



SPECTRE OF HATE

**An Explanatory Guide to
the Far Right in the UK**



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Cover image: The mural on Cable Street, East End of London depicts the memorable events of 4 October 1936, when a march by Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists was stopped by thousands of local people. The 'Battle of Cable Street' was a great victory for popular decency over Mosley's crude politics of hate.

About the guide

This guide provides an overview of British far-right and populist movements active today.

Whilst organised far-right networks are collapsing and fragmenting, the rise of populist movements – with their emphasis on xenophobia and crude anti-immigrant sentiment – is a worrying new reality.

The guide examines the origins of the Far Right today, the history and recent misfortunes of most high-profile far-right groups – including the British National Party and the English Defence League – and covers the growth of a burgeoning number of fringe movements, most of which are the result of splits within larger extremist organisations.

As well as examining the common beliefs and ideologies shared by white supremacists (notably antisemitism), we look at the rise of the 'Counter-Jihad' movement, opposed to Islam entire. In examining the rise of the 'lone wolf', we examine the backlash which has taken place against Muslims post - the Woolwich murders of 2013.

We also profile the Far Right across Europe and provide positive alternatives to hate, with a series of case studies highlighting the important work undertaken to fight the spread of hate groups.

Foreword

In sharp contrast with continental Europe, mass movements of the far right have never taken off in Britain. In the 1930s, with fascism in the ascendancy in Italy and Germany, Oswald Mosley's black shirts never won a seat in the House of Commons. The National Front briefly emerged as a threat in the economical and political crisis of the 1970s, but fizzled out.

Today we are living through an era of economic dislocation comparable to the 1930s. Once again the far right is on the march across Europe. This time round, however, far right or neo-fascist parties are making significant headway in Britain.

Furthermore there is a new dimension. Along with anti-Semitism, fear and hatred of Muslims has become a very significant theme of these far right parties. All too often, this translates to violence on the street - a phenomenon which the main British political parties have underplayed or ignored.

This excellent, scrupulous work gives an anatomy of the far right in Britain. Never has such a piece of work been more needed. It should be read by academics, journalists and policy-makers to navigate through the more poisonous parts of British life. It is a major contribution to our understanding of a dark and ugly phenomenon as it mutates in ways that are hard to fathom and impossible to predict.



Peter Osborne

Peter Osborne is a British journalist. He is the associate editor of the Spectator and former chief political commentator of the Daily Telegraph, from which he resigned in early 2015.

SPECTRE OF HATE

An Explanatory Guide to the Far Right in the UK

Preface

This guide is an introduction to far-right groups and movements in the UK. It includes within its framework both traditional extreme Right, neo-Nazi, as well as a populist political and street movements.

Although the Far Right in the UK seems momentarily fragmented, with the high-profile resignation of English Defence League (EDL) leader 'Tommy Robinson', the subsequent fragmentation of the EDL and the spiraling decline of the British National Party, there has been a disturbing rise in anti-Muslim attacks and online hatred (particularly following the murder of soldier Lee Rigby in May 2013, and the Paris attacks of early January 2015, as well as several far-right 'lone wolves' active in both this country and on the Continent). The Norwegian killer Anders Behring Breivik's horrific actions in 2011, murdering 77 people in the name of virulently anti-Islamic beliefs, show just how vigilant we must all remain against the extreme Right threat.



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Across Europe, the shadow of the Far Right is rising

Populist anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim political parties led by powerful rhetoricians now regularly poll up to 20% of the vote (sometimes higher) during national European elections. From burqa to minaret bans, calls to “halt the Islamisation of Europe” and a poisoned debate where “Islam = terrorism”, some of these movements are now powerful enough to join coalition governments.

This ‘new’ Right has started replacing and overshadowing some of the more traditional neo-Nazi and violent far-right movements of the past. These newer populist movements are led by ideologues and charismatic politicians such as Geert Wilders, leader of the Freedom Party in Holland; Timo Soini of the Finns Party in Finland; Marine Le Pen of the Front National in France; Jimmie Åkesson of the Sweden Democrats; Christoph Blocher of Switzerland’s Swiss People’s Party; Heinz-Christian Strache of the Austrian Freedom Party; and Nigel Farage of the UK Independence Party in the UK, which captured a quarter of the vote at recent local elections. There are similar movements in almost every country in Europe. All support policies limiting immigration; most also espouse anti-Muslim rhetoric.

In a few countries openly neo-Nazi movements are now starting to take hold: in Hungary, blackshirted paramilitaries connected to the Jobbik party have marched on Roma communities and even more virulent movements have arisen in Hungary, a country which once had a Nazi puppet regime during World War Two; in Greece the violently neo-Nazi Golden Dawn rose to become the country’s third largest party, taking 12% of the popular vote during Greece’s economic collapse, whilst members

openly assaulted migrant communities and spoke of ‘clearing’ areas of ‘undesirables’: a crackdown is now underway by lawmakers following the murder of a prominent anti-fascist DJ by Golden Dawn-linked supporters and the unexplained disappearance of up to 100 migrants.

This all occurs in a continent which, just few generations ago, lay under Nazi domination and in several countries which had historical fascist movements.

Into this mix has been thrown the anti-Islamic film, the ‘Innocence of Muslims’, alongside follow-up cartoons in French satirical magazine ‘Charlie Hebdo’, which lampooned Islam’s most revered figures. Notorious US anti-Muslim campaigner and blogger, Pamela Geller and her comrade in arms, Robert Spencer (who together vehemently opposed a new Islamic centre two blocks away from the site of the 9/11 attacks in New York), have launched a series of anti-Islamic advertisements on the New York subway system, before being banned from entering this country following pressure from anti-racism campaigners HOPE not hate.

In the UK there has also been a violent and vociferous anti-Muslim backlash following the murder and near-beheading of a British soldier on the streets of Woolwich, south London, by two Islamic extremists in May

2013. Since Woolwich, bombs have exploded at three mosques in the West Midlands and an elderly grandfather was stabbed to death by a ‘lone wolf’ Ukrainian neo-Nazi, who was studying for a PhD here. A mosque was burned down in north London with the words “EDL” scrawled onto its walls; an arson attempt was foiled at a mosque in Liverpool; graves have been desecrated with swastikas and far-right slogans; and even the Home Secretary has said she is “shocked and sickened” by this turn of events. In total, the TELL MAMA anti-Muslim hatred monitoring project recorded more than 35 mosque attacks in the post-Woolwich period.

At the height of the post-Woolwich aftermath, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, said that there had been an eightfold increase in “Islamophobic crimes” in the capital, which led to 24-hour patrols at key Islamic sites. The Met’s monthly figures for these crimes remain far higher than just a year ago. Meanwhile, against this rising tide of rhetoric and violence the far-right and anti-Muslim street movement, the English Defence League (EDL), soared to over 150,000 followers on Facebook, many of them screaming for revenge (with several of them subsequently convicted for inciting mosques to be burned down).



All this has contributed to a sense that Muslims are “under threat”; in turn, some elements in the Muslim world have overreacted to issues such as the ‘Innocence of Muslims’ – or used the video controversy as a mask to cover their own actions – leading to the deaths of nearly 30 people in protests.

In the UK, the established Far Right remains fragmented, politically impotent due to its internecine struggles. Even so, in the 2009 European elections, over 3.5m Britons voted for ‘far right’ political parties. According to an opinion poll commissioned by HOPE not hate in 2012, nearly half of respondents said they would support a white, English, anti-Muslim political party (as long as it did not condone violence). Further research studies suggested that a significant minority of supporters of the British National Party (BNP) and anti-European, anti-immigrant United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) condoned violence against minorities. The BNP has been trying to attract further funds from the European Union, and re-defining itself as a ‘think tank’, a move which has been blocked by the European Parliament following lobbying by UK and other international civil rights movements.

Just as this nation gave birth to skinhead subculture, so too has it spawned a violent street movement, the English Defence League (EDL). The EDL, with its marches close to mosques and attempts to incite violence against Muslims (which it defines as “Islamic extremists”), now lies at the centre of an international web of so-called ‘counter-jihadists’. This network links millionaire Christian fundamentalists in the USA with revisionist historians and politicians on the European continent, desperate to prove that Europe is about to descend into ‘Eurabia’, a nightmare fantasy/vision of Shari’a-domination, complete with hordes of Muslim migrants taking over where the Ottoman emperor’s armies once failed at the gates of Vienna.

Sound fanciful? Such narrative already exists – and it can light the touchpaper to mass murder.

The atrocities unleashed by Anders Behring Breivik in Norway during the summer of 2011 are still etched on our collective memories: 77 people were killed, many of them youth members of the Norwegian Labour Party, and hundreds more wounded, in gun and bomb attacks designed to halt the spread of what Breivik called “cultural Marxism”. He aimed to inspire a backlash against liberalism and multiculturalism. Thankfully, Breivik failed: the Norwegians affirmed their commitment to liberalism even more strongly after his killings, led by the Prime Minister himself defending Norway’s liberal outlook. But Breivik was subsequently linked to hundreds of EDL supporters via his friends on social media, and his justifications (a 1500-page manifesto) were spouted straight from the mouths of international counter-jihadist authors on the internet.

Barely days before Breivik was sentenced to 21 years in jail for his crimes, former US soldier and long-time white supremacist Michael Wade Page killed six people at a Sikh temple in Wisconsin, USA, before pulling the trigger on himself (it is thought he mistook the Sikh gurdwara for a mosque). Such so-called ‘lone wolf’ incidents are on the rise worldwide, involving not only extreme Right but also faith-led and other extremists.

Meanwhile, in Germany the security services are struggling to keep the lid on the rising number of neo-Nazis, particularly in the east of the country. Police and security forces have been left deeply embarrassed by revelations that three members of a neo-Nazi group, the National Socialist Underground, had killed 10 people during the past decade yet the killings had been wrongly blamed on ethnic drug gangs.

Long-regarded as an oddity fit only for talkshows, skinhead gangs are making a comeback in both the USA and Russia – the land that saw off Nazism – buoyed by a burgeoning neo-Nazi music scene and theories of ‘leaderless resistance’ (small autonomous cells of terrorists, seeking to ignite a racial or religious war) which have abounded throughout literature, and now the internet, promising “RAHOWA” or racial holy war for their adherents.

Whilst politicians, media and security services have long-concentrated on the threat from al-Qaeda, the lack of concerted action or research into far-right extremism has worried both academics, campaigners and – finally – UK politicians, with a 2012 Home Office Select Committee report underlining the lack of clarity or effort put into the fight against right-wing extremism.

Now, with economic conditions forcing hundreds of thousands below the bread line, and competition for limited resources increases, what will the future hold for immigrant and faith communities in Britain and Europe? Will the rise of the extreme Right remain a permanent threat, or is it simply a transitory phase? And what can be done to educate ourselves about that threat – and how to avoid it?

Definitions

What do we mean by extreme Right, Far Right, etc?

Far-right extremism is a diverse phenomenon. It is composed of movements and parties with different ideological tendencies, mobilising against different conceptions of ‘the enemy’, and using different methods to achieve their goals. For some, this involves the use of violence. Unfortunately, there is no single consensus on what constitutes far-right extremism.

Common ideologies of the extreme Right

Far-right politics commonly includes authoritarianism, anti-communism, and nativism, often associated with the notion of a ‘superior’ people.

Far-right politics usually also involves anti-immigration and anti-integration stances towards groups that are deemed inferior and undesirable.

Traditional far-right movements have often emphasised anti-Semitic (anti-Jewish) conspiracy theories; more recently, they have focused upon anti-Muslim narratives.

Far Right political parties

Contemporary extreme Right, or radical Right, parties in western Europe are typically either populist, nationalist, (neo-) fascist, anti-system/anti-politics, and/or advocate strong anti-immigrant policies.

Far right politics commonly involves support for social inequality and social hierarchy, elements of social conservatism and opposition to most forms of liberalism and socialism (though ‘national socialism’ i.e. Nazi, involves a mix of extreme nationalism, authoritarianism, dictatorship and socialism). These terms are also used to describe Nazi and fascist movements, and other groups which hold extreme nationalist, chauvinist, xenophobic, racist, religious fundamentalist or reactionary views.

The most extreme right-wing movements have pursued oppression and genocide against groups of people on the basis of their alleged inferiority. Infamous examples would include The Holocaust, during which Hitler’s Nazi Germany systematically murdered six million Jews during the Second World War; the 8,000 Muslim men and boys massacred by Bosnian Serb forces

in Srebrenica in 1995 ('Srebrenica Genocide'); or the nearly one million Tutsis and their liberal Hutu supporters killed in ethnic bloodletting by Hutu extremists during the Rwandan Genocide of 1994.

None of these are essential to the definition of "Far Right", however. Whilst the definitions are hotly debated, there is broad agreement on which type of political parties are extreme Right in nature.

Major examples include the Freedom Party (Austria), Front National (France), Vlaams Belang (Belgium/Flanders), the National Democratic Party (Germany), the Danish and Norwegian Progress parties, Alleanza Nazionale (previously MSI) and Lega Nord (Italy), and in the UK the British National Party (BNP) and National Front (NF). Although anti-Muslim in nature and often violent, the more recent English Defence League (EDL) in the UK is not technically a "far right" political party, but a street movement which certainly contains many racist, far-right and anti-Muslim figures within it (its founder and former leader was once a BNP member, for example).

Many of these parties saw a marked increase in their vote share in the 1980s and 1990s. In recent elections, the French, Italian, Austrian, and Flemish extreme Right have all consistently achieved more than 10% of the vote. These parties tend to focus on economic protectionism, a 'turning back of the clock' to a better (usually

more mythical time), favour extreme reduction in the number of foreigners/immigrants, and whilst traditionally were often anti-Semitic in nature, many are now strongly anti-Muslim, too.

Populism

Some of the newer, more politically successful movements on the farther Right are also termed by pundits as "populist". Usually these movements distinguish themselves from "far right" parties and movements by stressing their popular mandate, a willingness to work within the electoral system and reflecting broad public moods e.g. such as the UK Independence Party (UKIP), which supports withdrawal of the UK from the European Union, as well as having strong anti-immigrant policies. They tend to strive hard to disassociate themselves from traditional extreme Right groups, particularly those associated with violence.

Populist movements generally see themselves as siding with "the people" against "the elites". Whether Left or Right, a populist movement seeks to unite what might be termed "the little man" (the underdog) against the corrupt dominant elites (usually the orthodox politicians) and their followers (typically the rich and the intellectuals, the 'biased' media, etc). It is guided by the belief that political and social goals are best achieved by the direct action of the masses. It often comes into being where mainstream political institutions fail to deliver (to a whole or a part of the populace).

Some of the successful right-wing, anti-immigrant parties in Europe are populist in nature: France's Front National, Finland's Finns Party, Italy's Five Star Movement and Hungary's Jobbik, for example. Some, like Jobbik, would also be considered close to neo-Nazism whereas others, like the Front National under new leader Marine Le Pen, have made strong attempts to disassociate from the further extremes of the Right.



Photo: Blandine Le Cain

Fascism

The term “Fascism”, meanwhile, is often thrown around by opponents of the extreme Right in a rather loose way.

Fascism is technically:

- A system of government where authority is centralised under a dictator and includes stringent socio-economic controls, suppression of the opposition through terror and censorship, and typically a policy of belligerent nationalism and racism.
- A political philosophy or movement based on or advocating such a system of government.

Neo-Nazi, meanwhile, is even more specific:

- Those whose political ideal is akin to that of the German National Socialist (Nazi) party of the 1930s and 1940s.
- Neo-Nazism can sometimes be called White Nationalism, although many ‘white nationalists’ in the USA like to claim that they are not ‘Nazi’.
- Neo-Nazism usually surfaces in North American and European countries, as well as in Russia, where there is a resurgent extreme Right political and subcultural movement.
- The cornerstone of the ideology is the desire for these countries to be peopled by ‘whites’ and supporting the exclusion of non-whites (it also tends to be associated with violence and violent movements, such as the ‘skinhead’ movement of central and eastern Europe, or the ‘kameradschaft’ comradeships in former east Germany).

White supremacy, white supremacist:

A white supremacist believes that white people are racially superior to others and should therefore dominate society. Often associated with violence and with more extreme right-wing organisations.

Fascist ideology

Fascist ideology has been defined by academic expert Matthew Feldman, of the University of Teesside, as:

‘a specifically modern form of secular “millenarianism” constructed culturally and politically, not religiously, as a revolutionary movement centring upon the “renaissance” of a given people (whether perceived nationally, ethnically, culturally, or religiously) through the total reordering of all perceivably “pure” collective energies towards a realisable utopia; an ideological core implacably hostile to democratic representation and socialist materialism, equality and individualism, in addition to any specific enemies viewed as alien or oppositional to such a programme.’

The Far Right in the UK and Europe

“Both fascism and the more general far-right are generally understood to be hostile to liberal democracy, often xenophobic and willing to resort to extra-parliamentary politics (a good example of the latter is the present-day English Defence League, still considered a ‘protest group’ despite significant evidence to the contrary)”

Matthew Feldman, University of Teesside

Traditionally, the Far Right in Britain has been associated with failure. Compared to their more successful continental neighbours, both the inter-war British Union of Fascists (BUF) and later National Front (NF) have been seen as the poor relations of the far-right movement in Europe.

Despite alarmist reactions from the national media and mainstream politicians, the British National Party (BNP) seems on the wane, despite some electoral success at local level and the election of two MEPs (ex-party leader Nick Griffin, and former National Socialist Movement and National Front member, Andrew Brons). Compared to Continental far-right parties – such as the Freedom Party in Austria, which attracted over 26% of the national vote and more than 50 parliamentary seats in 1999 – the BNP and its ex-leader Nick Griffin has, for the most part, been confined to the margins.

The resurgence of extreme Right parties in Europe gained sudden and dramatic momentum when the Front National (FN) in France, led at the time by former paratrooper (and noted anti-Semite) Jean-Marie Le Pen and inspired in part by the 1970s NF in the UK, scored 11.2% of the vote in the 1984 European elections. Politicians and political scientists were shocked: until the mid-1980s the extreme Right had remained completely marginalised in Europe and performed poorly in elections. There have been three stages in its anti-immigrant rationale, according to Professor Pascal Perrineau, one of France's leading political scientists and an expert on the rise of the FN. The first focused on unemployment, the second on crime and the most recent on Islam.

Le Pen's breakthrough was not just a single incident, however. It heralded a lasting upsurge of the extreme Right all over the continent. This reached its first peak in dramatic electoral gains in the early 1990s, accompanied by a wave of anti-immigrant violence. Since then (and despite some notable 'ups and downs') the extreme Right has re-established itself as a significant political actor in several parts of the European continent.

Yet in the UK the main far-right political parties – the BNP and National Front (NF), with (depending on your

definitions and views) some elements of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) – have struggled to break into mainstream politics. More recently the street politics of the anti-Muslim EDL captured the headlines, though its violence failed to translate into political success (despite an attempt to create a party of its own and efforts by one of its leaders to link to another far-right party, the British Freedom Party). At the time of writing its leaders have publicly staged a high-profile defection from the movement, ostensibly to create another less visibly violent anti-Muslim organisation (many commentators have remained unconvinced by this apparent change of heart and former leader, Stephen Lennon, has recently been jailed for mortgage fraud).

Historical British fascism

The BNP, EDL and NF are only the latest movements in a century-wide attempt by fascist and extreme Right political movements to establish a toehold in Britain.

The interwar period (1918-1939) saw a rise in true "fascist" ideology. The first fascist political party (created in 1923) was called the British Fascisti, a fringe organisation named after Mussolini's Italian Fascists (there was an earlier anti-Semitic, anti-immigration society called The Britons). Another early British fascist movement was called the Imperial Fascist League (IFL), set up in 1929 by the biological anti-Semite Arnold Leese. The IFL was more radical than the British Fascisti and far more openly anti-Semitic; however, like most other fascist groups in the 1920s, its impact on British society was miniscule.

By far the most credible and successful fascist party of the interwar period was the British Union of Fascists (BUF), led by former Labour and Conservative MP, Oswald Mosley. The BUF was launched in 1932 after the short-lived New Party the year before. It was immediately successful, at one point gaining the support of *The Daily Mail*

The Battle of Cable Street 1936

In 1936, fascism was gaining ground across Europe. In Britain, Sir Oswald Mosley's blackshirted British Union of Fascists (BUF) portrayed Jewish people as the cause of the country's problems. East London had the largest Jewish population in Britain and the announcement that Mosley and his Blackshirts planned a provocative march through the area on 4th October was greeted with anger and a determination that it should be stopped. A petition was signed and local politicians tried to have the march called off, but to no avail.

On the day, up to 250,000 people gathered to defend the East End. There was a fierce battle with the police as they attempted to clear a path for the march; a barricade was thrown up to block the Cable Street route. People threw eggs, milk bottles and

the contents of their chamber pots from houses. Other demonstrators rolled marbles under the police horses' hooves. The most famous rallying call of the day, still repeated by many anti-fascists even now, was: "They shall not pass!" The march could not proceed and Mosley was ordered to abandon his plans. It was a famous blow against fascism and that night there was dancing in the streets. The march is remembered in a large mural in Cable Street today and has become part of East End, as well as anti-fascist, folklore.

The historian Bill Fishman, who was at Gardiner's Corner that day, recalled: "There were parties, there was dancing in the streets. The cafés were full, the pubs were full. And there was a feeling of elation, a feeling of relief, particularly amongst the immigrant Jews. I think from that day onward Mosley never again ventured into the ghetto streets of East London."



(whose owner, Lord Rothmere, was a strong supporter of Hitler) and growing to around 40,000 members. The BUF became synonymous with violence after a particularly violent response to protests at a fascist rally held at Olympia in 1934, but its support went into sizeable decline thereafter. When Britain did declare war, the Government feared that fascists would be disloyal and it therefore interned the vast majority of BUF leaders (including Oswald Mosley).

After the Second World War and the immediacy of the Holocaust, when six million Jews were murdered by the Nazis, fascism was a dirty word. The biggest issue for those on the further Right in the UK was the influx of migrants from Commonwealth nations or, as they became known, the so-called 'Windrush generation' (named after one of the boats bringing them to Britain). The 1960s and early 1970s saw the rise of the National Front (NF), led by ideologue John Tyndall, who was an unreconstructed believer in Hitler's fascism and would later found the British National Party. The NF capitalised on mass strikes, recession, inflation as well as the end of the British Empire, peaking in the 1970s. Its candidate won 16 per cent of the vote in a by-election in West Bromwich. In 1977, the group provoked a riot with a march through Lewisham in south London, accusing black residents of being responsible for crime. Once Margaret Thatcher adopted a tougher stance on immigration, the NF was swept away and did poorly at the 1979 General Election which elected Thatcher to power. Once counting 17,000 members, it soon collapsed into fratricidal splits. It was one of these fringe groups which future BNP leader, Nick Griffin, was to lead.

Following the NF's disintegration, the British National Party was formed in 1982 by John Tyndall. Under Tyndall it remained a hardline group, but gained the Far Right's first ever council seat in the UK when BNP member Derek

Beackon won in the Isle of Dogs, in London's East End, with a 'Rights for Whites' campaign in 1993. When his former protégé Nick Griffin ousted Tyndall in a leadership contest in 1999, the BNP started heading on the path towards outwards respectability, dropping its policy on forcible repatriation of immigrants and aiming for electoral respectability.

