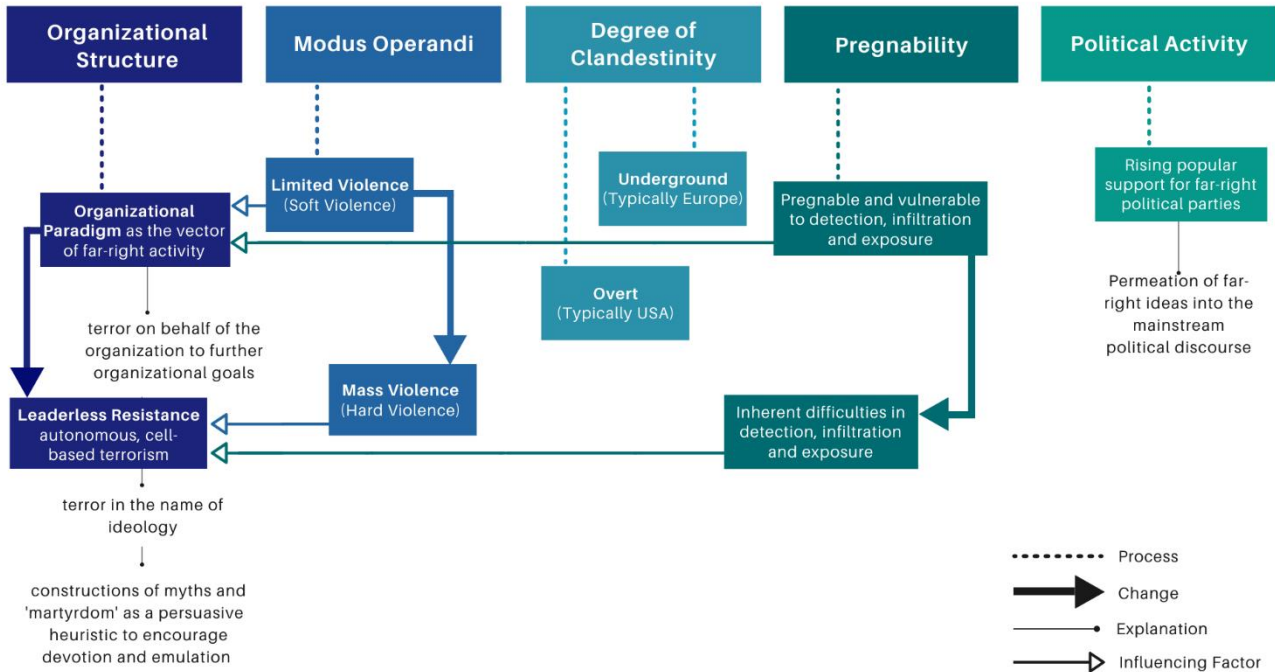
the Russian government has turned a blind eye to the far-right extremism within its borders, recognizing RIM's ability to further their shared expansionist, ultranationalist interests. On April 6<sup>th</sup> 2020, the US Department of State designated the RIM as a terrorist organization. An additional example is the **Wagner Group**, a Kremlin-backed mercenary group employed by the Russian government as a means to expand its influence and further national interests overseas – including Syrian and Libya - without overtly involving Russian state military forces. Many soldiers in the private Wagner army are extreme far-right ultranationalists, and the organization itself has consistently promoted far right propaganda and ideology<sup>218</sup>.

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<sup>218</sup> MacKinnon, Amy, "New Report Exposes Brutal Methods of Russia's Wagner Group", 11 June, 2020, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/06/11/russia-wagner-group-methods-bouta-killing-report/>

## Summary

Diagram – Far Right - Prominent Trends Discussed in the Article



Previous conceptions of the far-right phenomenon as a homogenous entity operating according to a coherent ideological and organizational framework are no longer appropriate nor accurate. Analysis of the current iteration of far-right extremism reveals that the contemporary far-right movement is neither unified nor ideologically uniform, and rather, comprises an amorphous, highly-diverse patchwork of groups, activists and influencers operating according to a broad spectrum of ideological currents - some more extreme than others. Within this fragmented, heterogeneous collection of extremist actors, the ideological framework is the catalyst for extremist far-right mobilization, dictating the motivational frames and strategic paradigms for violent action. This ideological framework is thus the determinant of the attacker’s chosen course of action – be it through ‘limited’ or ‘mass’ violence.

Over the past several years, the far-right extremist movement has undergone many significant shifts and changes in their organizational structure, propaganda efforts and modus operandi. The organizational shift from formal, centralized, hierarchical structures to atomized, individualized, network structures, has had profound implications for the far-right terrorist threat. The watershed moment precipitating this transformation was the 1995 Oklahoma City Bombing perpetrated by Timothy McVeigh. McVeigh’s attack also signified an additional transition within the far-right movement: abstention from the previous strategy of ‘soft/limited’ violence against specific targets (generally through targeted hate crimes, arson, assault and protest) in favor of indiscriminate, ‘spectacular’ attacks of mass (‘hard’) violence, perpetrated with the



intention to effect devastating carnage and a huge body count. **These twin processes have together facilitated the rise of an increasingly lethal and capricious modus operandi of mass-terror attacks perpetrated by lone wolf actors, considered by many to constitute the most salient terrorist threat facing Western society.** The lethality of this strategy is beyond question, proven repeatedly through sporadic attacks across the globe (Oklahoma, 1995; Norway, 2011; Christchurch, 2019; and more), **posing an almost insurmountable threat to intelligence and law enforcement due to the inherent difficulties in identifying, monitoring and thwarting lone wolf terrorists.**

The information revolution and digitization of global society has given rise to the transnationalization of the far-right phenomenon and the proliferation of virulent virtual communities across the cybersphere. These densely populated extremist forums, communities and websites are a breeding ground for self-radicalization, uniting disparate individuals in a leaderless, digital, post-organizational resistance. This new era of internet-mediated terrorism was inaugurated with Anders Breivik's mass-casualty terror attack in Norway in 2011, the first far-right attack of magnitude since 1995, inspiring a new phenomenon of copycat terrorism by lone actors seeking to emulate Breivik's 'success'. Breivik's digitally-published manifesto, "2083 – European Declaration of Independence", has since been widely disseminated within far-right circles, revered - as Breivik had intended - as a blueprint for lone wolf terror.<sup>219</sup>

This article's comprehensive delineation of the core ideological tendencies of the contemporary far-right, coupled with the presented typological framework for the classification of far-right organizations according to the parameters of: (i) attitude towards violence; (ii) attitude towards government; and (iii) attitude towards democracy, whilst considering operational capacities in terms of resources, strategic capabilities and popular support, hopes to provide security and law enforcement agencies with an effective analytic framework through which to evaluate and defend against the terror threat posed by far-right extremism.

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<sup>219</sup> Pidd Helen, "Anders Behring Breivik spent years training and plotting for massacre", The Guardian, August 2012  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/aug/24/anders-behring-breivik-profile-oslo>

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