Many saw the BNP under Griffin as a wolf in sheep's clothing. Griffin was a long-time Holocaust denier with convictions for stirring up racial hatred. He had once spoken of the need for "well-directed boots and fists" and said: "When the crunch comes, power is the product of force and will, not of rational debate". Not only that, but he maintained close connections with an international network of anti-Semitic extremists, such as former Ku Klux Klan (KKK) leader David Duke in the USA, as well as courting the ex-Red Army Faction ('Baader Meinhof Gang') left-wing lawyer, turned neo-Nazi, Horst Mahler, in Germany. In America his supporters attempted to infiltrate the Presidential campaign of arch-conservative pundit Pat Buchanan in 2000.

Despite his unreconstructed views, under Griffin's changes the BNP won 44 council seats in 2006 (most strikingly in the old Ford-producing suburb of Barking and Dagenham) and in 2009, when Griffin and his one-time NF comrade Andrew Brons won two seats in the European Parliament in the north of England. The BNP's success has been attributed to a number of factors, linked to a backdrop of increasing immigration, a sense of 'loss' of identity and certainty among white working class whites as Tony Blair's Britain hit the Noughties, a growing resentment of the European Union and most notably, the perceived rise of immigration as well as militant Islam. More recently, the BNP's decline has been swifter than its ascent, with deep unhappiness at Griffin's leadership, financial problems and no councillors left at the time of writing.

The violently anti-Muslim (“Islamic extremism”) English Defence League (EDL) exploded onto the scene in 2009, following protests by Muslim extremists in Luton against British soldiers returning from Afghanistan. The EDL’s protests across cities in the UK frequently turned into drunken brawls and many members issued frequent and vile attacks on Muslims and the Islamic faith on social media. Dozens of members were arrested for violence and a further number were imprisoned for weapons, drugs, paedophilia, robbery and other offences. After the murder of a British soldier in Woolwich by two Muslim extremists in May 2013, EDL followers took in force to social media, boosting the flagging fortunes of the group – which had been linked to the Norwegian mass murderer, Anders Breivik in 2011 – leading to a large spike in anti-Muslim incidents both on- and offline.

This arrival of a new far right group has led many to view it as a direct competitor to the BNP; however as the EDL had no coherent political programme or ideology and was only a street movement it is difficult to compare it on the same terms (though

the EDL founder, Stephen Lennon, is a former BNP member and Nick Griffin has quite clearly seen the EDL as a threat to his dwindling membership – producing several attacks on the rival organisation). Lennon, who uses the name of a Luton football hooligan Tommy Robinson, has a rough, working class street charm and confidence that Griffin lacks. However, as of October 2013 he announced his resignation from the EDL and pledged to work with the discredited counter-extremist group, the Quilliam Foundation. Shortly thereafter Lennon was jailed for 18 months for mortgage fraud.

The recent success of UKIP has underlined the rise of a new form of populist, anti-immigrant movement that (though it denies it) also seems to harbour a great deal of fear and resentment towards Muslims: it’s spokesperson on immigration, Gerard Batten, has said that Muslims – and Muslims only – should sign a special charter rejecting violence. In 2013 local council elections the party averaged 26% of the vote, running on a strong anti-immigration ticket.

Polling Data

2010 British Social Attitudes survey

- 55% bothered by large mosque
- 77% see Islam as threat to British life
- almost half expect violent clash of civilisations
- Fewer than one in four people believe that following Islam is compatible with a British way of life, Britain’s most senior Muslim minister, Baroness Warsi, revealed in 2013
- In 2011 Searchlight Educational Trust published original research (Fear & HOPE survey) looking at the attitudes of voters towards far-right political parties in the UK. It concluded that nearly half of those polled by a Populus survey supported the creation of an English nationalist, anti-Muslim political party
- 34% Muslim men and 26% women have experienced anti-Muslim discrimination in the past year (up to 8 times) across Europe



From Voting to Violence

The report ‘From Voting to Violence’ by academic expert on the Far Right, Matthew Goodman (published by Chatham House in 2013) noted:

“The Home Affairs Select Committee report noted that there were currently 17 far right activists in British prisons for terror-related offences. We are also witnessing an increase in violence from supporters of the EDL around the country.

“The Security Minister, James Brokenshire, earlier this year stated that the threat from far right extremism is ‘real’ and that the Government has been “urgently reconsidering the threat from Far Right terrorism in the UK.”

Goodwin’s report highlighted the role of sections of the media whose “framing [of] Muslims as problematic and threatening” provides succor to counter-jihad groups and their anti-Muslim agenda.

The Fear and HOPE survey

Source: Searchlight Educational Trust/ HOPE not hate (2011)

Huge numbers of Britons would support an anti-immigration English nationalist party if it was not associated with violence and fascist imagery, according to the largest survey into identity and extremism conducted in the UK.

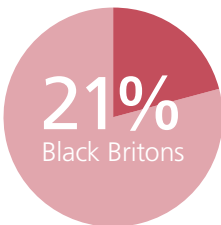
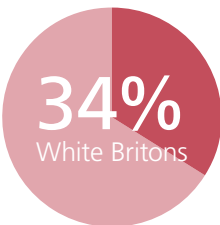
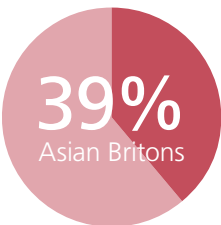
A Populus poll of nearly 6,000 people found that 48% of the population would consider supporting a new anti-immigration party committed to challenging Islamist extremism, and would support policies to make it statutory for all public buildings to fly the flag of St George or the union flag.

The poll suggests that the level of backing for a far-right party could equal or even outstrip that in countries such as France, the Netherlands and Austria. France’s National Front party has just topped

the opinion polls for next year’s European elections in France, beating even the ruling party of Francois Hollande. The Dutch anti-Islam party led by Geert Wilders attracted 15.5% of the vote at the height of its popularity; its share of the vote collapsed back down following 2012 elections, but it is widely expected to do well again under its new leader, Marine Le Pen, who has set about modernising its image.

According to the Populus survey, 39% of Asian Britons, 34% of white Britons and 21% of black Britons wanted all immigration into the UK to be stopped permanently, or at least until the economy improved. And 43% of Asian Britons, 63% of white Britons and 17% of black Britons agreed with the statement that “immigration into Britain has been a bad thing for the country”. Just over half of respondents – 52% – agreed with the proposition that “Muslims create problems in the UK”.

Percentage of Britons wanting all immigration into the UK to be stopped permanently, or at least until the economy improved.



Warning Signs Ahead

Matthew Feldman, researcher at the University of Teesside's Centre for Fascist, Anti-Fascist and Post-Fascist Studies Centre, warns that the Far Right's current disarray does not mean that it is without influence.

He said: "Conservative MP Jacob Rees-Mogg gave a speech at a dinner held by the esoteric far-right organisation, the Traditional Britain Group, in May 2013. Rees-Mogg immediately distanced himself from the group and its members' extreme views, particularly those on Doreen Lawrence's recent peerage, immigration and on 'repatriation' of non-Brits. What the incident demonstrated however was another type of far-right group, one that is anti-populist (unlike the EDL) and has its ideological roots in conservatism."

"Despite the BNP's decline," he added, "it still continually tries to recruit young members in schools. More threatening, there are a number of secretive and violent groups, such as the Aryan Strike Force and Combat 18, which are prepared to perpetrate terrorist atrocities. Anders Breivik's massacre in July 2011 showed the carnage these 'lone-wolf' far-right individuals can inflict. Britain is not immune from such action."

"In addition to the extensive list of convictions for low-level violence and intimidation," he said, "the British Far Right has a number of supporters prepared to carry out widespread and extensive violence. These include neo-Nazis such as David Copeland, who received a life sentence for killing three people [during a series of nailbombings against minority communities] in 1999, and Martyn Gilleard, who in 2008 received a 16 year sentence for terrorism offences."

Far Right & New Media

The Internet has radically altered the landscape for the expression of far-right views.

Whereas once there were poorly-produced, photocopied newsletters distributed by the National Front on east London's Brick Lane, these days numerous forums, Twitter feeds, Facebook groups and other forms of social media allow the development of extremist thought via online communities. Research has shown that far from challenging or changing our views, Internet communities tend to attract like-minded 'tribes' and act to self-reinforce collective views of the outside world. As any regular browser knows, conspiracy theories – including those talking of a "Muslim takeover", of Islam being a monolithic and violent religion – proliferate.

Not only are terror manuals and bomb-making guides available to al-Qaeda wannabes, but far-right extremists can meet on the EDL Facebook page (at one stage carrying 158,000 'likes', rising from a mere 20,000 before Woolwich), among one of its many offshoots, or inside the communities of Stormfront, the web's oldest white supremacist community, run by Nick Griffin's friend and long-time white pride and former KKK activist, Don Black. Similarly, Anders Breivik's 775,000 word manifesto on the *Islamification of Europe* is also widely available online for distribution amongst far-right extremists.

Perhaps the greatest danger from the Internet is not just the downloadable guides, the videos and the forums, but the capability of such tools to help 'self-radicalise' young men and women to carry out terror attacks: whether that be in support of "white Europe" or a deluded al-Qaeda fantasy.

White supremacist insignia

One feature of the far-right which has remained a constant since its inception in the early 20th century is its use of symbolism and insignia.

Displaying these logos, which are more often than not coded, adds to a sense of 'community' among the wearers, with many sharing similar tattoos and clothing displaying related symbols and numbers. Understanding the imagery and slogans of the Far Right is important in identifying groups which may be operating under secrecy; it is also important in indicating their ideological preferences.

Many of the first fascist groups in Britain drew on symbols inspired by German Nazis (the same is still true of certain groups on the Continent today, such as Greece's Golden Dawn): the Swastika was often used in movements such as the Imperial Fascist League's logo which demonstrated their commitment to National Socialist ideology. The British Union of Fascists did not directly use the Swastika, however their lightning bolt logo was clearly influenced by it.

In the post-war period, far-right, neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups continued this trend of using Nazi symbolism and subtle tributes to Adolf Hitler. Apart from the swastika, other examples include the number 88, in many cases in tattoo form, as a codified way of saying HH ('Heil Hitler!') (H being the eighth letter

of the alphabet). Some neo-Nazi groups, such as the British neo-Nazi organisation Column 88, used this directly in their name. The number 18 is another symbol, and is code for the initials A and H ('Adolf Hitler') in the alphabet. Violent neo-Nazis Combat 18 took their inspiration from this code.

14 is another number associated with white supremacist organisations: it is a code for the 14-word phrase ('the 14 words') coined by imprisoned American white supremacist, David Lane: 'We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White Children'.

Other symbols and logos used are often related to Norse or Celtic mythology. The Celtic Cross is used frequently by neo-Nazis and is the logo for the Stormfront website, most likely to invoke the imagery of the Swastika as well as the Klu Klux Klan cross without actually using them. Displaying the Celtic Cross has been banned in both Germany and Italy. Norse symbolism is also used to romanticise Norse peoples as the 'true Aryans' and thus the height of racial purity.

With the rise of more specifically anti-Muslim organisations such as the EDL, other acronyms have been adopted and can be frequently seen on social media: for example 'NFSE' (No F***** Surrender Ever) and 'PAI' (Patriots Against Islam) – often calling cards of virulent anti-Muslim haters.



Timeline: The Modern Far Right in the UK

1967

National Front formed by A.K. Chesterton

1982

British National Party formed by John Tyndall

April 1999

Ex-BNP member David Copeland kills three and injures 139 people in a 13-day nail bombing campaign against minority communities in Brixton, Brick Lane and Soho

June 2001

BNP wins <0.1% of national vote (approximately 47,000 votes) in the General Election

May 2005

BNP wins 0.7% of national vote (approximately 193,000 votes) in the General Election

2006

BNP wins 44 council seats in local elections

July 2007

Robert Cottage, a former BNP member, is convicted for possessing what police describe as the largest ever amount of chemical explosives of its type in the UK

May 2008

BNP polls just over 18,000 votes in London Assembly elections and its candidate, Richard Barnbrook, is elected to the Greater London Assembly (GLA)

June 2008

Martyn Gilleard, a British Nazi sympathiser is jailed after police find nail bombs, bullets, swords, axes and knives in his flat

2009

BNP wins two European Parliament seats, including for boss Nick Griffin

2009

Ian Davison, head of white supremacist group Aryan Strike Force, jailed for 10 years for producing ricin and planning terrorist attacks

27 June 2009

Emergence of the EDL

5 September 2009

90 activists arrested at EDL march in Birmingham

22 October 2009

Nick Griffin makes a disastrous appearance on BBC Question Time, amid protests

20 March 2010

74 activists arrested at EDL march in Bolton

May 2010

BNP wins 1.9% of national vote (approximately 560,000 votes) in General Election but fails to win a single seat

Spring 2010

Political wing of the EDL formed as 'British Freedom Party' (BFP)

May 2011

BNP MEP Andrew Brons challenges Nick Griffin in leadership contest but loses. Subsequently leaves the party to form British Democratic Party (BDP)

July 2011

Anders Behring Breivik slaughters 77 people, mainly teenagers, in bomb attack and mass-shooting in Norway

December 2011

EDL activist Simon Beech one of two people jailed for arson attack on a mosque in Stoke-on-Trent

September 2012

EDL suffers humiliation after being prevented by locals from marching in Walthamstow, east London

November 2012

EDL deputy leader Kevin Carroll fails in attempt to be elected Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire, coming in fourth place with nearly 11% of the vote

November 2012

BNP's Marlene Guest comes third in Rotherham by-election, marking the highest ever position in a parliamentary constituency election

January 2013

EDL leader Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (AKA Tommy Robinson) jailed for entering the United States on a false passport

22 May 2013

British soldier, Drummer Lee Rigby, run down then near-decapitated by two British Islamist terrorists in Woolwich, leading to spike in Islamophobic attacks and EDL activity across the country (EDL surges to over 150,000 Facebook followers)

June 2013

Yaxley-Lennon arrested again for obstructing police after attempting a 'charity walk' through London dedicated to the death of Drummer Lee Rigby

7 September 2013

Yaxley-Lennon arrested for range of public order offences after leading EDL march through Tower Hamlets, which led to over 300 arrests

8 October 2013

Yaxley-Lennon and cousin Kevin Carroll announce defection from EDL to press conference hosted by the Quilliam Foundation

January 2014

Yaxley-Lennon is subsequently jailed for mortgage fraud (18 months)

1 October 2014

Nick Griffin, who led the BNP for 15 years, was expelled from the party.



Far Right Movements Today

- BNP: What is the British National Party?
- Nick Griffin: Profile of (former) BNP leader
- UKIP – The United Kingdom Independence Party
- English Defence League (EDL)
- The EDL's backers
- EDL Supporters
- EDL and the Armed Forces
- Main Far Right Groups – UK

BNP: What is the British National Party?



The British National Party (BNP) is a far-right political party that operates throughout the UK. It was formed in 1982 from the remnants of the old National Front (NF). In 2009 the BNP's membership stood at more than 12,000. This has been dwindling rapidly. The last available figures showed it below 5,000, with fewer than 2,000 likely to be active members.

Under its founder John Tyndall (1982-1999) the BNP was a clear neo-Nazi organisation, given over to street demonstrations, violence, and with Tyndall an associate of groups such as the American Nazi Party and promoting active denial of the Holocaust. One former member remembers feet stomping and cries of "Führer! Führer!" as Tyndall took to the stage at one party rally.

"Its political programme demanded the forcible 'repatriation' of non-white Britons, and proposed the restoration of the British Empire along with a series of authoritarian measures derived from Hitler," said journalist Daniel Trilling, author *Bloody Nasty People: The Rise of Britain's Far Right*.

"[Under Tyndall] The BNP followed a familiar pattern of holding provocative marches and rallies; its members attacked left-wing meetings and sought to create ethnic divisions by encouraging – or even perpetrating – racist assaults," he said.

After 1992 the party began to abandon its public meetings and take electioneering more seriously (partly as a result of disruption caused by militant anti-fascists).

Tyndall was deposed as chairman in 1999 by a faction of “modernisers” led by his former protégé Nick Griffin. Ironically Griffin, despite his attempts to portray himself as a new and more electable force, had been responsible for some of the more extreme articles in BNP publications, including the party magazine *Spearhead* (which he secretly edited for a period) and in his own journal *The Rune*, content for which led to his conviction for inciting racial hatred in 1998.

Under Griffin the BNP swiftly emulated some of the strategies and tactics of Jean-Marie Le Pen’s much more successful Front National in France. It dropped the rabble-rousing demonstrations of the past (ironically, this mantle was later taken up by the English Defence League), introduced ‘influence circles’ (much as the FN once did) focusing on green issues, vegetarianism, the countryside, veterans, even created its own trade union. Griffin also dropped the forcible repatriation policy.

The BNP still rejects integration, equality and basic human and civil rights for people it describes as

“non-indigenous” or “civic British”, however, and claims to put the interests of “the British people” first (by which it means white Britons). In fact, in a speech he gave to young German neo-Nazis at the end of March 2014, he said:

“Many of the Africans who’ve swamped Britain, hundreds of thousands in the last five years are perfectly good Christians. I don’t care. They have no place in my country, they have no place in our Europe.”

So, while the BNP has attempted to distance itself from its past and adopted the “boots not suits” approach of many continental far-right parties, “it remains a racist party in the European fascist tradition” claims anti-racist campaign group, HOPE not hate.

Although experts agree it remains a white nationalist party with race (and more recently anti-Muslim hatred) as a focus, with a strong vein of anti-Semitism still at its former leader’s core, the party has variously tried to describe itself as British nationalist, racial nationalist or more recently, ‘ethno-nationalist’. Griffin has also referred to the party as a civil rights movement.



In recent years the BNP has concentrated on opposing Islam and actively campaigns against the establishment of mosques, halal meat and what it calls the “Islamification” of the UK.

It claimed in January 2011 that white people were being “exterminated” from British cities by means of “ethnic cleansing”. It also sought to build support for a populist opposition to the war in Afghanistan, though in this regard its younger upstart rival, the English Defence League, has probably had far more support among rank and file armed forces members.

Griffin and his former National Front colleague Andrew Brons were elected to the European Parliament in 2009. Since then the party has gone downhill, with severe financial problems and disastrous management by Griffin, accused of dictatorial behaviour. Andrew Brons quit the party at the end of 2012 to form his own political party in 2013, The British Democratic Party (BDP). The BDP has done little since.

In 2013’s local elections the BNP stood around 300 candidates less than at elections in 2009 – very few managed to gain more than 10% of the poll. For the first time since 2002 the party is without representation in Burnley (once heralded as a BNP breakthrough area, following race riots in 2001, and where it once held eight council seats) and

remains divided and moribund in most parts of London and Yorkshire.

According to HOPE not hate, “it has survived financially on pressuring members to leave the BNP property and cash in their wills” whilst generally losing the battle to win hearts and minds for Britain’s far-right supporters to the English Defence League (which has since developed its own problems).

“With the party in both financial and electoral decline, the BNP has had to rely on more controversial means of gaining publicity, including the use of conspiracy theories,” says HOPE not hate. “A planned march by the BNP in Woolwich in June 2013 was banned by the police, forcing Griffin into a humiliating public appeal for help from the EDL’s leader. This help was refused.”

Including Griffin, who has recently staged two high-profile visits to the vilified Assad regime in Syria, the party now only has three elected officials in the whole of the UK (as of March 2014 – Griffin and Brons may lose their only one councillor now). Griffin himself was declared bankrupt in January 2014. The judgment marked a new low for Griffin and the BNP, which a few years ago boasted 57 councillors, two MEPs and a London assembly member. Following its disastrous showing, experts predict that the UK could be “BNP-free”.

Some key BNP policies

- an end to immigration from Muslim nations
- encouragement for some UK residents to return to “their lands of ethnic origin”
- bring back British troops from Afghanistan immediately
- leave the European Union
- abolish quangos
- reallocate funds from the foreign aid budget to increase spending on frontline NHS services.



Nick Griffin: Profile of (former) BNP leader



Cambridge University-educated Nick Griffin at first sight appears far removed from the skinhead stereotype.

Born in 1959, in Barnet on the outskirts of north London, Griffin is the son of a right-wing Conservative Party activist (his father, Edgar, met his mother when they turned up to heckle a Communist Party meeting in the 1950s). By 14, the young Griffin had read Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. This all took place during the era of Enoch Powell and fears over 'rivers of blood' caused by new immigration.

In 1974 Griffin's father took his son to a National Front meeting in Norwich, the family having by then moved to Suffolk, where Griffin attended a private school. The speaker at the NF meeting talked about why the Conservative and Labour Parties would never stop the flow of immigrants and how the NF was the only party to support the complete repatriation of non-whites. From there and that moment, Griffin was hooked onto hardline racist politics.

An NF activist while studying law at Cambridge (he often boasts of being a 'boxing blue' whilst at university), Griffin had a long involvement with the NF during its most notorious period. In the late 1980s he travelled to Libya to try and meet Colonel Gaddafi on a fund-raising mission, while the NF was busy unravelling back in the UK. During this period he also ran a heritage tour company in London, before forming an extreme right-wing Catholic organisation called the International Third Position

with two other National Front members, as well as an Italian fascist called Roberto Fiore (who at the time was on the run from Italian police, because of his association with a terrorist group which had bombed a Bologna train station in 1980, killing 85 people).

Griffin left the NF in 1989 and joined the BNP in 1995, soon editing its magazine, despite being a political rival of its leader and long-time national socialist, John Tyndall. A long-term anti-Semite himself, Griffin once described the Holocaust as "the hoax of the 20th century" and has associated with a wide variety of Holocaust Deniers (even criticising the notorious Holocaust revisionist historian David Irving for being soft on the issue). In 1997 he co-authored a pamphlet called *Who Are the Mindbenders?* "about Jewish conspiracies to brainwash people in Britain" and was found guilty of distributing material likely to incite racial hatred. He was later given a two-year suspended prison sentence for inciting racial hatred, for material produced in his magazine, *The Rune*.

In 1999 he ousted Tyndall from the BNP leadership and set about his attempts to paint the organisation as a haven for the disaffected working class.

In 2006, along with party activist Mark Collett, Griffin was cleared of race hate charges relating to speeches he made describing Islam as a "wicked, vicious faith". In 2008 the BNP asked police to investigate after its entire party membership list was published on the internet.

Despite these setbacks, Griffin's attempts at remodelling the BNP's image at first proved successful. In 2008 his candidate Richard Barnbrook was elected to the Greater London Assembly and Griffin himself later won one of the party's first two seats in the European Parliament in 2009. Days later, he was pelted with eggs by anti-fascist protesters, forcing him to abandon a press conference outside the Houses of Parliament.

Changing fortunes

Things began to sour after the BNP leader made a disastrous appearance on the BBC's *Question Time* in October 2009. Griffin attacked Islam and gays, defended the Ku Klux Klan and was unable to explain his previous comments about the Holocaust. The BBC also faced substantial criticism for allowing his appearance.

Amid all the publicity, Griffin's mother-in-law then said he was a "racist" and a "work-shy pretender" who put his politics ahead of his family and was "living in the Dark Ages."

In 2010 the BNP's electoral fortunes went into more rapid decline, partly as a result of comprehensive anti-fascist campaigning by, among others, HOPE not hate and Unite Against Fascism. Griffin suffered a crushing defeat in Barking at the General Elections, which had previously been a party stronghold. Labour's Margaret Hodge retained her seat with a majority of more than 16,000. The BNP failed to win a single seat and only increased its overall national vote by 1.83% to 514,819.

There was further controversy when Griffin was invited to attend a Buckingham Palace garden party, in his capacity as an MEP for the North West, then was denied entry on the grounds that he had "overtly used his personal invitation for party political purposes."

Meanwhile, the party suffered at the hands of the rival English Defence League and its more charismatic street leader 'Tommy Robinson' (Stephen Yaxley-Lennon), whom Griffin attacked in a long series of videos alleging Jewish/Zionist manipulation of its backers.

Griffin led his party with an iron hand, despite many high-profile defections and his bankruptcy in January 2014. In July he was removed as party chairman; in October he was expelled from the party. Following a bad-tempered falling out with its Executive Committee, the BNP finally sacked Nick Griffin on 1 October, claiming he had "deliberately" fabricated a "state of crisis" and put all his efforts into trying to cause "disunity" within the party.

Adam Walker



Adam Walker replaced Griffin as party leader on 21 July 2014. In 1985, he joined 15th /19th The King's Royal Hussars as a battle tank crewman. After being discharged from his duties, he became a school teacher, later to be banned from teaching for life for accessing extremist literature and engaging in racially and religiously-intolerant chatter online during school hours. In 2010, Walker represented the BNP as part of a delegation led by French National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen to Yasukuni Shrine in Chiyoda, Tokyo.

Walker received a suspended sentence and a driving ban last year after chasing three boys aged between ten and 12 in his car, before slashing their bike tyres with a knife in 2011.

Last year, as a BNP organiser, he described Britain as a 'multicultural s***hole'.

UKIP – The United Kingdom Independence Party



The United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) is not a traditional far-right party: most people know UKIP for its hostility to the European Union (EU). Its leader, the media (and pub) friendly Nigel Farage, a former City broker, has described

its followers as the “true Europeans”, claiming credit for shifting the terms of the debate on immigration and holding a referendum on the UK’s membership of the EU. Critics claim that immigration is, in fact, its number one focus and that it is certainly a xenophobic party.

According to HOPE not hate: “It combines the English nationalism of Enoch Powell with the populist anti-immigrant and Euroseptic parties of northern and western Europe, such as the Finns Party and Geert Wilders’ Freedom Party.”

The party was founded in 1993 by Alan Sked and other members of the cross-party Anti-Federalist League, a political party set up in November 1991 with the aim of fielding candidates opposed to the Maastricht Treaty. Sked resigned from the leadership and left the party after the 1997 General Election because he felt “they are racist and have been infected by the far-right”. The party describes itself in its constitution as a “democratic, libertarian party”. It has a membership of 30,000.

Under Farage UKIP has reached what the BBC calls “unprecedented heights in the opinion polls”, coming second to the Conservatives with 16.5% of the vote in the European elections in 2009 (winning 13 MEPs) and winning further hundreds of seats in the 2013 May local elections. May 2014 Euro elections: swept the board, gaining 24 MEPs and 27% of the share of the vote.

UKIP & race and immigration

Despite having a pull-out from the EU as its core goal, UKIP is increasingly focusing on immigration and the failure of multiculturalism. Along with elements of the tabloid press, UKIP placed a lot of emphasis on the supposed ‘flood’ of Bulgarians and Romanians who would enter the UK in January 2014 (with the relaxation of EU work restrictions), with some leaflets claiming that 29 million people could arrive into Britain. As it was, the so-called flood never happened. Other UKIP leaflets have focused more generally on immigration

and multiculturalism. One UKIP leaflet even carried a picture of a Native American Indian, with the words: “He used to ignore immigration... now he lives on a reservation.”

At the party’s 2013 chaotic annual conference (at which one of its MEPs referred to women as “sluts” and hit a Channel 4 News journalist, before having the party whip removed), Farage referred to immigration as the “biggest single issue facing” the UK, warning of an “even darker side to the opening of the door”.

He claimed London had been gripped by a “Romanian crime wave ... This gets to the heart of immigration,” he said. “We should not be opening our doors on 1 January to Romanian criminal gangs.”

In a tactic common to many populist right-wing parties, Farage said “The Establishment” had dismissed anyone wanting to debate immigration as “bad and racist”.

On the BBC’s Andrew Marr programme he also claimed that the UK was already swamped with “Romanian criminals” and that “we are opening the door to more Romanian criminals”.

Although Farage has diluted his claims, saying he never expected all 29 million Bulgarians and Romanians to invade (there are only slightly more than 27 million people living in the two countries), he stressed that there were up to four million Romanian and Bulgarian Roma who “live like animals” and were excluded from their society.

At a meeting in July 2013, former UKIP MEP Godfrey Bloom (now expelled from the party) was filmed saying: “How we can possibly be giving a billion pounds a month when we’re in this sort of debt to bongo bongo land is completely beyond me, to buy Ray-Ban sunglasses, apartments in Paris, Ferraris and all the rest of it that goes with most of the foreign aid.”

Responding on the BBC Radio4 Today programme, Bloom said: “I’m standing up for ordinary people at the pub,

the cricket club, the rugby club, the sort of people who remain completely unrepresented under the political system that we have. My job is to upset The Guardian and the BBC. I love it. I love it."

Bloom had also argued that man-made global warming is a myth, and praised the 1985 sinking of Greenpeace's Rainbow Warrior, in which a man died. In November 2010, he was ejected from the Europe Parliament after taunting a German MEP with the Nazi slogan "Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer".

Numerous other UKIP political candidates have been recorded and reported for racist and other inflammatory tweets and Facebook postings, leading to the expulsion of the party's leader on Lincolnshire Country Council in summer

2013. Its prospective parliamentary candidate in the marginal West Midlands seat of Halesowen and Rowley Regis told a rally that "sharia law works as a prevention – and prevention is better than cure". He added: "If you think you are going to get your hand chopped off for pinching something, you won't pinch it." Nigel Farage defended him. In addition, one prospective parliamentary candidate was revealed to be a former NF member. More and more embarrassing examples were revealed by press and pressure groups in the run-up to the 2014 European elections.

UKIP now has two MPs, both defectors from the Conservative Party: Douglas Carswell in Clacton, and Mark Reckless in Rochester and Strood.

Some key UKIP policies

- **EUROPE:** Nigel Farage says he wants an "amicable divorce" from the European Union.
- **IMMIGRATION:** An end to the age of "mass uncontrolled immigration". It wants a five year freeze on immigration for permanent settlement. Any future migration must be limited to those who can "clearly be shown to benefit the British people as a whole and our economy". Immigrants would not be able to apply for public housing or benefits until they had paid tax for five years.
- **DEFENCE:** According to a recent policy paper, UKIP would increase defence spending back to 2010 levels.
- **ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE:** UKIP is sceptical about the existence of man-made climate change and would scrap all subsidies for renewable energy.
- **GAY MARRIAGE:** UKIP supports the concept of civil partnerships, but opposes the move to legislate for same-sex marriage, which it says risks "the grave harm of undermining the rights of Churches and Faiths to decide for themselves whom they will and will not marry".
- **LAW AND ORDER:** UKIP would double prison places and protect "frontline" policing to enforce "zero tolerance" of crime.
- **THE ECONOMY:** UKIP is proposing "tens of billions" of tax cuts and has set out £77bn of cuts to public expenditure to deal with the deficit.
- **SOCIAL ISSUES:** UKIP has been vocal in its opposition to what it sees as "political correctness" in public life. It also argues that multiculturalism has "split" British society.
- **DEMOCRACY:** The party wants binding local and national referendums on major issues.



UKIP voters

87% of UKIP voters in the 2009 European Elections believed that “all further immigration to the UK should be halted”

51% 2012 YouGov poll of 1,505 UKIP supporters, found that 51% do NOT believe that Britain has benefited from immigration (compared to 25% who do)

35% think immigrants should be sent back to their ‘home’ country

51% believe that immigrants are the main source of crime (21% disagree). Immigration is the most important issue for UKIP supporters. Europe as an issue comes second or even third

63% of UKIP voters believe “unfair discrimination”, only 8% think Muslim do

61% Conversely, 61% of UKIP voters think Muslims “benefit from UNFAIR ADVANTAGES in Britain”, compared to just 5% who believe that white people do

UKIP and Islam

UKIP is strongly opposed to what it calls an “Islamic threat”. The party has been closely linked to leading figures in the ‘counter-jihad’ movement. UKIP brought Dutch anti-Islamic politician Geert Wilders to the UK to screen his controversial film *Fitna*. Gerard Batten MEP has spoken at international counter-jihad conferences and is linked to leading anti-Muslim activists like Sam Solomon and Paul Diamond. Batten also favours a charter, in which Muslims have to sign up to non-violence, and warns that it was a big mistake for Europe to allow “an explosion of mosques across their land”.

According to a 2012 YouGov poll of UKIP supporters:

- 82% are bothered by construction of a mosque in their neighbourhood (2.1% would welcome it)
- 85% believe that Islam poses a threat to Western civilisation (7.6% disagree)
- 75% believe violence between racial/ethnic/religious groups is inevitable (11.6% disagree)

Misconceptions about UKIP

Some have suggested that UKIP is the natural inheritor of the ‘old Tories’, the aged golf club retirees who don’t like change.

According to Professor Matthew Goodwin of the University of Nottingham, who published a book on UKIP, *Revolt On The Right*, in 2014, UKIP has actually drawn strong support from white, working class former Labour voters.

“The claim that UKIP is drawing only from the right is one of the big misconceptions in British politics,” he said. “Our analysis on the party reveals that its voters are much more likely to be low-income, financially insecure and working class.” They look like old Labour, and since 2010 the UKIP surge has been strongest among these low-skilled, older and blue-collar workers, the exact groups that Labour is struggling with the most.

“Since its low point in 2009, we find that Labour has made double-digit advances in its vote share among women, the under-35s and graduates, all groups that avoid UKIP. In contrast, Labour has barely grown among men and those with no qualifications, and the party has actually lost ground among pensioners. Among these groups, the UKIP vote has surged by an average of nine percentage points.”

English Defence League (EDL)



What is the English Defence League?

11% of people say they would consider joining the EDL – *YouGov/Extremis*

The English Defence League (EDL) is an anti-Muslim organisation which claims to be protesting against “Islamist extremism”. It has no formal membership as such, though in 2013 it soared to around 150,000 Facebook followers following the murder of a British soldier in Woolwich (though this has now dropped again) and it is as much a social media as a physical or street phenomenon.

Its “anti-extremist not anti-Muslim” nuance has been lost on most of its supporters, who have frequently turned out for large (often drunken and violent) demonstrations, chanting offensive slogans against all Muslims. The cost of policing such demonstrations has reached more than £10 million since the group was formed by a set of Luton football hooligans in 2009, following a protest by a handful of al-Muhajiroun extremists at the homecoming parade of the Royal Anglian Regiment through the town.

What began as a loose alliance of people around various social networking websites turned into one of the largest social movements in the country, often descending on towns and cities and bringing them to a standstill.

In 2011, however, things started to go wrong. The Norwegian racist killer Anders Breivik cited the EDL as well as other counter-jihadists as an inspiration for his murderous rampage. Breivik had 600 EDL Facebook ‘friends’. Several high profile EDL activists were also recorded admitting their support for Breivik’s actions in killing 77 during his two terror attacks.

The EDL’s founder and leader Stephen Lennon (aka ‘Tommy Robinson’/resigned from the group on 8 October, 2013) was later filmed seemingly admitting his admiration for the killer, though he has denied making these comments. During 2011 various exposures in national and international media exposed the EDL as part of an international network of extremists – the so-called ‘counter-jihad’ movement – targeting Muslims around the world. This movement had a number of small-time English businessmen and women at its heart, as well as the street army that was the EDL.

There was even a short-lived entry into politics that ended in disarray and humiliation, after EDL second-in-command, and Lennon’s cousin, Kevin Carroll, joined the British Freedom Party (formed by an ex-UKIP member, Paul Weston, who now leads another far-right, anti-Muslim party called Liberty GB). The BFP subsequently collapsed at the end of 2012, having achieved little.



After Breivik and a series of other exposures, ordinary activists drifted away and splits emerged. Some of the more damaging allegations included the revelation that one of its other founding members was a paedophile. EDL supporters were also convicted for possession of guns, for violence, drugs and other crimes. Thousands more took to social media to call for mosques to be burned, Muslims to be purged, attacked or deported (for which several have been successfully prosecuted). The anti-Muslim hate crime project, Tell MAMA, estimates that around one-third of all the anti-Muslim hate comments it measures on social media can be traced back to EDL supporters – a figure verified by analysts at Teesside University.

In September 2012 the group suffered a humiliation when it was prevented by locals from marching in Walthamstow, east London. The fallout reopened a wound with the rival BNP, whose former leader Nick Griffin described the EDL's leader as a "big girl's blouse" in an appeal for the EDL activist base to move to the BNP. There were further defections and splits in a movement already riven by tensions and breakaways (such as the North West Infidels, North East Infidels or the South East Alliance), often from among more hardcore far-right supporters or those 'up north' away from Lennon and Carroll 'down south'.

In January 2013, Lennon pleaded guilty to "possession of a false identity document with improper intention" at Southwark Crown Court. He was sentenced to 10 months imprisonment, but was released on electronic tag in February. Lennon had used a false passport to gain entry into the United States in late 2012.

A career criminal, Lennon has a number of other criminal convictions, including for football-related violence. It is estimated that there are 700 criminal convictions directly

linked to the EDL and its supporter base. This includes fire-bombings and even murder.

EDL demonstrations tailed off during 2013, until the murder of off-duty soldier Lee Rigby in Woolwich, south London, in May 2013. Until Rigby's death, Lennon had shown no real interest in further EDL activities, but found his way to Newcastle on the 25th of May 2013 to address over 1500 people at an already planned march. A huge number of people joined the EDL's Facebook page following Rigby's murder, and police forces and monitoring projects recorded a large spike in anti-Muslim incidents (both online and offline).

On 8 October 2013 Lennon and Carroll spectacularly announced that they were quitting the organisation and defecting to the 'counter extremism' Quilliam Foundation. While questions remain over their apparent conversion and the work that Quilliam (disliked among British Muslim circles and which lost most of its Government funding in 2011) intends to do, the future for the EDL without its two leaders looks rather bleak – as of now, Lennon has recently completed an 18-month prison sentence for mortgage fraud. More splits and violent offshoots are likely to follow.

What the EDL says it wants

- Protecting 'human rights'
- Opposing Shari'a
- Ensuring public gets 'balanced picture' of Islam
- Promoting traditions of England
- Working with others around the world



Source: EDL website

'Tommy Robinson's' offensive outbursts

“The Islamic community will feel the full force of the English Defence League if we see any of our citizens killed, maimed or hurt on British soil ever again.”

Robinson's remark to an EDL demo in Tower Hamlets, east London, in 2011.

“If something was set fire and someone wrote “David Cameron” on the side of it, does it mean he did it?”

EDL leader defends his organisation after an Islamic Centre in north London is set on fire, following the murder of a British soldier Lee Rigby in May 2013, and 'EDL' is found written at the scene.

“This is a day of respect for our Armed Forces. They've had their Arab Spring. This is time for the English Spring’

Offensive outburst after Fusilier Rigby was killed in Woolwich.

“I class everyone in my community as everyone who is non-Islamic’

The offensive words of Tommy Robinson who said he is not anti-Muslim.

“Complimentary lunch, manager's a top lad, couldn't be more apologetic’

EDL leader Tweets his delight after Selfridges offer him a free lunch after a Muslim shop assistant had previously refused to serve him.

“Since Woolwich, in a terrible way, it gave people a platform to listen to what we were saying... it's common sense what we stand for and everyone's agreeing’

Stephen Lennon proclaimed to Channel 4 News



Quarter of young British people 'do not trust Muslims'

Of the 1,000 18-24 year-olds questioned by a BBC Radio 1 Newsbeat poll, 28% said Britain would be better off with fewer Muslims, while 44% said Muslims did not share the same values as the rest of the population. Some 60% thought the British public had a negative image of Muslims.

Other findings in the Comres survey, conducted in June 2013, include:

1. When asked about religious groups 27% said they didn't trust Muslims, 16% said they didn't trust Hindus or Sikhs, 15% said they didn't trust Jewish people, that figure was 13% for Buddhists and 12% said they didn't trust Christians
2. Young people place the blame for Islamophobia in Britain on terror groups abroad (26%), the media (23%) and UK Muslims who have committed acts of terror (21%)
3. Only three in 10 (29%) think Muslims are doing enough to combat extremism in their communities. However, overall young people are more likely to agree (48%) than disagree (27%) that Islam is a peaceful religion
4. Young people are divided over whether or not immigration is good for Britain overall. Two-fifths (42%) say it is a good thing but more than a third disagree (35%)

The EDL's backers

'Alan Lake' or Alan Ayling, a wealthy investment fund manager, was the mastermind behind the strategy to unite football hooligan firms into an anti-Muslim street army: what was-to-become the English Defence League, or EDL.

According to an investigation by *The Sunday Times* newspaper another influential figure was a woman called 'Gaia' and 'Dominique Devaux', aka Ann Marchini, who runs a buy-to-let property empire from Highgate, north London.

Other backers of the EDL project included Chris Knowles, known by the alias 'Aeneas', who ran the EDL's media operation and was central to its links with European and US far-right groups.

Ayling, who under his 'Lake' alias described Anders Behring Breivik's Norway massacre as 'chickens coming home to roost', was once a director of Pacific Capital Investment Management, a City investment fund.

It was at Ayling's £500,000 Barbican flat that the EDL was established in 2009, according to a disaffected founder member, Paul Ray. The founding meetings brought together Lake and these other 'counter-jihadists' together with Ray, Stephen Yaxley-Lennon – aka 'Tommy Robinson', the former BNP member who would lead the EDL – and his cousin Kevin Carroll.

Ann Marchini was also there. She coordinated the European wing of a well-funded US organisation, the Center for Vigilant Freedom (CVF), now part of an Islamophobic organisation called the International Civil Liberties Alliance (CLA).

The CVF/ICLA was formed from a discussion group – 'the 910 Group' – centred around a deeply Islamophobic website, the Gates of Vienna, whose name is inspired by the 'holding back' of the Ottoman Empire's forces at the gates of the Vienna in 1683. The site is

run by Edward May ('Baron Bodissey') who is now a director of CVF.

Another CVF director is Christopher Knowles, who was a key player in the EDL although unknown to most of its supporters. Under his alias, Aeneas, he was in contact with Ray since 2007. 'Aeneas' runs the CVF's ICLA website and coordinates its European work from his West Yorkshire base.

Ray names Aeneas/Chris Knowles among the clique who met to set up the EDL. He remained an important behind-the-scenes figure and a link between the EDL, the moneyed CVF strategists and other racist and far right groups internationally.

The third director of CVF is Christine Brim, whose day job has been the chief operating officer for the right-wing US think tank, the Center for Security Policy. She is prominent on US anti-Muslim demonstrations.

Counter Jihadists

The Gates of Vienna website also hosts other well known Islamophobic ideologues. They include the former UKIP candidate Paul Weston who launched the British Freedom Party, in conjunction with support of the EDL's Kevin Carroll. Weston has predicted war between 'native Europeans' and Muslims is 'inevitable' unless Europe 'wakes up to the danger it is in and expels all its Muslims'. He now runs another far-right party, Liberty GB, which has been locked in a bitter war of words with the Tell MAMA anti-Muslim hatred monitoring service.

The Gates of Vienna site published the outpourings of a blogger known as 'Fjordman' – real name Peder Jensen – who was named by Norwegian killer Breivik 111 times in his manifesto. Alan 'Lake' Ayling has said: 'People ought to read him, he is good'.

The CVF/ICLA has organised counter-jihad conferences and other international activities that bringing together supporters of Geert Wilders'

Islamophobic populist PVV party in the Netherlands with activists from the anti-immigrant Sweden Democrats and far-right Flemish Belgian Vlaams Belang – plus the EDL.

EDL Supporters

Source: *iEngage* (rebranded as *MEND*, September 2014)

Matthew Goodwin, associate professor of Politics at the University of Nottingham, published new research on the English Defence League in 2013, via Chatham House (The Roots of Extremism: The English Defence League and the Counter-Jihad Challenge).

Goodwin drew on analysis of survey data by YouGov, involving a random sample of 1,666 respondents in the United Kingdom, and a smaller group of 298 adults who had both heard of the EDL and knew what it stood for, and (said they agreed with the values and/or methods of this specific counter-jihad group.

Goodwin's research used the survey data to explore answers to questions that arose from the growing popularity of 'these movements, such as the various 'defence leagues' and 'stop Islamization' movements which have grown up in recent years.

The research revealed an alarming tendency for anti-Muslim prejudice among both counter-jihad enthusiasts and the wider public, arguing that such movements have "rallied citizens who appear united by the belief that both the religion [Islam] and its followers [Muslims] pose a fundamental and pressing threat to their native group and nation: 80 per cent of supporters perceive Islam as a danger to Western civilisation and consider the growth of Muslim communities as a threat to their native group. They are consistently more likely to endorse such ideas, and often strikingly so: 76 per cent rejected the notion that Muslims are compatible with the national way of life, compared with 49 per cent in the full sample."



Most British EDL supporters, it said, were over 44 years. More than half (53 per cent) were working in routine non-manual, professional or managerial occupations; the remainder were skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled workers, or on state benefits.

They were also marginally more likely to distrust politicians than the average population. The report said: "Among those who agree openly with the counter-Jihad agenda, 85 per cent distrust political parties and the European Union, 79 per cent distrust their member of parliament, 75 per cent distrust parliament itself, 71 per cent distrust journalists and 69 per cent distrust their local councillors. A clear majority (62 per cent) also feel dissatisfied with the way in which democracy is working more generally, and are significantly more likely than the average citizen to feel this way."

The data suggested that counter-jihad groups possess an anti-immigrant and anti-Islam tendency, with the target of their antipathies both Muslims and immigrants broadly.

The survey contained a note of optimism in the difference in attitudes towards Muslims between generations, finding that: "Whereas 84 per cent of respondents from older generations (i.e. 60 years and above) supported the idea of reducing the number of Muslims in the country, this fell to 38 per cent among a more recent generation (i.e. those aged 18–24). Whereas 77 per cent of the oldest respondents saw Islam as a danger to the West, this fell to 32 per cent among the youngest respondents. Whereas 64 per cent of the oldest endorsed the 'clash of civilisations' thesis, this support fell to 37 per cent among the youngest."

While the difference presents a significant opportunity to reclaim the discourse from 'clash of civilisation' or 'Eurabia' enthusiasts, Goodwin argued that the challenge is not being

adequately met by politicians across Europe. "Importantly for policy-makers, such views sit within a wider circle of public sympathy for a counter-Jihad narrative that is actively framing Islam and Muslims as a fundamental and urgent threat," he said.

"Few mainstream voices in Europe appear to be actively challenging these claims, but doing so will be an integral component of any successful counter-strategy. This underscores the need for these strategies to simultaneously explore ways of addressing, at one level, 'harder' responses to disrupt the actual pathways into these groups and, at another, 'softer' responses aimed at addressing misperceptions and hostility within the wider public towards Islam and the role and perceived compatibility of Muslim communities."

The paper also noted the role played by sections of the media in "framing Muslims as problematic and threatening" and the succour this provided to counter-jihad groups and their anti-Muslim agenda.

EDL and the Armed Forces

After the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich in May 2013, the much-discussed connection between the EDL and the Armed Forces was brought into focus.

More than 100 EDL supporters turned up in Woolwich the night of the murder, drunkenly rampaging and attacking police while 'patriotic' messages in support of the Armed Forces appeared on the group's rapidly growing Facebook page (alongside many incendiary anti-Muslim messages).

"We're passionate about our armed forces. The EDL was created in defence of our armed forces, we will continue to defend our armed forces," said EDL leader 'Tommy Robinson' (Stephen Lennon).

He went on to claim he receives messages of support “from every regiment in this country on a weekly basis” he told Channel 4 News.

“Our military are trained to fight against Sharia and then when they come home are they supposed to turn that off? They’re trained to fight and battle this. We’re the only ones that dare speak up against Islamist ideology.”

The Defence Minister Mark Francois said that following Lee Rigby’s death soldiers were “not to get drawn into the politics of this incident”.

One former soldier, who had served in Iraq and Afghanistan, told Channel 4 News that in the aftermath of Woolwich he made the decision to become an EDL supporter.

He said he had found the adjustment to civilian life difficult, and after Woolwich had started taking part in demonstrations. He said that he was surprised at the amount of serving and ex-soldiers at these demonstrations.

Channel 4 News claimed that it had seen social networking profiles from hundreds of serving members

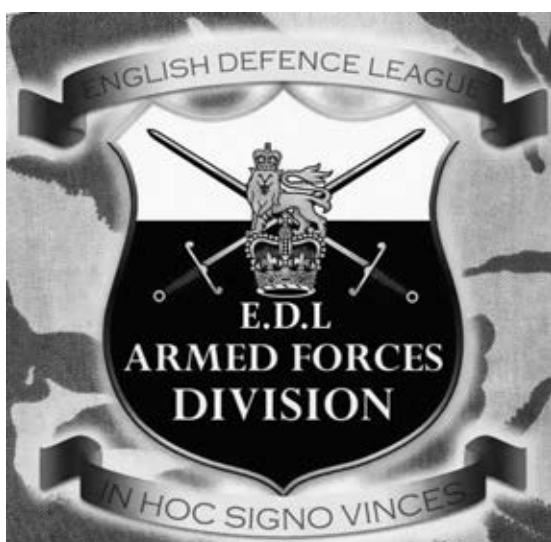
of the armed forces who have liked EDL related pages, including the organisation’s “Armed Forces Division”.

“The total numbers of soldiers who have declared their support for the group remains unclear, but it is unlikely to be more than a small minority of armed forces personnel,” the programme said.

A statement from the Ministry of Defence (MOD) claimed that Queens Regulations forbade regular service personnel in uniform taking “any active part in the affairs of any political organisation, party or movement and they are not to participate in political marches or demonstrations”.

“Groups that seek to inflame tension and set one part of the community against the other have no place in the Armed Forces and racism of any kind is completely unacceptable”, an MOD statement explained.

“Members of the Armed Forces are free to join lawful political parties and are entitled to their beliefs and no restriction is placed upon the attendance at political meetings provided that uniform is not worn.”



Main Far Right Groups – UK

Blood and Honour (B&H)

www.bloodandhonourworldwide.co.uk

White power music network, neo-Nazi

Leader: Simon Dutton

The main umbrella group for the ‘white power’ music scene. Holds regular music concerts and still produces a regular glossy magazine under the same name, but the supporters are ageing.

British Democratic Party (BDP)

www.britishdemocraticparty.org

Leader: Kevin Scott

Eighteen months in the planning, the BDP was launched in autumn 2012 as a far right alternative to the BNP. Announced first as True Brit, it was then re-launched a few days later after a major falling out between the original founding members. The highest profile member is Andrew Brons, a former National Front member who along with Nick Griffin was elected one of the BNP’s two MEPs in 2009 (Brons and Griffin have since fallen out). With a chaotic launch, the party has been mostly silent and ignored in the shadow of the much wider-known BNP.

Britain First (BF)

www.britainfirst.org

Anti-Islam/Muslim, Christian evangelical, anti-immigration

Leaders: Jim Dowson (millionaire ex-BNP fundraiser, strong anti-abortion Protestant activist from Scotland), and Paul Golding (ex-BNP media officer)

Not a political party as such, but a campaign which has made “Muslim grooming” a feature of a letter writing effort to mosques up and down the country. Paul Golding has led several stunts as a ‘Christian Patrol’ in east London, making Anjem Choudhary of al-Muhajiroun his leading target. Meanwhile Dowson has been active in the Northern Irish ‘flag protests’ in Belfast. Dowson sensationally quit in summer 2014, following disagreements about high-profile “mosque invasions”.

British Freedom Party (BFP)

Anti-Islam and anti-immigration

Leader: was Kevin Carroll

Despite promising much the BFP – the political arm of the EDL – did very little and has since been de-registered as a political party in late 2012. It stood six candidates in the 2012 local elections but they only polled 308 votes between them. The party did a lot better in the Police and Crime Commissioner elections in Bedfordshire where Carroll, former joint leader of the EDL, polled 10.3% of the vote.

British National Party (BNP)

www.bnp.org.uk

Racial nationalist, anti-Semitic

Leader: Adam Walker

Stuck in electoral freefall, with Nick Griffin its former leader losing both his European Parliamentary seat as well as declaring himself personally bankrupt.

Membership is believed to be well below 2,000.



British Movement (BM)

Neo-Nazi

Leader: Steve Frost

Once one of the leading 'street' movements of the Far Right in the 1980s. Recently launched a youth wing called 'Young Wolf', but now a mere shadow of its former self.

British People's Party (BPP)

www.bpp.org.uk

National Socialist

Leader: Kevin Watmough

Only exists on the internet. Watmough is a longtime neo-Nazi who also publishes the hate site, Redwatch.

Casuals United

www.casualsunited.wordpress.com

Football hooligans, anti-Muslim

Leader: Jeff Marsh

Mostly online with occasional street activity. Previously would link up with the EDL at their demos. Casuals United announced a link up with the National Front after falling out with the EDL leadership.

Combat 18

Neo-Nazi

Leader: Will Browning

Ultra-violent neo-Nazi gang, once the BNP's stewarding force. Collapsed under murder trials and allegations of links to continental bomb plots in the late 1990s but has limped on since. Was heavily infiltrated by Special Branch during its earlier incarnations, revealed in the murder trial surrounding former leader Paul 'Charlie' Sargent, now released. Is believed to have expanded its brand to up to 17 countries across Europe, including several terror plots.

Combined Ex-Forces (CxF)

Far-right street movement

Leader: James Devine

Formed in 2011 as a network of former soldiers within the English Defence League, more hardline and confrontational it was later expelled. A relationship still continues with the EDL rank and file and the CxF has organised demonstrations alongside the EDL and more recently with the North West Infidels.

English Defence League (EDL)

www.englishdefenceleague.org

Far Right street movement, anti-Muslim, anti-immigration

Leaders: Tim Ablitt

Now in disarray, following the high-profile defection of its two leaders, Stephen Lennon ('Tommy Robinson') and his cousin Kevin Carroll. Riven with internal division and splits offs, was revitalised temporarily by the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby in May 2013 but now dropped back off again. Expected to continue splintering into more and more factions, some of which may be drawn to violence and confrontation.

Still active online, via social media.

English Democrats

www.englishdemocrats.org.uk

English nationalists

Leader: Robin Tilbrook and Steve Uncles

Attempts to position itself akin to the Scottish National Party (SNP) or Plaid Cymru (PC) in Wales, has performed disastrously in elections and has recently absorbed many BNP members upset at Nick Griffin's leadership.

England First Party

<http://efp.org.uk>

White nationalists

Leader: Mark Cotterill

Created by former Nick Griffin protégé and ex-head of the American Friends of the BNP, Mark Cotterill, an reconstructed racial nationalist now based in Lancashire. Also runs the Heritage and Destiny magazine, with links to US far-right extremists.

English Volunteer Force (EVF)

Islamophobic and racist, sympathies to Loyalism

Leader: William Anderson

First appeared in Bridgend, Wales, on 3rd October 2012 at a Homecoming parade by the Royal Welsh Battalion. Has strong links to Belfast, including National Culturalist founder Jack Buckby, now part of Liberty GB

Infidels

Violent far-right street movement, inspired by leaderless resistance

Leaders: John 'Snowy' Shaw

Founded on 2 April 2011 as a breakaway from the English Defence League (EDL). The Infidels are a non-party umbrella coalition of far-right nationalists and Loyalists from across the UK, formed into the North East Infidels (NEI), North West Infidels (NWI) and the Scottish Defence League (SDL). The Infidels of Ulster affiliated to the coalition in January 2012. Six of the group were jailed in September 2013 for a vicious attack in Liverpool on antifascist campaigners.

Iona Forum

Far-right intellectual

Leader: Jeremy Bedford-Turner

Linked to the National Culturalists of Jack Buckby and with the BNP, but remains small. Hosts regular meetings in London and recently invited notorious Canadian Holocaust denier Paul Fromm to visit.

Liberty GB

www.libertygb.org.uk

Far-right political, anti-Muslim

Leader: Paul Weston

Liberty Great Britain was registered with the Electoral Commission on 5 March 2013 by Paul Weston, failed former leader of the British Freedom Party. Claiming it is "working together to protect our British culture, heritage and freedoms" it explains that: "the Liberal Democrats, Labour and Conservatives manifestly refuse to discuss the most important issues of our time, namely mass Third World immigration, the steady rise of fundamentalist Islam and the hijacking of traditional British culture and institutions by well-organised left-wing 'progressives'."

Weston and his cohorts seem increasingly obsessed with Islam.

March For England (MFE)

www.marchforengland.weebly.com

Far-right street movement, anti-Muslim

Leader: Dave Smeeton

Founded 18 February 2007 originally as March for the Flag by two fans of Tottenham Hotspur FC. It was renamed March for England (MFE) in November 2007. The Portsmouth-based MFE is anti-immigration and anti-Islamist, plus had close links with the English Defence League (EDL).

National Front (NF)

www.national-front.org.uk

Neo-Nazi

Leader: was Ian Edward, now disputed with rival Kevin Bryant

Ageing activist base – though some influx of former EDL, and EDL splinter groups, into its ranks (bringing other difficulties with it, including confrontation) – some marches, concentrates on Holocaust denial and scientific racism, still associated with violence.

Natural Culturists

www.culturisthub.org

Far Right/young BNP

Leader: Jack Buckby (recently joined Liberty GB)

According to VICE online magazine, "longs for a return to a simpler and entirely imaginary time in Britain's past, one in which everyone got along because they were white". On the group's website, they claim they are "making anti-egalitarian and socially conservative politics accessible for younger people for the first time". Believes Muslims "cannot mix well in a country like the UK" and have referred to "Muslim paedo gangs". Buckby, a university student, is admired by Nick Griffin and has been a BNP member.

Northern Patriotic Front (NPF)

www.northernpatrioticfront.tumblr.com

Neo-Nazi

Leader: Robert Batten

Street demonstrations against (proposed) mosques, anti-grooming pickets and organising confrontations and pickets against the Left.

The New Right

Intellectual 'far right'

Leader: Troy Southgate

Holds regular meetings and issues publications. Attempts to bring together the intellectual wing of Britain's far right, though many of its participants are no longer key figures. Is rivalled by the Iona Forum.

Racial Volunteer Force (RVF)

www.rvfonline.com

Neo-Nazi

Leader: Mark Atkinson (ex-C18)

Mostly stagnant, the RVF has almost become an insignificance. Hardline, violent neo-Nazis.

RedWatch

www.redwatch.org

Neo-Nazi

Leader: Kevin Watmough

Anonymously publishes details of those it considers the 'enemies' of the further ends of the extreme Right: journalists, union members, anti-fascists, students, etc.

South East Alliance

Anti-Muslim, anti-immigration, sympathies to Loyalism

Leader: Paul Prodromou (aka 'Paul Pitt')

A declining force based around a splinter faction from the EDL, involved in small marches and counter-demonstrations. Members have filmed themselves threatening anti-fascist activists.

Traditional Britain Group

Extreme Conservative

Leader: Gregory Lauder-Frost

Hosts social events, dinners. Hit the media headlines in 2013 after it was revealed that Conservative MP Jacob Rees-Mogg was a guest at its annual dinner in May and was pictured sitting at the top table seated next to Gregory Lauder-Frost.



Common Beliefs and Ideologies

- Anti-Semitism and Holocaust Denial
- Notable Holocaust Deniers
- Counter Jihadism
- Pamela Geller
- Robert Spencer
- Mosque-busters and mega-masjids

Anti-Semitism and Holocaust Denial

The 'glue' linking many far-right movements and their leaders has been a strong, palpable sense of anti-Semitism – a hatred of Jews. Many neo-Nazis have obsessed about Jewish conspiracies over who runs the world, the media, the entertainment industry, the power of the Israeli or Jewish lobby, and Zionism (which they often confuse with simple Jewish identity). Some writers and violent white supremacists have even voiced a belief in 'ZOG', or the Zionist Occupation Government, as the secret rulers of the world.

In practice, this anti-Semitism is often expressed in the form of Holocaust Denial or Holocaust Revisionism.

The Holocaust is name given to the systematic murder of six million Jews by the Nazis during World War II. The Nazis sought to hide all trace of their attempted extermination of the Jews through the use of euphemistic language referring to their "evacuation" and "special treatment". Nick Griffin of the BNP has referred to the Holocaust as the "Holohoax" and his friend, and former leader of the Ku Klux Klan in America, David Duke, has presented papers at an Iranian conference which questioned whether the Holocaust had actually happened. He has also promoted Nazi racial theories and often harped on about Jewish conspiracies.

Accompanying these outright deniers are the Holocaust Revisionists, those who accept the existence of the camps but either dispute key facts or play down the number of people who were killed. Many Revisionists will argue that there was no German programme to exterminate the Jewish race and will often claim that there was not the systematic killing of Jewish people in gas chambers and say that the accepted belief that six million died is hugely exaggerated.

In addition to outright Holocaust Denial and Holocaust Revisionism is Holocaust Relativism. 'Relativism' denies the unique character of the Nazis' extermination programme, comparing Nazi crimes as relative to other acts of inhumanity.

All forms of such denial are used as a basis for 'evidence' that there is a Jewish conspiracy at work.

Perhaps the most (in)famous Holocaust Denier to date has been historian David Irving, who lost a huge libel battle with the author Deborah Lipstadt over his Holocaust Denial, and who has served prison time in Austria for these beliefs.

Notable Holocaust Deniers

Fred Leuchter - One of America's most influential Holocaust deniers, in 1988 Leuchter produced The Leuchter Report, which purported to offer "scientific" proof that there were no gas chambers at Auschwitz. In fact Leuchter has no qualifications whatsoever. Thoroughly discredited, the report nonetheless had a significant impact on the Holocaust Denial community. Leuchter was deported from the UK in November 1991 after David Irving brought him into the country illegally to address an international Holocaust Denial rally in London. Nick Griffin, now the BNP leader, was in charge of his security.

David Duke - Duke is a self-styled white nationalist, though critics often label him a white supremacist. He says he does not think of himself as a racist, stating that he is a "racial realist" and that he believes "all people have a basic human right to preserve their own heritage." He speaks against racial integration and in favour of white separatism. Duke made several unsuccessful bids for political office, including runs for the Louisiana House, Louisiana Senate,

U.S. Senate, U.S. House, Governor of Louisiana and twice for President of the United States. In 2002, he pled guilty to tax evasion and fraud charges, resulting in a year-long prison sentence.

Mark Weber - Weber has been the director of the Institute for Historical Review (IHR) since 1995. The IHR is perhaps the leading disseminator of Holocaust Denial material in the Western world. Weber is a former member of the neo-Nazi National Alliance.

Michael Hoffman II - Hoffman is a leading light in the American Holocaust denial movement noted for his conspiracy theories, which he expounds through his "revisionist history" website.

Fredrick Töben - A German-born Australian Holocaust denier who runs the Adelaide Institute as a platform for his activities, Töben was jailed for seven months in Germany in 1999 for "offending the memory of the dead". An attempt by the German authorities to extradite him from Britain in 2008 failed.

David Irving - Irving is the doyen of "revisionist" literature. His failed libel action against Professor Deborah Lipstadt and Penguin books in 2000 exposed him to the world not as a bona fide historian but as a racist, anti-Semitic, far-right polemicist whose work unduly exonerated Hitler for the crimes of his Nazi regime.

Lady Michèle Renouf - A former model, born Michèle Mainwaring, Renouf is David Irving's chief cheerleader and runs her own Telling Films outlet as a vehicle for her anti-Semitism. She is a regular talking head on the Iranian-owned Press TV. Renouf sits on the International Holocaust Research Committee (IHRC) Interim Committee established to perpetuate the work of the Iranian Holocaust Denial conference of December 2006.

Paul Fromm - A veteran Canadian far-right activist who lives in Ontario, Fromm is a leading light in the Canadian Association for Free Expression (CAFÉ), an organisation he founded in the early 1980s to publicise the cases of racists and Holocaust deniers who face prosecution. He has shared platforms with David Irving.

Robert Faurisson - Considered by many to be the high priest of French Holocaust Denial, Faurisson is a former professor of French literature at the University of Lyon. His speech in defence of Nick Griffin, now leader of the British National Party, in 1998 at Harrow Crown Court did little to persuade the jury who found Griffin guilty of inciting racial hatred. He has been convicted for Holocaust Denial on numerous occasions.

Germer Rudolf - Rudolf is a German Holocaust Denier and chemist whose publication of "revisionist" literature in the form of the Rudolf Report led to his prosecution in 1995. In response Rudolf fled Germany to the United States, where he applied for asylum. He was turned down in 2006 and deported to Germany, where he was imprisoned.

Ernst Zündel - One of the world's leading Holocaust Deniers, Zündel's writings include *The Hitler We Loved and Why* and *UFOs: Nazi Secret Weapon?* In 2005 Zündel was deported from Canada to Germany to stand trial for Holocaust denial. Convicted and imprisoned, he was released in March 2010. Among those waiting for him outside the prison gates were Lady Renouf and Richard Edmonds of the BNP.



Counter Jihadism

The 'counter-jihad' movement is a broad, international alliance of neo-conservatives, hard-line racists, football hooligans, nationalists and right-wing populists who claim to be exposing and opposing "radical Islam" and "Islamist extremism".

However, counter-jihadists often stray into wider criticism of the entire Islamic faith and of Muslims as a people, such as when former EDL leader 'Tommy Robinson' (a key British counter-jihadist) called for all mosques to be regulated and for all Muslims (not just so-called 'Islamists') to feel the full force of the EDL's might.

Just as with the right-wing Holocaust Deniers of the extreme Right, so too are the counter-jihadists the new face of the political extreme Right in Europe and North America. Replacing the old racial nationalist

politics of neo-Nazi and traditional far-right parties with the language of cultural and identity wars, they present themselves as mainstream and respectable. In countries such as Denmark, the Netherlands and Switzerland these beliefs have abounded among right-wing populist parties, promoting an anti-Muslim and anti-immigration message which has proven far more popular than the tired clichés of the traditional far-right parties and their strange obsession with 'the Jews'.

The counter-jihad movement is also spread among not just political movements, but many media and social media commentators.

The core beliefs of counter-jihadism are that Islam poses a serious threat to Western civilisation, based on a flawed 'clash of civilisations' narrative once promoted by Samuel Huntington. Counter-jihadists fear an Islamisation of Europe, whereby

Counter-Jihad vs Radical Right

According to Matthew Goodwin of Nottingham University, co-founder of the Extremis Project, counter-jihad groups differ from the populist radical right in three ways.

1 First, they prioritise demonstrations over elections. In France, Generation Identity occupied a mosque to demand a referendum on Muslim immigration, and compared followers with the '68'ers', claiming to represent a generation saddled with unemployment, debt and multicultural decline.

2 Second, they have unbounded memberships, whereby activists flow in and out. Some are from far-right circles but others are connected to football hooligan firms, and most are

organised through social media. The EDL once claimed over 150,000 followers on Facebook, while Generation Identity launched itself on YouTube. They often reject crude 'whites-only' supremacism, appealing to minority communities. Recently, Stop Islamization of Denmark marched in support of a Jewish community that had recorded an increase in acts of discrimination.

3 Third, rather than offer a broad program, counter-jihad groups focus heavily on the 'threat' from Islam. While the populist radical right has infused its discourse with anti-Muslim prejudice, counter-jihad activists show little interest in issues beyond Islam, which is framed as threatening the resources, identity and way of life of the native group.

the continent will be turned into 'Eurabia'. Among the most popular blogs pronouncing this theory are the Gates of Vienna; also Pamela Geller's Atlas Shrugs.

Many counter-jihadist adherents completely fail to distinguish between the hardline beliefs of those such as Al-Muhajiroun (who support violence and want a harshly-defined, global Islamic superstate) and the overwhelming majority of peaceful Muslims who reject these extremist views and want to get on with their lives. Immigration and multiculturalism are seen by many counter-jihadists as a Trojan Horse through which Islam is gaining a foothold in the West.

Norwegian killer Anders Breivik was inspired by counter-jihadism and its proponents. He believed that Islam was a threat to Western Europe and that "cultural Marxism" (a term favoured by the Far Right) had allowed immigration and multiculturalist policies to permit Islam to prosper. In his manifesto he regurgitated many words of prominent counter-jihadists, sometimes word for word. Almost a quarter of Breivik's 1,518-page Manifesto consisted of quotes from other people. Half of these 375 pages of quotes came from just one man, the blogger Fjordman.

Breivik feared and hated Islam, but it was the Norwegian establishment which was his real enemy. More specifically it was social democracy that he and the counter-jihad movement blamed for encouraging and promoting immigration and multiculturalism. Breivik bombed government buildings and shot young members of the ruling Labour Party. Other counter-jihadists were desperate to distance themselves from his actions. Many did so because they were genuinely appalled by what he did. Others were worried about how it would impact upon them.

Counter Jihad in action

In the United States, five state legislatures have already banned Shari'a law from being practised. It is being debated by another 20. In Switzerland, people voted for a ban on minarets despite the fact that there were only four in the country. In France, politicians of the centre and right tried to outbid each other in the 2012 Presidential election to prove how hardline they are on Muslim practices and extremism. The fear of Islam is playing an increasingly important role in the political discourse in many countries.

Pamela Geller



Pamela Geller is the anti-Muslim movement's most visible and flamboyant figurehead. Owner of the Atlas Shrugs blog, this US 'soccer mom' came to prominence during the heated protests over an Islamic centre being built near the site of the 9/11 Twin Towers attacks.

Geller often makes broad-brush denunciations of Islam and issues preposterous claims, such as that President Obama is the "love child" of Malcolm X. Partnering with the Catholic deacon, Robert Spencer, together they run Stop Islamization of America (SIOA) and have involved the former EDL leader Stephen Lennon on the board of another organisation, Stop The Islamization of Nations (SION) – though with Lennon's defection, he has now been removed from that body.

As the US civil rights group, the Southern Poverty Law Center notes: “Geller has mingled comfortably with European racists and fascists, spoken favorably of South African racists, defended Serbian war criminal Radovan Karadzic and denied the existence of Serbian concentration camps. She has taken a strong pro-Israel stance to the point of being sharply critical of Jewish liberals.”

After Breivik’s terrorist attack in Norway, Geller wrote an article claiming that the victims (predominantly children) were not innocent; she also included a photograph with the caption: “Note the faces which are more Middle Eastern or mixed than pure Norwegian”.

Both Geller and Spencer were banned by the Home Secretary from entering the UK in 2013, after they attempted to join the EDL in a March on Woolwich.

In Her Own Words:

“Islam is not a race. This is an ideology. This is an extreme ideology, the most radical and extreme ideology on the face of the earth.”

*Pam Geller on Fox Business’
“Follow the Money,” March 10, 2011*

“I don’t think that many westernized Muslims know when they pray five times a day that they’re cursing Christians and Jews five times a day. ...I believe in the idea of a moderate Muslim. I do not believe in the idea of a moderate Islam.”

*Pam Geller, The New York Times,
Oct. 8, 2010*

Robert Spencer

Geller’s counter-jihad partner Robert Spencer is the author of the virulently anti-Muslim website JihadWatch; he is also co-head of SION, SIOA, and the American Freedom Defence Initiative



organisations. Spencer’s pivotal role in the multimillion-dollar international anti-Muslim propaganda network has been heavily documented.

Robert Spencer and JihadWatch were the most heavily cited sources of propaganda in the terrorist Anders Breivik’s manifesto; in fact, Breivik explicitly stated: “About Islam, I recommend essentially everything written by Robert Spencer”.

Spencer is not actually a scholar of Islam in any credible sense of the term. In fact, Spencer’s own alma mater, the University of North Carolina, has publicly described his writings as “perpetuating a type of bigotry similar to anti-Semitism and racial prejudice. They are to be viewed with great suspicion by anyone who wishes to find reliable and scholarly information on the subject of Islam.”

He is on record as claiming that there is “no distinction in the American Muslim community between peaceful Muslims and jihadists” as well as denying the Srebrenica genocide, explicitly describing it as “the-genocide-that-never-was” and proposing “the possibility that Muslims could have carried out any deceptive atrocity-manufacturing in the Balkans”.

According to the site Loonwatch.com, Spencer’s anti-Muslim propaganda is identical to the anti-Semitic propaganda of Julius Streicher, a Third Reich-era Nazi whom the US subsequently prosecuted at the Nuremberg Trials and was convicted on the charge of crimes against humanity; even Spencer’s arguments in his own defence are identical to Streicher’s statements at the time.

Mosque-busters and mega-masjids



Julian Bond, director of the Christian Muslim Forum, reflects on the opposition to mosque building in the UK. Reproduced with permission www.christianmuslimforum.org @ChrisMusForum

It's difficult having an image problem. Mud sticks, even undeserved mud. I think most of us would admit that Islam currently has an image problem. But some of us would say that that 'tarnished' image has nothing to do with real Islam.

Those reflecting on the reception of Muslims in England (and I can't help thinking that it is more of an English issue than a British issue, as things are different in Wales and Scotland) have compared their recent situation to that of Irish Catholics in the 19th and early 20th century. The unwelcoming signs of our recent history read 'No Blacks, No Irish'; it's a small step to imagine it saying 'no Muslims', 'no Asians' or 'no Pakistanis'.

Despite the worst efforts of the IRA in my youth in the 1970s and 80s, I don't recall people saying 'all Catholics are terrorists'. The level of distrust, fear and sense of threat from Muslims has (sadly) reached far greater heights. Recent survey data, quoted by Communities Minister Baroness Warsi, has indicated that three-quarters of Brits think that Islam is incompatible with being British. Related research gave virtually the same figure for ignorance of Islam.

Strikingly, about 80% of Muslims in this survey said that they were proud to be British. In fact, they were 'more proud' than non-Muslims – perhaps they felt that Britain is less British these days – I have come across this view personally and anecdotally; it also describes some of the outlook of far-right and Eurosceptic movements.

Anti-Muslim negativity crystallises around a few issues:

- **Shari'a** – although, ironically, this is about being a good Muslim, shari'a is another word for the way a Muslim lives their life, not the negative associations attached to it
- **Oppression of women** – a cultural projection and a cultural problem
- **Terrorism** – by a small minority who are terrorists, rather than 'Islamists' or Muslims
- **Halal meat** – possibly ignoring a host of inhumane animal-rearing and slaughtering processes
- **Muslim presence** – e.g. the threatening and dominating mega-mosque narrative



Baroness Warsi also had this to say:
'I don't need to give you story after story about the mosque that's been attacked or the women who have had their headscarf ripped from their heads, or abused for wearing religious dress, or the discrimination in the job market or the online abuse.'

This negativity can extend to Christians. The mosque-friendly or Muslim-friendly Christian can be on the receiving end of abuse and hate mail from fellow-Christians because they have responded positively to a mosque development or have been welcoming of Muslims. As I write this, and publication may be some time later, I have been both encouraged and disheartened about news of Christian-Muslim relationships in Aberdeen. A great good news story was covered in the mainstream media of the minister who allowed local Muslims to pray in his church because the neighbouring mosque was too small and worshippers were having to pray outside in the cold and the rain. He was criticised for being a 'Good Samaritan' and called a traitor. My article is [here](#). I hope that the Christians who have shared their hatred of Muslims and their disapproval with the minister are a very small minority indeed. This links with reactions to mosque-building, including by Christians.

Opposition to mosque building

The prospect of a mosque-development seems to provoke an almost visceral reaction, and opposition to mosque-building is getting stronger and more organised. The mosque has become an unwelcome presence and a focus, like women, for anti-Muslim negativity. The organisation 'Mosque-busters', created in 2011 has become increasingly active and successful, 'winning' virtually all its campaigns against mosques around the country.

It is a war against a phantom enemy, not rational objections to a development that has no place, relying on whipping up hatred and intolerance, so much for 'British values'!

These are some of the ways in which non-Muslims have responded to the prospect of a mosque being built locally:

- Proposed mosque development in Bletchley – British National Party (BNP) campaign, thankfully unsuccessful
- Leicester – pig's head left outside community centre being used for prayers with plans for development as an Islamic centre. The English Defence League (EDL) has been actively campaigning against this centre. There has also been a visit by Nick Griffin of the BNP.
- A disused church in Lancashire that was due to be developed into a mosque was subject to an arson attack
- Leicester – masjid is based in former council Portakabin, a non-Muslim passerby described it as a 'bomb factory' while I was standing outside with a local priest
- Sunderland – there was a long-running campaign against a mosque development
- London – of course there is the infamous 'mega-mosque' which is no closer to getting planning permission, let alone being built, in Newham. Christians from an anti-Muslim network regularly gather to pray 'against' this development, surely an irritation to God whenever they meet to 'pray'! Perhaps one day I will make my way there and offer prayers of peace with a Muslim colleague...

So what is the problem with a mosque?

I have been in many masjids around the country – Sunni, Shi’a, Sufi, Salafi – though as my colleague the imam says – ‘no need for sectarian labels’. In some of them very little other than prayer goes on; in many there is an attached community centre with community projects. I wonder how many of the mosque-haters have been inside a mosque?

Reading an account of the lawyer who runs ‘Mosque-busters’ recently it is clear that he has rather different ideas about mosques: not as places of prayer and community centres but as centres of hate, promoters of violent jihad, bastions of an Islamic empire.

We need to tell better stories about places of worship – and there are plenty of them out there. I deliberately visited a London mosque on 21/7/05 after walking several miles across London due to transport outage. I did so to show solidarity with the Muslim community. It felt like a safe and

spiritual place to be in, removed from actual or planned atrocities carried out in the name of ‘Islam’ and with the reality being that ‘the Qur’an says no’. I told a friend later I had walked into a mosque. He was surprised. ‘You mean you can just go in?’ I later took another friend to the mosque across the road. Yet these are just places of prayer, no more threatening than that. Try it – go inside.

In closing, I offer the example of the imam at Aylesbury Jamia Masjid. I took a group of Christians there and he warmly welcomed us into God’s house, not his. As Christians and Muslims, we need to cool things and not fuel the flames of division and hostility. My vision is of people of both faiths speaking generously and graciously about each other. As a group of Christians and Muslims we produced this statement together which encourages us to be more open to each other.

Julian Bond
Director, Christian Muslim Forum





Transport
for London

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7 am - 6 pm

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ALDGATE STATION

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POLICE

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Far Right Movements and Violence

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- Norway massacre
- Breivik and the Far Right
- Profile: Professor William Pierce – “Godfather of leaderless resistance”
- Woolwich – the Far Right Backlash
- For their attackers, mosques are seen as places of “difference”
- The mosque bomber

Far Right movements and violence

Europol’s most recent EU Terrorism Situation and Trend report notes that the threat of violent far-right extremism has ‘reached new levels in Europe and should not be underestimated’. It defines far-right terrorist groups as those that ‘seek to change the entire political, social and economic system on an extremist right-wing model’.

Europol suggests that the threat of terrorism is most likely to come from so-called ‘lone wolves’, rather than organised groups.

Violent far-right attacks in Europe

Source: Institute for Strategic Dialogue

- In 2006, 17 members of the movement Blood, Soil, Honour and Loyalty were charged in Belgium with planning terror attacks against the National Bank and plotting an ‘army-led coup’ to create a fascist Flemish state. That same year, a follower of this movement, Hans van Themsche, killed two people in a racially-motivated shooting spree in Antwerp.
- In 2007, a former electoral candidate for the BNP in the UK was imprisoned for stockpiling chemical explosives due to his fears about ‘the evils of uncontrolled immigration.’
- In 2009 in Germany, the young neo-Nazi group Autonome Nationalisten attacked a group of far-left protesters and police, setting cars on fire and injuring dozens.
- In 2010, three members of the violent banned neo-Nazi group Nomad 88 in France went on a shooting spree to ‘purge’ the suburbs of immigrants, and were sentenced to prison in 2010. Nine other members of the group were also sentenced for offences including arms possession.

- In July 2011, Anders Behring Breivik detonated a bomb in Oslo and carried out a shooting attack on the island of Utøya, killing a total of 77 people.
- In November 2011, an arson attack, classified by Europol as a 'right-wing terror attack' was carried out in Terrassa (Spain) on the facilities of a publishing company and an anti-capitalist cooperative society, with no casualties.
- In 2011, five people were arrested in Germany for involvement in far-right terrorism, and all arrests were linked to the far-right extremist terror group NSU, which carried out politically-motivated murders between 2001 and 2007
- In 2011, two Senegalese street vendors were murdered in Italy by a member of the far-right group Casa Pound.

Europol confirms that many members of the extreme right-wing scene have access to or harbour ambitions to acquire weapons, ammunition, or explosives. "Though most groups with a far-right orientation do not openly endorse violence, research has drawn out the 'motivational vocabularies' that inspire far-right commitment and that tend to amplify feelings of threat, urgency and survivalism: a struggle for racial and cultural survival," says the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD).

The ISD adds that, according to the EU-Midis European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (2012), the 10 most targeted groups for crime with a perceived 'racist motive' are: Roma in the Czech Republic; Somalis in Finland; Somalis in Denmark; Africans in Malta; Roma in Greece; Roma in Poland; Sub-Saharan Africans in Ireland, North Africans in Italy, Roma in Hungary; and Roma in the Slovak Republic.

In many countries, anti-Muslim violence in particular has been on the rise. One report places an estimate

of between 100 and 200 hate crimes per year against mosques, Islamic institutions and Muslim organisations in the UK since 9/11 as 'not unreasonable and probably highly conservative', according again to the ISD.

Racial Violence in the UK – the view from IRR

“Violent racism in the UK is generally seen as something consigned to history.”

Jon Burnett of the Institute for Race Relations (IRR)

"Racial violence, however, remains an every-day experience for some," he suggests in his February 2013 IRR report, 'Racial Violence: Facing Reality'. According to this research, racial violence is no longer confined to major urban centres but is spreading outwards to suburban and other areas.

"As austerity measures begin to bite and welfare changes and benefit caps take their toll, it is likely that such violence will intensify," Burnett believes. "Already, cities are experiencing internal migrations, with welfare recipients – many of whom are from BME communities – being relocated outside richer boroughs and people being decanted out of the capital. They arrive in towns and cities which are already suffering cuts, where unemployment may be high and which are unprepared in any way for their arrival."

Violent racism can range from persistent name-calling, graffiti, damage to cars and homes, harassment of shop-keepers to extreme, lethal attacks. Since the murder of Stephen Lawrence, at least 105 people – about five people, on average, per year – have been murdered in racist attacks.

Racial violence is spreading now to smaller cities as well as towns across the UK. In part, this is related to demographic changes. Whereas less than six percent of the population of England and Wales were from a BME background in 1991, this had risen to 13% in 2001 and about 20% in 2011.

"The UK's 'new' migrants often find themselves in localities which have until fairly recently had a majority white British population ...accommodation is given on a 'no-choice' basis and is frequently based in hard-to-let properties," says Burnett. Recent changes have compounded this, with private companies re-dispersing asylum seekers into more remote towns where properties are cheaper.

"Migrant workers, meanwhile, have been targeted in racist attacks as they have found employment in areas where local economies have been transformed. And international students have found themselves at risk in localities where colleges and universities have encouraged their presence as part of internationalisation strategies."

Political narratives which attack multiculturalism and diversity, sensationalised media coverage have – arguably, says the IRR – helped propel a far-right narrative.

"In Stoke-on-Trent – a city reeling from decades of industrial decline and marred by significant inequalities – by 2008 the BNP had become the second largest political party, with nine councillors and a party-line which described the city as the 'jewel in the crown'. Whilst the Far Right has since fallen into electoral disarray, there has been the emergence of a range of other far-right groups, some of which have attempted to form political parties, whilst others have become established as street movements against 'Islamification'. There are indications that this fracturing of the far-right has been accompanied by an intensification of racial violence."

Racial violence in UK

- 37,000 racially or religiously aggravated crimes in 2011/12 (England & Wales)
- More than 100 per day
- Since the murder of Stephen Lawrence, at least 105 people – about five people, on average, per year – have been murdered in racist attacks
- Crime Survey for England and Wales suggests this is a fraction of the total number

Lone wolves

“A recent report on so-called 'lone wolves' notes that those involved in apparent one-person actions have in most cases had long-standing involvement with organised extremist groups.”

Matthew Feldman, University of Teesside

Lone wolf terrorism is political or religious violence conducted by individuals (as opposed to an organised, hierarchical group). It is not a new phenomenon, despite an increase in attacks in recent years, particularly from right-wing extremists.

There are obvious connections to the ideas of leaderless resistance. According to the US-based Anti-Defamation League, the term “lone wolf” was popularised by the white supremacists Alex Curtis and Tom Metzger in the 1990s. Metzger advocated individual or small-cell underground activity, as opposed to above-ground membership organisations, envisaging “warriors acting alone or in small groups who attacked the government or other targets in ‘daily, anonymous acts.’” He referred to these people as “lone wolves”.

The term is not confined to the extreme Right, either. President Barack Obama recently referred to the Boston Marathon bomber Tamerlan Tsarnaev as a self-radicalised “lone wolf” terrorist. The nature of lone wolf attacks often makes them hard to predict and track, particularly with the advent of the internet and “self-radicalisation”.

Lone Wolves

Timothy McVeigh is an infamous example of a white supremacist and anti-government lone wolf. He killed 168 people when he bombed a federal office building in Oklahoma City in 1995. Another well-known lone wolf is Ted Kaczynski, the so-called “Unabomber” who killed three and wounded 23 more in various parts of the United States over a 17-year period, also ending in 1995. McVeigh considered the federal government tyrannical, and Kaczynski apparently felt the same way about just about everything in the modern world.

Common traits

Nearly all lone wolves have personal and/or political grievances, the perception that harm has been done to them or to society. One of the most notorious examples is Ted Kaczynski, the so-called Unabomber, who believed that technology was destroying both the environment and humanity.

Others are frustrated in life, ambition, love, building a sense of grievance that (they feel) can only be overcome with violence. Lone wolves may have become “unfrozen”, a psychological term for the process of disconnecting from loved ones, work and daily routines that might otherwise anchor them against radicalisation. They may suffer from depression or other mental disorders.

Sometimes lone wolves have active or recent connections to larger, organised extremist groups (though they may be acting without those groups’ knowledge). Wade Michael

Page, a supposed ‘lone-wolf’ neo-Nazi activist who fatally shot six people at a Sikh Gurdwara in Wisconsin, USA on August 2012, had a long lineage of militant far-right activism. He had belonged to two white power music groups, End Apathy and Definite Hate, and was also affiliated with the Hammerskin Nation, a skinhead movement operating across the United States. ‘So the shooter was one of us...’ ‘This is not looking good!’ muttered a user on the neo-Nazi site, Stormfront.

This emerging body of evidence suggests that ‘lone-wolves’ – like all prospective terrorists – need to believe they are representing a broader constituency, some sort of self-justification for their sick actions.

Leaderless resistance

The term ‘Leaderless Resistance’ generally refer to spontaneous, autonomous, and unconnected cells seeking to carry out acts of violence, sabotage, or terrorism against a government or occupying military force. The concept is often attributed to American white supremacist and former Vietnam veteran, Louis Beam.

Such cells can carry out action in a semi-autonomous fashion without fear of compromising an entire organisation if they are discovered. Many violent, extreme right networks in the USA have been inspired by this concept. Many trace the inspiration for leaderless resistance to the writings of Professor William Pierce, a notorious neo-Nazi who once led the USA’s largest far-right group, the National Alliance. McVeigh’s truck bombing bore an uncanny similarity to a fictional scenario in one of Pierce’s novels, in which a race war is ignited as a result of a similar attack.

David Copeland – 'The London nailbomber'

David Copeland was given six life sentences in June 2000 for three counts of murder and three counts of causing explosions in London in order to endanger life. Copeland admitted killing three and injuring 139 people.



During 13 days in April 1999 Copeland caused explosions in Brixton, south London Brick Lane in east London and Soho, central London. The final blast at the gay pub the Admiral Duncan killed Andrea Dykes, 27, who was pregnant, and friends John Light, 32, and Nik Moore, 31, from Essex.

Copeland intended his bombing campaign to ignite a race war across Britain. He was tried for murder after the prosecution refused to accept his plea of guilty to manslaughter on the grounds that he was suffering a mental illness (paranoid schizophrenia). Although a Broadmoor Hospital consultant had described him as psychotic and diagnosed schizophrenia, the trial judge, Michael Hyam, concluded that Copeland's crimes were motivated by his hatred of black and Asian people and homosexuals.

Early life

Copeland was born in Isleworth, in the London Borough of Hounslow, but for most of his childhood he lived in Yateley, Hampshire. He resented the fact that he was small for his age, and was given the nickname "Mr Angry".

After his arrest in 1999, he told psychiatrists that he had started having sadistic dreams when he was about 12, including fantasies that he had been reincarnated as an SS officer with access

to women as slaves. In court, it was reported that Copeland had never had a girlfriend, and this caused him to fear that people might think he was gay.

In May 1997, aged 21, he joined the British National Party. Copeland acted as a steward at some BNP meetings, coming into contact with the BNP leadership, and infamously photographed next to John Tyndall, the-then leader (which was reproduced in a tabloid cover image). It was during this period that Copeland read William Pierce's *The Turner Diaries* (also read by Timothy McVeigh), and first learned how to make bombs using fireworks with alarm clocks as timers after downloading a so-called terrorists' handbook from the internet.

In 1998, Copeland left the BNP as it rejected political violence. He then joined the smaller, violent and openly neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement, becoming its regional leader for Hampshire just weeks before the start of his bombing campaign. It was around this time that he visited his family doctor and was prescribed antidepressants after telling the doctor he felt he was "losing his mind".

Bombings

Copeland's first attack, on Saturday, April 17, 1999, was in Electric Avenue, Brixton.

He made his bomb using explosives from fireworks, taping it inside a sports bag before priming and planting it outside the Iceland supermarket, on the corner of Electric Avenue. The market traders became suspicious and moved it several times before it detonated just as the police arrived, at 5:25pm in the evening. Fifty people were injured, many of them seriously because of the four-inch nails Copeland had packed



around the bomb. One victim was a 23-month-old toddler who had a nail driven through his skull into his brain.

Copeland's second bomb, on the following Saturday, April 24, was aimed at Brick Lane, the centre of the Bengali area in the East End of London. There was a famous street market on Sundays, but Copeland mistakenly tried to plant the bomb on Saturday, when the street was less busy. Unwilling to change the timer on the bomb, he left it instead in Hanbury Street, where it exploded. Thirteen people were injured, but there were no fatalities.

Copeland's third and final bomb was planted and exploded on the evening of April 30, in the crowded Admiral Duncan pub in Old Compton Street, the centre of London's gay village. Andrea Dykes, 27, who was four months pregnant with her first child, died along with her friends and hosts for the evening, Nick Moore, 31, and John Light, 32, who was to be the baby's godfather. Andrea's husband, Julian, was seriously injured. The four friends from Essex had met up in the Admiral Duncan to celebrate Andrea's pregnancy, when the bomb exploded after being taped inside a sports bag and left near the bar. Seventy-nine people were injured, many of them seriously. Four of the survivors had to have limbs amputated.

Capture and conviction

The Anti-Terrorist Branch of the Metropolitan Police Service identified Copeland from CCTV footage of Brixton. The image was given wide publicity on April 29 which caused

Copeland to bring forward his bombing of the Admiral Duncan to Friday evening. Paul Mifsud, a work colleague of Copeland, recognised him and alerted the police about an hour and 20 minutes before the bombing.

Copeland was arrested that night once the police obtained his address, a rented room in Farnborough, Hampshire. He admitted carrying out the three bombings as soon as he was arrested. His mental state was assessed at Broadmoor Hospital, but remained a matter of dispute at his trial.

The jury convicted him of three murders and three offences of planting bombs, and he was sentenced to six life sentences on June 30, 2000. The trial judge spoke of his doubt that it would ever be safe to release Copeland. Almost seven years later, on 2 March 2007, the High Court decided that Copeland should remain in prison for at least 50 years, effectively ruling out his release until at least 2049 at the age of 73. He is currently confined in Broadmoor Hospital.

Motivation

Copeland maintained he had worked alone and had not discussed his plans with anyone. During police interviews, he admitted holding neo-Nazi views, and talked of his desire to spread fear and to trigger a race war. He told police: "My main intent was to spread fear, resentment and hatred throughout this country, it was to cause a racial war." He also stated: "There'd be a backlash from the ethnic minorities, I'd just be the spark that would set fire to this country." After his arrest, Copeland wrote to BBC correspondent Graeme McLagan: "I bomb the blacks, Pakis, degenerates. I would have bombed the Jews as well if I'd got a chance."

When asked by the police why he had targeted Black and Asian ethnic minorities he replied: "Because I don't like them, I want them out of this country, I believe in the master race."

Norway massacre – Anders Breivik

On 22 July 2011, Anders Behring Breivik carried out a bombing and mass shooting in Norway that killed 77 mainly young people and wounded dozens more. He was inspired by 'counter-jihadist' ideology and is widely believed to be the "worst" far-right lone wolf terrorist in recent years.



Breivik and the Far Right

*By Matthew Feldman,
Teesside University*

Norwegian judges jailed the mass killer Anders Breivik after declaring him sane, yet his extremist ideology and shocking violence continue to raise questions.

His murder of 77 unsuspecting people was the worst outrage for Norway since World War II.

It was also the worst far-right attack in Europe since Italy's Bologna railway station bombing of 1980, which killed 85 and wounded hundreds.

Breivik's calculated acts of political violence took months, even years, of intricate planning. After bombing the Oslo government district he went on a shooting spree at a Labour Party youth camp on Utøya Island. It was the deadliest mass shooting by a gunman in peacetime.

Timeline

22 July 2011 Day of Attacks

14.36 The centre of Oslo is disrupted by a huge explosion, damaging the offices of the Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg, and the country's largest newspaper VG.

16.57 Two hours after the explosion in Oslo an unknown man, dressed as a police officer, arrives on Utøya island outside Oslo and travels to a youth camp organised by the ruling Norwegian Labour Party. He opens fire on the group of teenagers, who have gathered after hearing noises on the shoreline.

18.00 Police arrive on the island and proceed to apprehend the lone gunman, who has yet to be identified. The man does not resist arrest. Late in

the evening Jens Stoltenberg, the Norwegian Prime Minister, gives a press conference in which he labels the attack upon the youth camp "especially brutal – an attack of cowardice."

23 July Stoltenberg speaks of a "national tragedy" as the death toll continues to climb. 77 people are eventually reported as having lost their lives, 69 from the Utøya shootings. Anders Behring Breivik, 32, is identified by Norwegian media as the man arrested by police. Stoltenberg indicated that Breivik was part of a larger organisation, and not acting alone.

24 August 2012 After a trial in which Breivik bizarrely offers Nazi-style salutes, he admits to the killings but not "criminal guilt". The judge finds him sane and sentences him to 21 years in jail.

In a country as famously tolerant, integrated and wealthy as Norway, what could have motivated such mass murder?

Lone 'crusader'

His method was that of a "lone wolf" right-wing terrorist. But he also saw himself as part of an international crusade, a Nordic warrior who could inspire others.

First dubbed "leaderless resistance" by a radical right ideologue in 1982, the "lone wolf" tactic has remained a signature of far-right violence for three decades - one whereby the "terrorist cycle" of preparation and execution is undertaken single-handedly.

Since Breivik's killing spree, "lone wolf" attacks by right-wing extremists have continued: from a targeted killing of Senegalese traders by a CasaPound activist in Florence in December 2011 to the "hate rock" shooting rampage at a Sikh Temple by a neo-Nazi singer, Wade Michael Page.

In August 2012, in the Czech Republic, police arrested a 29-year-old man stockpiling explosives and weapons, claiming to be directly inspired by Breivik.

"Lone wolf" terrorism represents a tiny - if less detectable - fraction of terrorist attacks.

It remains difficult to accomplish - that is why Breivik's "manifesto", comprising some three-quarters of a million words, is so dangerous.

Beyond the incitement to hatred and violence, Breivik's *2083: A Declaration of European Independence* provides a do-it-yourself guide for "lone wolf" terrorism, ranging from a daily bomb-making diary to instructions on how to source materials - both logistical and material - from the dark corners of the internet.

The manifesto supersedes all previous terrorist manuals and concludes, allegedly at 12.51 on the day of Breivik's attacks: "If you want something done, then do it yourself."

He did so, chillingly and with cold determination. And his manifesto, sent to thousands of fellow far-right "patriots" in the hours before his attacks, is patently intended to inspire copycats.



Utøya, the place of the attack on the Norwegian Labour Party's youth camp. Photo: Paal Sørensen

Incitement to violence

Breivik wants his murders on 22 July 2011 to be considered a form of “terrorist PR” for his manifesto and accompanying online film.

He claims the “Knights Templar” clenched fist salute “symbolises strength, honour and defiance against the Marxist tyrants of Europe”.

From demonising rhetoric to terrorist instruction manual, Breivik’s manifesto is a call to arms for right-wing extremists that, in work on similar failed plots in the UK, I have elsewhere dubbed “broadband terrorism”.

The date 2083 refers to the 200th anniversary of Karl Marx’s death, and the 400th of the Battle of Vienna, when a Christian army halted the Ottoman Empire’s northward advance in Europe.

Breivik’s subtitle is lifted from a 2007 essay by fellow Norwegian blogger “Fjordman”. Extensive citations - often plagiarised - also refer to other anti-Muslim ideologues and groups, from the Dutch politician Geert Wilders and Steven Yaxley-Lennon’s English Defence League to the likes of Jihadwatch and Stop the Islamisation of Nations (SION).

In this sense, Breivik’s Islamophobic references are less harbingers than reformulated, stock canards that have been trundling around the far- and radical-right for more than a generation.

Religious overtones

Literally hundreds of references to Breivik’s main enemy, “Cultural Marxism”, derive from the Christian Right in the US, while its allegedly anti-Judeo-Christian offspring, “multiculturalism” - for which, read “Islamification of Europe” - appears more than 1,100 times across Breivik’s 1,513-page manifesto.

These and other terms are used to demonise European Muslims on well-networked internet sites; theirs is the language of civilisational war, not democratic politics.

His activities, of course, were not limited to online hate. He was a dues-paying member of Norway’s populist right-wing Progress party for some five years until 2004.

During that time he seems to have visited Bradford in northern England shortly after riots there in 2001, which further convinced him of the allegedly evil and “genocidal” nature of multiculturalism.

The online multi-player game World of Warcraft also became a big part of his life - sometimes he played it for as many as 16 hours a day. Players adopt fantasy roles and fight battles to earn rewards.

By 2009, Breivik was using Facebook to communicate with members of the recently formed street movement the English Defence League, and later claimed to have hundreds of EDL Facebook friends.

By 2010, Breivik was apparently in contact with at least some of the EDL leadership, and attended at least one demonstration that year. He also visited London to welcome fellow “counter-jihadist” Geert Wilders.

While very different, these networks continue to agree that - again citing 2083 - “multiculturalism is an anti-European hate ideology”.

Breivik offers a clear instance of “Christianism” - the use of travestied Christian doctrines for the advancement of violent and revolutionary views. That is no reason for anyone to demonise more than a billion worshippers of Jesus Christ. By the same token, Islamism remains a political perversion of a Muslim faith shared by a billion souls.

Such anti-liberal doctrines can be - and have been - defeated by robust discussion and debate.

(this piece was first published on BBC News, 27 August 2012)

Profile: Professor William Pierce

“Godfather of leaderless resistance”

William Pierce was America's most important neo-Nazi for three decades, until his death in 2002.



He was the founder and leader of the National Alliance, a group whose members included terrorists, bank robbers and would-be bombers.

Pierce was the movement's fiercest anti-Semitic ideologue and he built the Alliance into a money-making machine through its hate music business, Resistance Records.

Pierce was also the author of the race war novel *The Turner Diaries*. The book has been called “the bible of the racist right,” is known to have drawn many into the movement, and was a key inspiration for Timothy McVeigh's 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.

He was widely revered by neo-Nazis worldwide and even visited former BNP and NF leader, John Tyndall, at his house in Hove, on the Sussex seaside.

Groups such as Combat 18 parroted Pierce's writings and ideas for a white power uprising, hoping to emulate the atrocities contained in his novels and ‘spark’ a race war by launching attacks on minority communities in Britain.

Legacy

Pierce inspired various hate crimes, including a wave of violent robberies and murders during the 1980s carried out by the Order, a white supremacist splinter group, including the machine-gun murder of the Jewish radio talk show host Alan Berg in Denver in 1984. Pierce demurred when asked about his influence, but he was undoubtedly the movement's theoretician (although in sum his theories amounted to little more than proposing the expulsion of all blacks and Jews from America).

Pierce mostly remained hidden from view on his property, a compound in

West Virginia, where he also dabbled in quasi-religious movements, founding at one time a sect with no god called the Cosmotheist Church. He kept up a wide network of fellow extremists in South Africa, Europe and Britain.

As well as *The Turner Diaries*, he published a best-seller called *The Hunter* and dedicated it to Joseph Paul Franklin, a serial murderer who numbered among his victims two white women who had said they were going out with African Americans. Yet his aides would maintain that he was a badly misunderstood, gentle man who merely wanted to retain the US for people of European - preferably northern - descent.

In reality, he revelled in violence, as his writing shows. After the Day of the Rope, his hero comes across a hanged figure in Los Angeles wearing a placard saying: “I defiled my race.”

Pierce wrote: “Above the placard leered the horribly bloated, purplish face of a young woman, her eyes wide open and bulging, her mouth agape.” He added that “many thousands” of women were hanged around the city because they had married or lived with blacks, Jews or “other non-white males”.

In His Own Words

“After the sickness of ‘multiculturalism,’ which is destroying America, Britain, and every other Aryan nation in which it is being promoted, has been swept away, we must again have a racially clean area of the earth for the further development of our people. ...We will not be deterred by the difficulty or temporary unpleasantness involved, because we realize that it is absolutely necessary for our racial survival.”

Professor William Pierce, “What is the National Alliance?”, National Alliance website, undated

Woolwich – the Far Right Backlash

There was a large spike in anti-Muslim incidents following the murder of British soldier Lee Rigby in Woolwich on 22 May by two Muslim extremists, Michael Adebolajo and Michael Adebowale.

The murder was an outrageous act, utterly condemned by all (including almost every British Muslim organisation). The English Defence League obliged by sending 100 of their number to get drunk and hurl beer bottles at police, going on a drunken rampage in Woolwich that same evening and led by their then-frontman, Tommy Robinson.

Typifying the immediate, post-Woolwich response on social media, one EDL Facebook thread was headed: 'MESSAGE FROM TOMMY ROBINSON [EDL leader] "GET TO LONDON NOW" IF POSSIBLE'. EDL messages ran into their thousands. One wrote: "get as many of the rag-head dogs as you can lads!! much support and best wishes from ulster.. NO SURRENDER!!" Another added: "Kill any muslim u see!!!!" Whilst others said: "cause carnage on them mother fuckers!!!!!!!!!!!!" and "Kill the curry munching bastards". Others called for mosques to be attacked and burned.

A mosque in Muswell Hill, north London, was burned to the ground, the words "EDL" scrawled on its walls. An Islamic school in Chislehurst was subjected to an arson attack whilst its pupils slept. Two men were arrested after an attempt to firebomb a mosque in Grimsby. There were other mosque attacks in Braintree, Rhyl, Bletchley; then more recently swastikas were sprayed on the windows of a mosque in Worcestershire, whilst a homemade bomb exploded against a mosque wall in Walsall. In Newport Muslim graves were desecrated with swastikas and crude signs for UKIP, the BNP and NF.

Anti-Muslim hate crime monitoring project, Tell MAMA (www.tellmamauk.org), recorded 212 anti-Muslim incidents in the week following the Woolwich murder, the majority online. Campaigners and academic experts alike suggest that this online threat should not be dismissed. Muslim politician Salma Yaqoob faced a death threat on Facebook after Woolwich, with a threat to cut her throat. A Portsmouth woman was found guilty after writing 'Feeling like burning down some mosques in Portsmouth, anyone want to join me?' post-Woolwich. A Facebook user who stirred up "appalling, racist and anti-religious" hatred about burning down a Grimsby mosque was jailed for eight weeks, following the Woolwich attacks.

On the night of Lee Rigby's murder, another Grimsby man posted to his Facebook account: "Burn the mosque down the end of Legsby Avenue. That will tell the clowns in charge in this country that we ain't taking this s*** and it will start a nationwide action going." He has subsequently pleaded guilty to sending an offensive or menacing message. The mosque in Grimsby was then attacked with three petrol bombs on 26 May, after these two messages were posted. Meanwhile in Hastings an EDL supporter received a suspended jail sentence, following social media comments that "the mosque needs burning down" (in Hastings), calling on fellow EDL members to congregate in the town.

In response, police posted 24-hour armed guards around key Muslim sites in the capital. The Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, said that Islamophobic attacks in the city had risen eightfold in the days after Woolwich. His force recorded a massive +145.7% spike in 'Islamophobic crime' (the Met's definition) comparing May 2012 with May 2013 and a +31.1% spike year-on-year for the same period. The figures have fallen now, but are still far higher than they were one year ago. ACPO –

the Association of Chief Police Officers – also recorded 136 anti-Muslim incidents reported direct via its True Vision online service in the week after the murder.

Analysis of Tell MAMA's data by Teesside University suggested far right (mainly EDL) activists were linked to one-third of all online incidents. Academics such as Chris Allen of Birmingham University (who advises the Government on Islamophobia), pointed to EU-wide studies of widespread underreporting of such incidents, suggesting the true picture was much graver than reported.

The counter-attack began with two articles by Andrew Gilligan in *The Telegraph*, which claimed that a majority of incidents were online (57%) and those recorded elsewhere – against mosques, involving hijab pulling, etc – were 'minor'. He alleged that MAMA's funding was being cut by Government due to concern about its methods. The piece was circulated widely on social media. Other commentators

followed: Tony Parsons in *The Mirror*, blithely calling two Muslim women he saw in the street as "batman and batman"; Charles Moore joined again in *The Telegraph*; followed by the right-wing Commentator website; and then the Henry Jackson Society's Douglas Murray, calling any attempt to link anti-Semitism with anti-Muslim hatred "a terrible trap" and devoting a considerable amount of time to picking apart the notion of "Islamophobia" (he also once suggested the EDL was a "grassroots response from non-Muslims to Islamism"). Former Tory MP and executive editor of the Conservative Party blog, ConservativeHome's Paul Goodman, has roundly criticised Murray for his anti-Muslim attitudes.

The notorious US counter-jihadists, Robert Spencer and Pamela Geller, also leapt in, calling Tell MAMA "a hate group" and frequently linking mainstream Muslims and Islam with extremist actions, suggesting they are mandated by their religious texts to act in such a manner.



For their attackers, mosques are seen as places of “difference”



Chris Allen's research has shown that mosques are rarely just seen by as places of worship. ©Dr Chris Allen, reproduced with permission (Source: New Statesman 07 June 2013)

It remains to be seen whether the blaze which destroyed a community centre and mosque in Muswell Hill, north London this week was a reprisal attack against Muslims in Britain for the murder of drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich a fortnight ago. If so, it will be another to add to the dramatically increased number of incidents to have been reported to Tell MAMA, the government-funded third party monitoring project which records anti-Muslim attacks.

In this climate however, it is no surprise that mosques have come under attack. According to Tell MAMA, around 12 have been targeted of late, the most worrying incident being in Grimsby where three petrol bombs were thrown. This is no surprise to me though because as my research over the past decade has shown, mosques have become convenient targets onto which the fears and anxieties about Muslims and Islam that ordinary people have are projected.

From research undertaken in the Midlands, mosques are rarely seen by ordinary people as mere places of worship. Instead, they are seen as places of “difference”, physically embodying all that is perceived to be wrong or problematic about Muslims and Islam. Because of this, opposition to mosques is regularly voiced on the basis of them being seen to go against “our” culture

and “our” way of life, against who “we” think “we” are and what “we” stand for. This is something which resonates loudly with the rhetoric of some far-right groups including the English Defence League (EDL) which claims to “not let our culture and traditions be eroded... [to] preserve English values”.

Focusing on Islamophobic incidents the Midlands, my research highlighted how opposition towards mosques was growing. With Birmingham being a notable exception most likely because of its significant and well established Muslim population, this was most evident in a variety of locations on the periphery of cities: in Hanley, Nuneaton, Solihull and others, and particularly in the “Black Country”, the former industrialised area to the north west of Birmingham, where negotiations to build a new mosque in Dudley had been ongoing for a decade. Having highlighted the failings of many stakeholders – the public spats between the local authority and some Muslim organisations especially – there a vacuum was created which gave space to the far right. As one community leader I interviewed put it, this vacuum afforded the EDL an opportunity to use “Dudley as its flagship... coming here to use the mosque as an excuse”.

In the two year period I focused on Dudley, the EDL organised two significant protests in the town. On another occasion, EDL supporters barricaded themselves into the building currently on the site of the proposed mosque with the intention of broadcasting the Islamic call to prayer five times a day. Alongside this, the British National Party had won seats on the local council alongside UKIP, both parties succeeding on the back of explicit anti-mosque campaigns.

Of the community leaders in the area – both Muslim and non – I spoke to, there was a direct link: the more active the far right, the more tensions there were amongst local residents about Muslims and Islam. For them, the mosque offered the far right a convenient opportunity to exploit those fears and anxieties by

exaggerating the perceived threat the mosque – all mosques in fact – present.

And this maybe manifested itself in the fact that while the far right was at its most active in the town, there were a number of attacks on nearby mosques. So in nearby Cradley Heath, the mosque was subjected to two separate arson attacks, the second burning the mosque to the ground on Boxing Day 2009. A further stone's throw away in Langley, a building set to be taken over by the local Muslim organisation was similarly destroyed by an arson attack.

From those ordinary people I engaged with, it became clear that they could only speculate about what went on behind the closed doors of a mosque. This was clear in Dudley where one local resident opposing the proposed mosque told me how mosques are “hotbeds of extremism”. Another, more worryingly spoke about how “the minarets resemble look out posts...” before adding, “I know what they say they are but the design of the buildings seem more fortified castles than spiritual houses to me”.

In the aftermath of the bloody and barbaric incident in Woolwich, it will be very easy to exploit the pre-existent fears and anxieties that ordinary people have about mosques as also being about Muslims and Islam. Given the increased activity of those such as the EDL and BNP in recent weeks, it is likely that these fears and anxieties will be heightened and in some instances exploited. While mosques may be mere places of worship for Muslims as indeed others, it is worth remembering that for many, they represent something much more threatening and fearful.

The mosque bomber

Pavlo Lapshyn was a young PhD student resident in the UK when he killed an elderly Muslim man and launched a bombing campaign against mosques in the West Midlands during the early summer of 2013.

Pavlo Lapshyn came to the UK on 24 April 2013. Five days later the 25-year-old Ukrainian student, described by friends as shy and polite, armed himself with a knife and wandered the streets of the Small Heath area of Birmingham, which has a significant and visible Muslim population.

Just after 10pm, Lapshyn came across Mohammed Saleem, 82, a grandfather walking the few hundred yards from a mosque to his home with the aid of a stick. Lapshyn approached Saleem from behind and stabbed him three times in the back, murdering him. More than 5,000 people attended Saleem's funeral.

Pavlo Lapshyn was, at first, an unlikely candidate for murder. He had been a doctoral student at the National Metallurgical Academy of Ukraine, before coming to Britain after winning a competition to visit Coventry University and securing work experience at a company called Delcam. He stayed in a flat on an industrial estate by its offices in Small Heath.

After the murder Lapshyn bought materials from shops, the internet and market stalls to make bombs. These were hydrogen peroxide-based devices: Lapshyn used his engineering skills and bomb-making websites to construct them.

In late May 2013 Lapshyn added extremist material to his social media page, which was hosted on a Russian-language site. He also added material about Timothy McVeigh, the Oklahoma bomber who had been motivated by the extreme propaganda of neo-Nazi ideologue, Professor William Pierce, founder of the National Alliance.

On Friday 21 June, Lapshyn's first device exploded outside a mosque in Walsall, in the West Midlands. It had been packed in a children's lunchbox. Lapshyn travelled with the bomb on a bus from his flat. Having left the device set on a timer made from a mobile phone, he took the bus back to Birmingham, buying a bottle of wine on his way home. It was a day before the explosion was reported, classed as a 'terrorist incident'.

Lapshyn carefully planned his remaining attacks for Friday lunchtimes, knowing that this was the main prayer day for Muslims. After his arrest he told police that his next bomb, which he left outside a Wolverhampton mosque, had been placed because police had arrested the wrong man in connection with his Walsall attack.

In fact, police failed to recognise that a bomb was the cause of debris on a traffic island near the Wolverhampton mosque on Friday 28 June until after Lapshyn's arrest.

Detective Chief Inspector Shaun Edwards, the lead detective for Operation Clockface – the hunt for Lapshyn – told the BBC that: "He was intending to stir racial hatred. We can find no pre-planning before he came to the UK. He was very well educated. He had a really dangerous mindset of hatred for non-white people."

The final bomb attack on 12 July was the most powerful yet.

Lapshyn attacked a mosque in Tipton with a device that would have murdered and maimed worshippers had he got his timings right.

He had studied the mosque's website and timed his device to explode at 1pm during Friday prayers, which usually attracted the biggest crowd of the week.

The device was packed with 600g of 25-millimetre nails, spraying the deadly contents across a 70-metre radius with such force that nails were left embedded in tree trunks. But main prayers were delayed by one hour to 2pm that day, meaning the area was empty when the bomb exploded.

Even though police and MI5 were searching for the bomber, Lapshyn was so newly arrived in the UK, and not a "known" extremist, that they failed to detect him. CCTV revealed a suspect, but Lapshyn was not on any known databases.

After the Tipton bombing the investigation gained new urgency. Yet the phones failed to ring, despite a call by police for information and assistance from the media and the public. West

Midlands police had placed extra officers to deal with the expected deluge of information in response to such specific details about a murder and terrorist suspect. But there was nothing.

Assistant Chief Constable Marcus Beale, head of the West Midlands counter-terrorism unit, remembers it as one of the lowest points of the hunt for Lapshyn. "I believed we had a serial bomber, I had a picture, we were in the middle of Ramadan, and Friday prayers were the next day," he said in a BBC interview.

That Saturday there was also an English Defence League protest in Birmingham city centre. Concern was now reaching the highest levels of Whitehall.

Police were in contact with every mosque in the region offering security advice. Then on Thursday 18 July, there was a breakthrough. Local officers studied CCTV taken from an Asda supermarket in Small Heath. A suspect was seen carrying shopping, including a pineapple, leading police to conclude this was someone going to work in the area. They decided to visit local businesses with pictures of the suspect, as the next Friday prayer approached.

At Delcam employees recognised the man in the pictures as their work experience student.

Lapshyn was arrested and quickly confessed not only to the bombings but also to Saleem's murder. His motivation was openly racist and those who interviewed him said he was "calm, calculating and committed".

Lapshyn was by all accounts a shy, polite, normal young man, with no links to extremist groups in Ukraine, a view confirmed by West Midlands police. Part of Ukraine's Russian linguistic minority, he acted alone and seemed to have become 'self-radicalised'. Before Birmingham, there was no evidence of rightwing material on his website.

Police, and the family of the victim, are still mystified as to what set Lapshyn on his murderous path.



Photo: Blandine Le Cain

The Far Right Across Europe

- Far Right Across Europe
- Nationalist and Far Right Parties Around Europe
- Golden Dawn
- The NSU Scandal
- Geert Wilders
- The Far Right and the Internet
- Skrewdriver, Blood & Honour and the Growth of White Power Music

In the face of continued economic uncertainty, many European voters have increasingly rallied behind populist and nationalist ideas. From France's National Front to Finland's Finns Party, Italy's Five Star Movement to Hungary's Jobbik, parties that scorn 'the Establishment' have surged in the polls (though the results of the 2014 European elections suggest a mixed picture across the Continent). Most are xenophobic in nature. They are riding on a wave of discontent, fuelled by austerity programmes, immigration, tension over terrorism and fear of Muslims.

Although crude racism has made way for emphasis on cultural integration, intolerance towards minority groups often dominates the populists' increasingly sophisticated message. Geert Wilders in the Netherlands and Marine Le Pen in France are among Western Europe's most widely recognised faces from this political tendency. Profiling Le Pen, the New York Times described her as a "Kinder, Gentler Extremist". The daughter of the virulently racist Jean-Marie Le Pen – who recently uttered further anti-semitic slurs – now "pretends to defend gays, Jews, women," the NYT reported, and has re-orientated the Front National to be more economically left-wing. This has not only caught her opponents off-guard but also brought her new support from people who previously would not go near the party.

A similar story has unfolded in the Netherlands, as the anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim "movement" headed by Geert Wilders has championed gay rights, Judaism and feminism to make its politics more acceptable to Dutch voters. At the height of his popularity Wilders even issued a "10 point plan to save the West" that included calls on ethnic minorities in Western countries to sign a "legally binding contract of assimilation", and to stop the building of all mosques. He also said the right to religious freedom should not apply to Islam. In Greece, meanwhile, the

Golden Dawn party has demonstrated a violent streak in the throngs of an austerity crisis, even as its MPs entered Parliament and it gained its first MEP.

There are some exceptions to this success, of course. In the Netherlands, Wilders and his Freedom party won only 15 seats in Parliament recently, down from 24, having been punished for bringing down the previous government. In March 2014 Wilders controversially promised his party supporters he would ensure there were fewer 'Moroccans' in his country, something which went too far even for his political supporters and which led to splits and many high-profile defections from his Freedom Party. His party

also lost seats in the 2014 European elections and has formed a European electoral pact with the Front National. Likewise, in Italy, the anti-immigrant, regionalist Northern League saw its vote halved in February's general election. But the League's poor result was less striking than the earthquake detonated by Beppe Grillo, the blogger-comedian whose Five Star Movement took 25 per cent of the vote and made it impossible for two months for Italy's mainstream politicians to form a government. In Greece, too, after up to 100 disappearances of migrants and a murder linked to one of its supporters, many of Golden Dawn's leading MPs are now facing the full force of the law.

European elections 2014

According to Dutch academic and expert on the far right, Cas Mudde, there were two far right 'firsts' in the 2014 European elections:

1 two far right parties, the Danish People's Party (DFP) and the French National Front (FN), became the biggest party in a nationwide election in an EU country – although this has been the case in Switzerland (since 1999)

2 more or less openly neo-Nazi parties – the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) and the Greek Golden Dawn (XA) – for the first time entered the European Parliament

In total, far right parties significantly increased their representation in the Parliament, gaining a record 52 MEPs, up by +15 seats since the 2009 election.

Yet Mudde says that: "All this notwithstanding, it is clear that Europe as a whole wasn't hit by a far right earthquake."

In an article for the Washington Post, Mudde explains that only 10

of the 28 member states (i.e. 36 percent) elected far right MEPs.

While there was a total increase of +15 far right MEPs compared to the 2009 election, the FN alone gained an extra 21 seats, helping in part to explain this rise.

"In many ways, the success of the European far right is really the success of the FN (and to a lesser extent the DF)," Mudde argues.

Overall, far right parties gained additional seats in just six countries, while they lost seats in seven others.

According to Mudde, while two "new" far right parties entered the EP for the first time (Golden Dawn and Sweden Democrats), five lost their representation in Brussels – Ataka in Bulgaria, the British National Party in the UK, the Popular Orthodox Rally in Greece, the Greater Romania Party in Romania and the Slovak National Party in Slovakia.

You can see a breakdown of European Parliamentary "far right" results at: www.hopenothate.org.uk/2014/europe

The French president, François Hollande, has warned that Europe risks “regression and paralysis” if Eurosceptics and nationalists gain the upper hand in European parliamentary elections. His warning was born out when the FN topped the 2014 European election results in France recently.

“All the ingredients are coming together for the Front National to achieve a higher score than ever before in both the municipal and the European elections. The European elections will be a chance for people to express their discontent with everything associated with Europe, globalisation, outsourcing and so on.

Jean-Yves Camus, who is based at the Institute of International and Strategic Relations, in Paris, and is an expert on the European Far Right

In the UK, UKIP became the biggest British party in the European parliament, winning 23 seats.

Nationalist and Far Right Parties Around Europe

Austria

Party: Freedom Party

Leader: Heinz-Christian Strache

Key issues: Eurosceptic, immigration, cultural identity

Seats in Parliament: 29% (2011) / 12.7% (2014 European Election)

The Freedom Party joined Austria's coalition government in 2000 and has become a powerful force in the country. Since 2006 it has focused on anti-immigration, anti-Islam and Eurosceptic issues. In the 2010 state elections, the party garnered 25.77% of the vote, coming in second to the Social Democratic Party and doubling its seats in parliament. By March 2011, the Freedom Party had an approval rating of 29%, putting it neck-and-neck with the country's two

other major parties. Its photogenic young leader, Heinz-Christian Strache, notoriously called women in burqas “female ninjas” in 2008 and has promised to cut off funds for “bankrupt E.U. countries” if he is elected chancellor. Following elections in September 2013, it now has 21.4% of the national vote.

Belgium

Party: Vlaams Belang (Flemish Interest)

Leader: Bruno Valkeniers

Key issues: Flemish independence, multiculturalism, traditional values

Seats in Parliament: 3.67% (2014, Parliament) / 7.6% (2014, Senate) / 4.26% (2014 European election)

The party seeks full independence for Flanders (northern, Dutch-speaking Belgium) and wants strict immigration standards. Any immigrants allowed in would need to assimilate to Flemish language and culture. The party is also Eurosceptic and supports zero tolerance policing. The party won 12% of the vote in Flanders as recently as 2007, but support has waned recently with the emergence of the more moderate New Flemish Alliance. In the June 2010 elections, Party Vlaams Belang won 7.8% of the Flemish vote. It has one seat in the European Parliament.

Denmark

Party: Dansk Folkeparti (Danish People's Party)

Leader: Pia Kjaersgaard

Key issues: Immigration, Eurosceptic, traditional values

Seats in Parliament: 26.6% (2014, European Election)

It has fought against Denmark becoming a multicultural country, pushing caps on new immigration, opposing refugees, promoting assimilation of immigrants and advocating better services for elderly Danes. With a leader who is often voted Denmark's most powerful woman, the party secured 13.8% of the vote in the 2007 parliamentary election, making it the third-largest party in Denmark.

Finland

Party: Finns Party

Leader: Timo Soini

Key issues: E.U. and euro bail-outs, immigration

Seats in Parliament: 19% (2011) / 13% (2014 European Election)

The Finns Party (previously the True Finns) emerged from obscurity to capture 19% of the votes in the April 2011 election, finishing just behind the conservative National Coalition Party and the Social Democrats. Sharing populist rhetoric with other Nordic parties, its supporters are opposed to the European Union and globalism. When the two top parties came to form the current six-party coalition government, the Finns were excluded.

France

Party: Front National (National Front)

Leader: Marine Le Pen

Key issues: Protectionism, immigration

Seats in Parliament: 24.86% (2014, EU)

Led by the daughter of its controversial former head Jean-Marie Le Pen, the party won 11% of the vote in the local elections in March 2011. Since the younger Le Pen took the reins in January, the Front National's popularity has surged. Le Pen won 18% of the vote in the first round of France's 2012 presidential election, making her the third most-popular candidate. FN also holds 21 seats in the European Parliament and has recently said it was forming a European alliance with Dutch politician, Geert Wilders.

Germany

Party: Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (National Democratic Party of Germany)

Leader: Holger Apfel

Key issues: Capitalism, globalisation, Islam

Seats in Parliament: 1.5% (2013)

While Germany's oldest nationalist party has no seats in the Bundestag, the German parliament, it does hold seats in two of the country's

sixteen states. In 2003, the German government attempted to ban the NPD, but the country's Supreme Court blocked the initiative after it was revealed that the party members whose actions formed the bulk of the government's case were in fact agents of the German intelligence services. The NPD now holds a single seat in the European Parliament.

Greece

Party: Golden Dawn

Leader: Nikolaos Michaloliakos

Key issues: Virulently anti-immigrant, neo-Nazi

Seats in Parliament: Golden Dawn 6.92% (2012, Parliament) / 9.4% (2014, EU)

Support for the ultra-nationalist Golden Dawn, which has been linked to a rise in attacks against migrants in recent months, rose to 14% (which would make the group Greece's third-largest party) then dropped dramatically following the murder of a left-wing rapper by man allegedly linked to the party. The party leader and other leading members of Golden Dawn have also been arrested. The party has been linked in recent months to violent attacks on immigrants from racial minorities and its youth wing has distributed racist messages in Greek schools and organised concerts. It has also now entered the European Parliament for the first time.

Hungary

Party: Jobbik

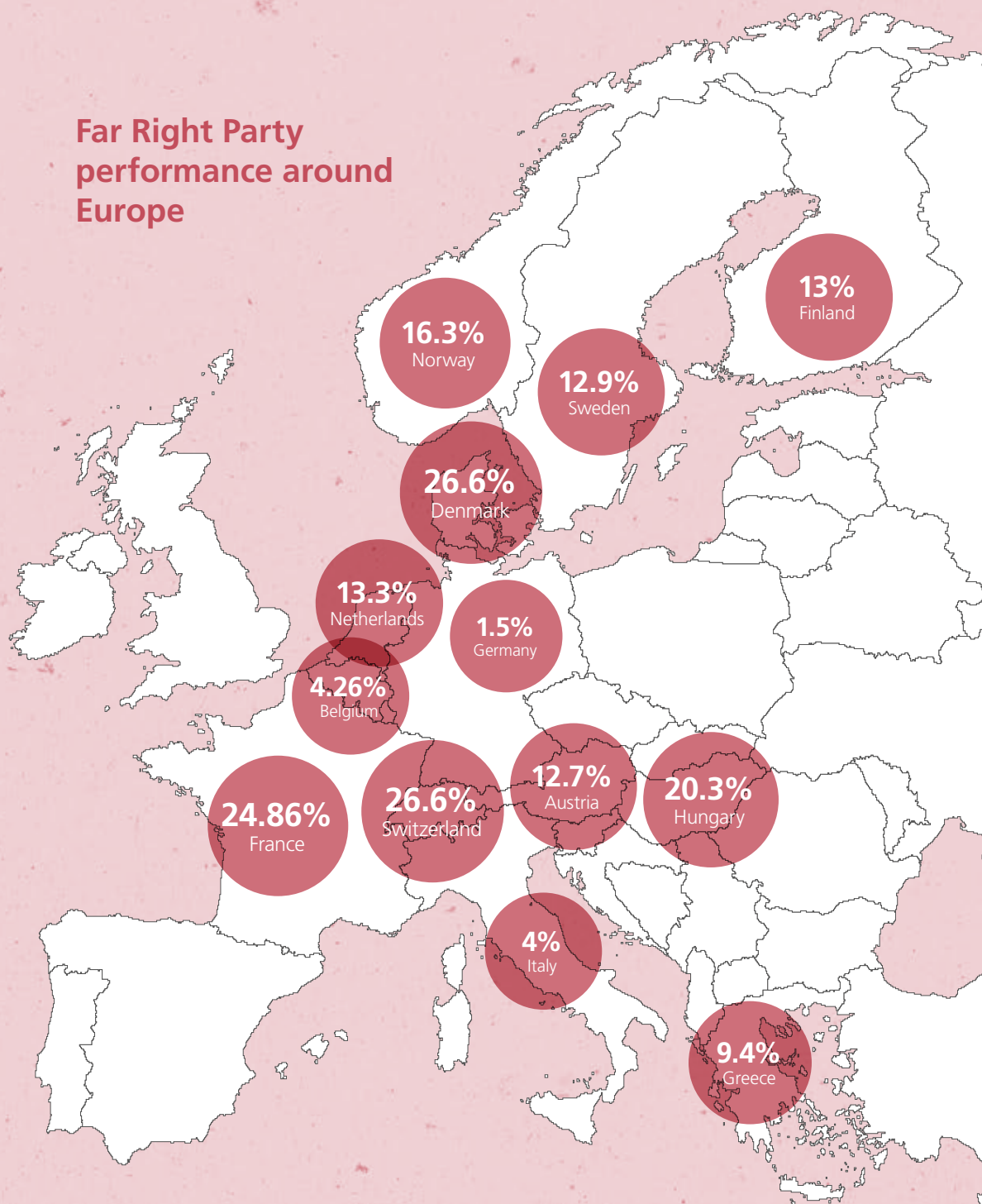
Leader: Gabor Vona

Key issues: Roma minority, anti-Semitism, homophobia

Seats in Parliament: 20.3% (2014)

Jobbik blames Hungary's Roma population for everything from petty crime to trash on the streets. Gained entry into parliament for the first time in April 2010, after securing 16.71% of the vote in general elections. The party also secured three seats in the last European Parliament elections.

Far Right Party performance around Europe



Austria

Freedom Party 29% (2011) / 12.7% (2014 European Election)

Belgium

Vlaams Belang (Flemish Interest) 3.67% (2014, Parliament) / 7.6% (2014, Senate) / 4.26% (2014 European election)

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Hungary

Jobbik 20.3% (2014)

Italy

Lega Nord (Northern League) 4% (2013) / 6.2% (2014, EU)

Netherlands

Freedom Party (PVV) 13.3% (2014, EU)

Norway

Progress Party 16.3% (2013)

Sweden

Sweden Democrats 12.9% (2014, Parliament)

Switzerland

Swiss Peoples Party 26.6% (2014)

Italy

Party: Lega Nord (Northern League)

Leader: Umberto Bossi

Key issues: Immigration, devolution

Seats in Parliament (Senate and Chamber of Deputies): 4% (2013) / 6.2% (2014, EU)

The party has called for the secession of northern Italy as a new autonomous state called “Padania” and come out against the construction of mosques. It takes a firm stance on immigration from Muslim countries, and also emphasises the fight against terrorism and other types of crime. The League was a controversial and sometimes troublesome partner in Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi’s governing coalition. In 1994, the League abandoned the partnership after less than a year in power, collapsing Berlusconi’s government and driving him from office in 1995 – it took until 2001 for him to make it back into the president’s seat. The party holds governorships in Piedmont and the Veneto region, and five seats in the European Parliament (losing four in the recent elections).

Netherlands

Party: Freedom Party (PVV)

Leader: Geert Wilders

Key issues: Anti-establishment, anti-EU, Islam, law enforcement

Seats in Parliament: 13.3% (2014, EU)

Geert Wilders single-handedly founded the Freedom Party in 2005. Despite its youth and the flamboyance of its leader – Wilders declared that juvenile offenders should be relegated to a “village for scum” – the party has achieved high popularity. In March 2011, polls showed the party with 17.6% approval, second only to the Liberal Party, which governs in a minority coalition with the Christian Democrats. Wilders has called for a ban on the Koran – which he likens to “Mein Kampf” – the burka and Halal food. However, Wilders’ party lost 11 parliamentary seats in recent Dutch elections, but he

said he would continue to fight “to protect the Netherlands against Europe, against mass immigration, against the [European] super-state.” It dropped from five seats to four in the European Parliament.

Norway

Party: Progress Party

Leader: Siv Jensen

Key issues: Immigration, free market, law and order

Seats in Parliament: 16.3% (2013)

The Progress Party, which accused attacker Anders Behring Breivik once supported, won 22.9% of the vote in the 2009 election, the best result in the party’s 38-year history. The second-largest party in parliament since 2005, it has historically been shunned by other parties. As the first to emphasise “integration politics” in Norway, the party seeks to ban the hijab in schools, and deport parents of children who wear the hijab. In recent years, its growing popularity has moved the opposition Conservative Party to say it would consider working with the Progress Party in a coalition government.

Sweden

Party: Sweden Democrats

Leader: Jimmie Akesson

Key issues: Immigration, crime, Islam

Seats in Parliament: 12.9% (2014, Parliament)

The main party tenet is that Swedish immigration and integration policies have been a failure. SD also supports the traditional nuclear family and opposes any policies that promote the agenda of the Swedish “Homosex Lobby”. With 5.7% of the votes in the 2010 elections, the Sweden Democrats won seats in parliament for the first time. The party was once more extreme, but in 2001 shed its Nazi trappings – including uniforms and swastikas – to gain mainstream appeal. It now has two seats in the European Parliament.

Switzerland

Party: Swiss Peoples Party

Leader: Christoch Blocher

Key issues: National conservatism, right-wing populist, immigration

Seats in Parliament: 26.6% (2014)

Also known as Democratic Union of the Centre, the party aims to preserve Swiss sovereignty and

social conservatism. SVP rejects the idea of Switzerland joining the European Union and any increases in government spending on welfare. Much of the party's emphasis is on immigration and homeland security policy. It has led a drive for "minaret bans". Controls 26.6% of the vote in Switzerland (2011).

Golden Dawn (Greece)

The Golden Dawn party has become notorious for its blatant anti-Semitic and xenophobic rhetoric and has been responsible for perpetrating attacks on Jews and foreigners.

It openly displays copies of "Mein Kampf," as well as other works on Greek racial superiority at party headquarters.

Party leader Nikos Michaloliakos has claimed that Nazi concentration camps did not use ovens and gas chambers to exterminate Jews during the Holocaust.

"There were no ovens – it's a lie. I believe it's a lie. There were no gas chambers either," Michaloliakos said.

The firebrand leader captured the fury of an exhausted constituency and won his party seven percent of the vote in the last Greek elections.

Now he is in jail after being accused of running a criminal organisation following the violent death of a left-wing hip-hop artist, being connected to a Golden Dawn member.

The party campaigned under the slogan "So we can rid the land of filth" and holds frequent rallies, chanting "Foreigners out of Greece!"

Furthermore, the group recently held an all-Greek blood drive and released a statement at the time saying:



"All the bottles of blood we collect will be handed over to patients we choose and to no one else. This right to choose belongs not just to Golden Dawn members, but to all volunteer blood donors."

A report by Human Rights Watch warned that xenophobic violence has reached "alarming proportions" in parts of Greece, and accuses authorities of failing to take the necessary steps to stop the trend.

Greece, the weakest member of the eurozone, has suffered harsh austerity measures, a grinding recession and unemployment levels which are now near 30%. It is also the favoured gateway for illegal immigrants into Europe, given its long coastlines and geographical position.

The NSU Scandal (Germany)

On 4 November 2011, two men shot themselves in their mobile home after a bank raid in Thuringia. Some hours later, in Zwickau in neighbouring Saxony, a house divided into flats exploded, then burst into flames.

Within hours, it turned out that these two events belonged to what has become one of the biggest scandals in post-war German history: the existence of a neo-Nazi terror gang that had, somehow undetected by police or the security services, murdered nine immigrant shopkeepers and a policewoman, robbed 15 banks and set off two bombs. After the existence of the gang and the identity of its leading members – Uwe Böhnhardt, Uwe Mundlos and Beate Zschäpe – was uncovered, video-clips and DVDs salvaged from the mobile home and the house in Zwickau confirmed that the trio who had called themselves the ‘National Socialist Underground’ had committed a wave of crimes.

It transpired that they had been living ‘underground’ since 1998. The group to which they formerly belonged had long been under surveillance: yet despite this, the three remained undetected for nearly 14 years. While there was considerable tracking and extensive use of hi-tech secret service investigations and telephone tapping which obtained, for example, the address lists of German Blood & Honour (B&H) activists – who played a key role in supporting the gang’s underground life with accommodation, health insurance cards and rented cars – the data had not been collated, or was simply ignored.

A major problem appears to have been that the police and other authorities never imagined that racism could be the leading motive for killing nine immigrants. Even a nail bomb blast in a Cologne street where mainly immigrants lived – and which showed obvious parallels to the acts of British neo-Nazi nailbomber David Copeland – did not lead to serious investigation.



Instead, again and again, the victims and their families were treated as suspects, the police arguing that the murder must be somehow related to organised crime, Turkish-Kurdish rivalry or drug dealing.

Incredibly, an officer of the Hessian secret service was actually inside an internet cafe in Kassel when its Turkish owner was shot in the head by the NSU terrorists in 2006. The agent, Andreas T, openly voiced right-wing views, and in his home village was nicknamed 'Little Adolf'. (He has since been removed from the security service.)

The NSU scandal is now part of the largest neo-Nazi trial in Germany.

Geert Wilders (Netherlands)

Geert Wilders is a deeply divisive figure. He has antagonised the Muslim world by calling for a ban on the Qu'ran, which he has likened to Adolf Hitler's Mein Kampf. Yet he was also voted politician of the year in 2007 by the Dutch political press.

His Freedom Party went from winning nine seats in the 2006 election to 24 in 2010, taking a bigger share of the vote than the Christian Democrats – the main party in the outgoing government. It has now dropped back to 15, though predictions suggest it will do well in the 2014 Euro elections.

He argues that he is only "intolerant of the intolerant".

In a speech to a 2010 counter-jihad rally against the construction of an Islamic centre near the 9/11 site, he contrasted the "forces of Jihad" with New York's tradition of tolerance, which he tied also to the Dutch traditions.

His speech echoed themes from Fitna (which roughly translates from Arabic as "strife"), his hugely controversial film which juxtaposed the Qu'ran with 9/11 and other atrocities.

No TV company in the Netherlands would broadcast the 17-minute film and some Dutch politicians tried to impose a ban before Wilders posted it on the internet in March 2008.

Dutch Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen complained the furor over Fitna could endanger Dutch companies, soldiers and residents abroad.

Asked about the impact of his film, Wilders said: "It's not the aim of the movie but people might be offended, I know that. So, what the hell? It's their problem, not my problem."

Attempts by the Freedom Party leader to carry his anti-Islam message abroad have brought him into conflict with other Western states.

The British Government tried to ban him from the UK on the grounds that he posed a threat to public security, though the move was later overruled by the courts.

Unlike other figures on the fringes of European politics, he has never been accused of anti-Semitism. On the contrary, he is a strong admirer of Israel, visiting the country frequently.

"My allies are not Le Pen or Haider..." he told The Guardian newspaper, referring to other European far-right leaders.



The Far Right and the Internet

The internet is now a significant recruiting ground for extremists, no longer isolated from others who share their beliefs.

It has provided the far-right fringe with formerly inconceivable opportunities. According to the Simon Wiesenthal Center, there are at least 14,000 social networking sites, forums, Twitter accounts, blogs, newsgroups, and other on-demand video sites supporting hate-motivated extremist groups.

One example of how the Far Right is adapting to this new social media age is the Immortal group in Germany, which emerged in 2011. Organised around Twitter and other social media, it stages unregistered rallies at night, at which its activists wear white masks, carry torches through urban areas and chant extremist slogans. Shortly after each gathering, a professionally produced video appears on YouTube. Intended to demonstrate the group's power and support, the imagery harks back to the torchlight processions of inter-war Nazism.

"Activists have embraced the internet to such an extent that it's now virtually impossible to track all the bloggers, Twitter accounts and Facebook pages that have, for them, become indispensable tools of communication," says Professor Matthew Goodwin of Nottingham University.

In February 2012, populist anti-Muslim Geert Wilders's party in the Netherlands launched a website targeting Polish immigrants. It invited Dutch citizens to report Eastern Europeans for doing anything from "taking your parking spaces" to "taking your jobs."

Yet the appearance of the internet in extreme Right communities is not new. White racist groups started to use computer networks in the mid-1980s and by the mid-1990s they had seized

upon the internet as a political tool. The BNP was the first party in the UK to make significant use of the Net; although today it is in decline, it still has over 100,000 Facebook 'likes'.

As well as allowing users to avoid cynical traditional media, it allows such movements the ability to sell merchandise, recruit, bypass national laws and boundaries, and most importantly offers the chance to create an effective sense of 'community' – research has shown that many of us tend to congregate around self-identifying 'tribes' on the internet. The same is true of extreme Right followers. A virtual community offers a set of shared values, norms, meanings, and a sense of history, free from outside pressure, examination or ridicule.

The granddaddy of them all is Stormfront.org, which was launched in 1995 as the first major hate site on the web. Prior to this point, these groups were only able to reach small audiences and were restricted to spreading messages through books, newspapers, magazines and newsletters.

Today far-right recruiters roam online chat rooms, post messages, and track user demographics. The counter-jihad networks in North America and Europe increasingly rely on social media to organise their international demonstrations and meetings. Matthew Goodwin, an academic expert studying the extreme Right, has complained that far-right supporters have used Twitter to organise a hate campaign against him and his work. The White House has recently argued that popular social media sites like Facebook and Twitter play an important role in "advancing violent extremist narratives".

These groups have also developed child-friendly websites with jokes, cartoons, colouring books, and "assistance" with homework. Teenagers are sometimes attracted through sophisticated video games

and aggressive white power music. The internet is also important in 'self-radicalisation' of lone extremists (lone wolves), who can access the theories, communities and ideologues that support their world views without any physical interaction at all.

Stormfront.org

Created by former Alabama KKK boss and long-time white supremacist Don Black in 1995, Stormfront was the first major hate site on the Internet.

Claiming more than 130,000 registered members, the site has been a very popular online forum for white nationalists and other racial extremists. One activist described the forum as "like a second home". Black's son, whom he used to take to all his white nationalist meetings, has recently and very publicly disowned the beliefs espoused by his father.

In Its Own Words

"Our mission is to provide information not available in the controlled news media and to build a community of White activists working for the survival of our people."

*From "Guidelines for Posting,"
Stormfront.org*

"White Pride Worldwide"

Stormfront.org motto



The White Power Music Scene

'White Power' music is an important part of the glue for a violent sub-culture of neo-Nazis across the UK, eastern Europe, Russia and the USA.

According to Heidi Beirich of the Southern Poverty Law Center, a prominent US civil rights organisation: 'The white power music industry is a leading source of money and young recruits for many of the Western world's most dynamic racist revolutionaries. Since the early 1990s, it has grown from a cottage industry into a multimillion-dollar, worldwide enterprise.'

Wade Michael Page, a committed white supremacist who shot and killed six people at a Sikh temple in Wisconsin, USA, in August 2012 (mistaking them for Muslims), was a member of the Hammerskins, a hardcore racist skinhead group. He had been heavily involved in the white power music scene, playing in a number of white power bands over the previous 12 years, most prominently groups called 'Definite Hate' and 'End Apathy'.

Page was just one of hundreds of white supremacist musicians listened to by thousands of white supremacists across the world, sometimes at underground gigs (with many bands and their networks banned in several European countries), but more often enabled by the internet and music-sharing networks.

'For listeners, white power music is not simply entertainment,' says the Anti-Defamation League in America. 'It is music with a message, a medium used to express an ideology suffused with anger, hatred and violence.'

The bands' own names defiantly express feelings of hate or violence: Aggravated Assault, Angry Aryans, Attack, Definite Hate, Final Solution, Force Fed Hate, Fueled by Hate, Hate Crime, Jew Slaughter and White Terror, among others.

Behind them are small record labels or distributors that specialise in white power music: Label 56, Tightrope Records, Final Stand Records, and others. Many bands are associated with a racist skinhead group such as Volksfront, the Vinlanders Social Club or, especially, the Hammerskins.

The Hammerskins dominate much of the white power music scene. Many bands are Hammerskins-affiliated, while the group itself organises hate music concerts, including Hammerfest, its largest annual event.

The music comes in many flavours. The oldest is a racist form of Oi!, associated with the original skinhead subculture from Britain. Also popular is hatecore, a white supremacist

version of hardcore punk. A white supremacist form of death metal music, known as National Socialist Black Metal Music or NSBM, has become popular. There are other small sub-genres of hate music; even a few white power hip hop artists, though most white supremacists dislike hip hop.

White power music conveys many messages – hatred towards Jews, immigrants, nonwhites, Muslims, gays and left-wingers. But songs can convey other messages, too. Some white power songs may glorify heroes or martyrs of the white supremacist movement. Others are essentially self-promotional, praising a group or leader.



Skrewdriver, Blood & Honour and the Growth of White Power Music

The classic skinhead look – Doc Martens boots, red suspenders and shaved heads – first appeared on British streets in the late 1960s. Early skinhead music was a spinoff of black music such as (Caribbean) ska and rocksteady.

That began to change in 1982, when Skrewdriver, a legendary band led by Ian Stuart Donaldson, held the first of a series of white power concerts under the banner of “Rock Against Communism” (this was a response to “Rock Against Racism” concerts held by punk rock bands). Earlier, in the late 1970s, Donaldson had begun publishing the magazine *Blood & Honour*, named after the inscription on the daggers of Hitler’s SS youth corps. Donaldson, who died in a 1993 car crash, would go on to inspire racist skins all over the world, including America.

During Skrewdriver’s heyday in the 1980s, several European labels sold white power music, often alongside anti-racist punk albums. But racist music didn’t really take off internationally until after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Between 1992 and 1997, the international racist music industry mushroomed. In Sweden there was one white power concert held in 1992. In 1995, there were 20. White power labels, including Sweden’s Ragnarock Records and Nordland Records, started selling their wares in many European nations. Michigan-based Resistance Records, formed by Canadian George Burdi and others, became the largest American label and even produced its own glossy magazine.

The first groupings in what would later become Hammerskin Nation, one of the most violent skinhead groups in the world today, emerged in Dallas by 1989.

During the same period, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, US skinheads left a trail of ruthless beatings and stabbings – and some 40 murders.

Said Heidi Beirich: ‘The culture that accompanied the lucrative racist music business was violent. In internecine disputes, neo-Nazis in the industry have stomped each other with boots, beaten each other with baseball bats and tortured each other with hammers. They have hired hit men and burned down buildings. Racist music fans have bombed children and bludgeoned people with iron pipes; they have drowned LGBT people and executed police officers.’

‘In Europe, where such music is generally illegal, governments in recent years have deported racist aliens, raided white power CD caches and banned some neo-Nazi music organisations. Such pressure has driven racist music underground even as profit margins have shot up for what is seen as illegal contraband. Increasingly, this crackdown has made the United States, with its First Amendment protections for even extremely violent hate speech, a haven for the racist music business. Now, with the rise of digital music, Internet-based “radio” shows stream racist music around the world at all hours of the day. In the United States, racist music from more than 100 domestic bands, plus hundreds more foreign ones, is available on line.’

“Racist music is big business, almost certainly the main source of income for many radical groups.

*Heidi Beirich,
Southern Poverty Law Center*



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Source: *Socialist Worker* 15 October 2013

After English Defence League leader quits - is racism in retreat?

Following the resignation of EDL leader Tommy Robinson, Weyman Bennett of Unite Against Fascism looks at how fascist groups build – and how anti-fascist movements can push them back

The resignation of Tommy Robinson and Kevin Carroll, the two leaders of the English Defence League (EDL), is good news for the anti-fascist movement. The two announced their resignation from the group at a press conference last week.

Robinson said that the EDL had become increasingly influenced by neo-Nazis and claimed they did not represent what he stood for.

It's true that the EDL is riddled with fascists. Unite Against Fascism (UAF) has argued this since the EDL was set up in March 2009.

It was formed in the £500,000 Barbican flat of businessman and Islamophobe Alan Ayling, also known as Alan Lake, to organise street confrontations targeting Muslims. It was built and maintained by fascists.

Chris Renton, who ran the EDL website, was a member of the Nazi British National Party (BNP). Another BNP member, David Cooling, did admin work on the Luton EDL Facebook site.

But it is laughable for Robinson to claim that this is not what he stood for. Robinson – real name Stephen Yaxley-Lennon – is an ex-member of the BNP. He has led countless demonstrations terrorising Muslims and boasted in 2011 that he was prepared to break up the student protests.

In Robinson's resignation statement he tellingly described street demonstrations not as wrong but as

“no longer productive”. By this he means that, at every turn, mass anti-fascist demonstrations confronted the EDL. Their hate-filled invective was challenged.

Robinson has not experienced a “sudden conversion on the road to Damascus”. Instead his resignation represents a retreat from an attempt to build a mass organisation that could control the streets.

Such shifts and turns are common in fascist organisations. Fascists ultimately aim to seize power and smash all forms of democracy.

They are marked out from racist and far right movements in general because they pursue a dual strategy. They want to build up gangs of street thugs that can attack minorities and the left while also fighting to win political legitimacy.

Opposition, along with tensions in this dual strategy, can force fascist groups to alter their emphasis.

For instance, attempts by fascists to organise openly were often met with revulsion in the decades following the Second World War. So fascists in France, led by Le Pen, stopped openly praising Hitler to try and win influence through legitimate channels.

Instead they claimed to be nationalists concerned about immigration.

Shattered

In Britain the BNP was, until recently, relatively successful in winning elections. It broke through when it won three council seats in Burnley, Lancashire, in 2002. Mass campaigning against the Nazis has since shattered their electoral strategy.

But its initial success meant party leaders had to rein in hardcore elements and retreat from building on the streets to protect the party's image. The EDL grew to fill the vacuum this created.

Fascists don't stop being fascists when they put on suits and stand in elections. They try and hide their politics in order to win votes and build up influence.

But it's vital that anti-fascists oppose them however they choose to organise.

The EDL has at times managed to pull off some big protests. Over 1,200 EDL supporters ran amok in an anti-Muslim riot in Stoke in January 2010. Around 2,000 protested in Blackburn in April 2011. Five mosques were vandalised after the protest, with the initials “BNP” and “EDL” spray painted on them.

But several high profile mass anti-fascist mobilisations damaged the racists' morale.

The EDL's first rampage took place in Luton in April and May 2009. But when they returned in May 2012 only a few hundred supporters showed up. Some 2,000 UAF protesters marched against them.

Some in the anti-fascist movement failed to recognise the danger that the EDL posed when it launched. The Hope Not Hate group argued that anti-fascists should ignore the EDL and it would go away.

This idea has now been shown to be completely wrong. UAF was right to oppose the EDL every time it took to the streets. We have played a major role in splitting this racist movement.

It was right to create a broad based campaign. From the start UAF was backed by the likes of Peter Hain MP, Glyn Ford MEP, Muslim groups and national trade unions.

This broad campaign helped to create a crisis for the EDL that it hasn't managed to recover from.

Reorganise

Robinson's resignation is a blow to the EDL, but it doesn't mean the EDL is finished. Just two days after Robinson's departure, the regional organisers of the EDL met to reorganise.

They elected Tim Ablitt, a south west EDL organiser, as chair and agreed to go ahead with planned EDL demonstrations in Bradford and Exeter. Around 250 racists turned out for the EDL protest in Bradford last Saturday.

And it certainly doesn't mean that fascists won't form new organisations in the future. Helen Gower, Tommy Robinson's "personal assistant", claimed last week that, "A new group, that isn't street-based, is going to be formed."

"Tommy is definitely going to be in the new group, and Kevin will be in it too."

Mainstream politicians have created a political climate that helps groups such as the EDL to flourish. David Cameron and his Tory government have attacked multiculturalism, scapegoated migrants and pushed an Islamophobic agenda.

Home secretary Theresa May declared yet another clampdown on immigration just last week. All of this boosts the fascists and makes every racist more confident.

Depressingly many in the Labour Party leadership have either ignored these attacks or at worst aped them.

Fascism will remain a threat as long as we live in a system wracked by crisis and racism is used to divide us.

But anti-fascists have shown, once again, how it is possible to drive back fascist groups. Everyone who wants to stop the growth of fascism should learn these lessons for the future.

“**Sharia legalises paedophilia and that Islam was “fuelling” a “global war/Holocaust on Christians”.**

Stephen Lennon, comments on Twitter, following his resignation from the EDL

'No Platform' outdated?

For many years, the standard response from anti-fascists was to refuse to share a speaking platform with anyone deemed to be "fascist" or from a far-right movement.

In 2012, HOPE not hate's director Nick Lowles reversed that decision. He said that the anti-fascist tradition of

never giving extremism a platform had become old-fashioned.

"Of course I still would not give a platform to Nick Griffin or the BNP," he said, "but others do and enforcing it is no longer a central plank of our work."

"There's been a long history in the anti-fascist movement of "no platform", but a lot of those principles have become outdated, because of new technology, people have a platform online."

He said that groups such as the BNP had won elections, and so they had a platform regardless of whether anti-fascists agreed or not.

Twitter and other forms of social media had also circumvented the restrictions of a no-platform policy. That in turn has also led to more calls for freedom of expression and challenging views in (online) debate, rather than out-and-out censorship.

"I'm not going to sign up to a Twitter debate with Griffin, that's beyond the pale. But at the same time we need to do more to take on their ideas in the blogosphere, there are ideas are out there in swathes. Or we sit on the sidelines, condemn them, and refuse to engage, that's when we look like the pro-censorship group," Lowles said.

In Lowles' view, hate groups were changing and not all fell within an easily definable "fascist" description.

"This is especially the case with the emerging anti-Muslim extremists, those in the self-defined counter-jihad movement. And it is these groups and individuals who are a far more dangerous threat to local communities than the tiny neo-Nazi parties like the British People's Party or the Racial Volunteer Force.

"The more controversial things they say, the more attention they get. It's actually easier with people like Nick Griffin and David Irving. But there's mainstream hatred of Muslims all over Twitter. We have to be in the argument, expose their ideas."

Facing down the far right threat

Magnificent Mobilisation Against EDL in Tower Hamlets

Source: UAF, September 2013

More than five thousand people joined a Unite Against Fascism (UAF) and United East End (UEE) demonstration to stop the racist English Defence League (EDL) entering Tower Hamlets.

The EDL, who had initially promised to mobilise thousands, were left embarrassed when only 750 racists turned out on the day. Their demonstration was disrupted by drunkenness and violence as they targeted each other when it became clear their racist march would not make it to Tower Hamlets.

In contrast, local mosques, trade unions, and community organisations mobilised thousands of people onto Whitechapel Road to protect the East London Mosque which had been threatened by the EDL. The UAF rally highlighted the strength of multiculturalism in the borough, people from different cultural, religious and political backgrounds were determined to stand together in the face of racism.

UAF groups from across the country, including the South East coast, the Midlands, and as far afield as Wales, also joined the counter-demonstration. But the majority of the mobilisation were themselves local residents angry at EDL attempts to divide them.

When news reached Altab Ali Park that Tommy Robinson had been arrested, and that the EDL had turned away early from their rally, cheers went up throughout the demonstration. Protestors carried a banner saying, "Tower Hamlets United Against Racism" and led a victory march along Whitechapel Road to the East London Mosque. Marchers made it clear, if the EDL were to return, they would too.

Weyman Bennett, Joint Secretary of Unite Against Fascism, said: "Today highlighted the strength of unity,

when they tried to divide us, we stood together. Every section of the community stood together when the fascists threatened to march. This was another good day in the struggle against the racists.

"In the past weeks, mosques and Islamic community centres have been attacked. Today we sent a message that this must stop. We must recreate this success everywhere the EDL plans to go. In local areas we need to build the broadest possible alliances to block them from marching. We will stand with an community threatened by racism and fascism."

Tower Hamlets Mayor, Lutfur Rahman, said: "Tower Hamlets is a vibrant and diverse borough which I am proud to call home. Like many other areas of our country, there are problems such as unemployment and poverty but the EDL blame 'others' for our country's problems in an attempt to divide us."

Owen Jones, writer and journalist, told the crowds: "Wherever the menace of Islamophobia emerges, we must drive it back. Today this is our message to the EDL; we are one community. We will not rest until we drive this poison off the streets of this community."

What they said (UEE press conference)

At a press conference in Tower Hamlets before the EDL March, Dr Glyn Robbins, representing United East End, said that his family had lived in the area for over 200 years.

"But that doesn't give me more rights than anyone else in this area. This area is changing and it always has but the EDL have a problem with change. The people who live here do not.

"The Mosques here are open to local people to visit and they do a lot to build relations with the wider community.

"The EDL intends to come into this area – and it seems they are going to be coming – they are a clear and present

danger to our community. They come with a message of not just hatred and bigotry but also violence.

"Our organisation, United East End, includes community and faith groups and trade unions and Rainbow Hamlets, the Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender group, who are not here today but they are very much part of our community."

Cllr Rachel Saunders, deputy leader Tower Hamlets Labour Group, said: "They won't march through our community," she said. "We will make sure the police take responsibility to make sure they do not. Our MP Jim Fitzpatrick is fighting for a ban on the EDL."

Dr Abdullah Faliq, former Deputy Secretary of Islamic Forum of Europe said, "the EDL threat is real but our united response as a community is crucial to defeating the EDL. Tower Hamlets has a rich history of thwarting the racists and fascists, I confident we will stop them from entering this borough, where we are proud of our diversity and unity."

Weyman Bennett, joint leader of Unite Against Fascism, said the UAF has been opposing the EDL since 2010: "The EDL say they are opposed to Islam but they attack everybody and they are trying to divide communities."

He spoke about the community centre in Muswell Hill that was burnt out and he had just visited the Harlow Muslim Centre the night before, which had suffered an arson attack – where the attackers had tried to drill into the gas supply to set their charges.

"These people used to attack synagogues; now they attack Mosques," he said. "If they are allowed they will end up attacking everyone."

Leon Silver, of East London Central Synagogue, said that Tower Hamlets, or Stepney as it used to be known, has been home to wave after wave of immigrants for centuries; it is the first port of call for those coming into London.

"In 1905 they passed the Aliens Act, which was aimed at Jewish communities.

What was said about Jews then they are saying about Muslims now.

"Every wave of immigrants into the East End has in time integrated into the local community. But they have not assimilated; they have kept their culture and identity and added it to the local mix, which becomes ever richer for it.

"Outsiders like the EDL just don't get it.

"In the 1930s Oswald Mosley tried to come into the East End to spread division and hate and to attack the Jewish immigrant population. But the whole population came out to stop him, including the Irish dockers.

"And when the EDL come in to attack our Muslim brothers and sisters we will all come out to defend them."

Dilowar Khan, representing the East London Mosque spoke on the history of the Islamic community in east London, which has existed for over a century now. "We are no longer immigrants, we are part of the community and we don't have another home to go to, so we are staying. We are part and parcel of the community here.

"The Mosques in this country play a very positive role in turning young people into good citizens."

The Reverend Alan Green, chair of Tower Hamlets Inter-Faith Forum, said he had been a Church of England vicar in Tower Hamlets for 15 years.

"The EDL claim to speak for me," he said, "when they say they are getting rid of Muslim oppression. But I am privileged to live here among the biggest Muslim community in London. I do not feel oppressed at all by the Muslim community in the east end but I do feel oppressed by the EDL threatening to divide my community and sow hatred.

"They are all outsiders and they just don't understand what it is to live here. They are very dangerous and they should not be allowed in this borough or anywhere near Tower Hamlets."

Case study

United East End



Interview with **Dr Glyn Robbins**,
co-ordinator

What is United East End and how did it come to be set up?

United East End (UEE) is an informal umbrella group comprising community and campaign groups, faith organisations and trade unions from Tower Hamlets. UEE was set up in May 2010 in response to a threatened EDL march through the borough.

How effective has it been, in your view, and what has it achieved?

The EDL has planned marches through Tower Hamlets in 2010, 2011 and 2013. On each occasion they were prevented from doing so and UEE has been at the forefront of campaigns that challenged the EDL's message of division and asserted that Tower Hamlets is 'No Place for Hate'.

UEE, in conjunction with Unite Against Fascism, Islamic Forum of Europe and other community groups, organised large, peaceful counter-demonstrations that attracted thousands of people

from a wide range of backgrounds. We have succeeded in ensuring that Islamophobia and related prejudice are seen as an issue - and a threat - to the whole community. In so doing, we have confounded some of the lazy, often media-driven, stereotypes about Islam in general and the East London Mosque in particular, for example, local LGBT and Jewish groups have been a vital component of UEE's work and have always been warmly welcomed at the ELM/LMC.

If UEE did not march, would that make any difference to the outcome – surely the police would prevent the EDL entering Tower Hamlets? Why is it necessary to have a physical presence on the streets?

I have started each of the three rallies by saying 'If we weren't here - they would be' and I absolutely believe that. Experience from around the UK is that the police do not prevent the EDL from marching, even in places that are similar to Tower Hamlets in terms of their ethnic diversity. There are complex legal arguments about what can and cannot be legally prohibited and of course, there is an over-arching issue of freedom of speech, assembly etc. UEE can and has taken a view on some of these questions, but it is very easy to be distracted by them, allow them to become divisive issues within our ranks and demobilise/demoralise. In the end, the police would be the first to agree that it's not their job to challenge what the EDL represents – that's our job and when we're faced with the prospect of them marching through our streets, spouting a message of hate and threatening violence, it is our responsibility to stand against them and in defence of our friends, neighbours and places of worship.

What lessons have you learned about building a coalition to 'defend' an area? And is this physical defence we are talking about, or more an issue of 'togetherness' and moral support between differing elements of a community?

More the latter than the former. UEE has always said that our aim is a peaceful demonstration of community unity. We have learned many lessons, but I think the main one is to be resolute about our 'core values', so we demand the right to directly oppose the EDL and in so doing, we reject any attempt to portray what we do as equivalent to what the EDL do. It is the EDL who should be marginalised and heavily policed because that reflects the nature of their organisation and what it stands for. In building a united front against the far-right it is essential that people are prepared to leave their other differences aside and focus on the common enemy of bigotry and racism.

What problems come with running such a coalition of groups and how do you overcome them – any examples?

Many, but over time I've found that the problems reduce as trust and mutual respect increase. Certainly in the first year we had some very sharp differences of opinion about the correct tactics to adopt, but in the end there has been a clear consensus within UEE that encouraging physical confrontation could cause lasting damage to our community and be counter-productive. Similarly, UEE absolutely rejects the 'stay at home' message that has been advanced by some in the past. Another difficult issue has been differing perspectives on the question of legal bans of EDL activities, but particularly in 2013, we have decided not to allow this to become a divisive issue.

In your view, what role do faith groups have in preventing the rise of extremism and hatred?

Very important. I'm an atheist myself and never make any secret of this, but it is one of the greatest strengths of UEE that we welcome all faiths and none. I think this idea is best summarised by the Rev'd Alan Green who coined the slogan 'Whose mosques? - Our mosques!' It is essential that we do not allow the threat of Islamophobia to be only an issue for Muslims, any more than anti-Semitism should only be an issue for Jews, or homophobia should only be a concern for gay people.

Why do far-right groups have such a (particularly) negative view of Islam and Muslims, and especially the East London Mosque?

Three main answers, at a global, national and local level, but there are lots of complex issues that relate to them. First, since 9/11 anti-Islamic sentiment has become legitimised by the dishonest, manipulative and ignorant policies pursued by 'western' governments and the media that supports them. Second, there is a fear of the stranger that is as old as time, but has been pronounced in the UK, again with succour from politicians and journalists who exploit fear and ignorance for their own ends, particularly at times of economic recession. The ELM/LMC, because of the place it occupies, has been a particular target for some of these sentiments, but this is aggravated by the complex character of Tower Hamlets politics.



Case study

The UK Government's Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group

The cross-government Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group met for the first time in January 2012. The group brings together leading representatives from the Muslim community, academics and government departments and makes recommendations on what more can be done to reduce anti-Muslim hatred.

The working group's objectives include focusing on the role of the media and tackling hate crime on the Internet, and, from an international perspective, highlighting the role Muslims played in World War I and exploring ways of commemorating the massacre at Srebrenica.

The group is modelled on the hugely influential cross-government working group on anti-Semitism, set up by the previous Labour government for the Jewish community, and chaired by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Responsibilities

The independent members of the group have decided to focus initially on six areas of work:

- **Media:** promoting more fair, accurate and balanced reporting on Muslims within the British media
- **Evidence:** improving our understanding of anti-Muslim hatred
- **Outreach:** improving the reporting of hatred through community engagement
- **Internet:** exploring solutions for addressing anti-Muslim hatred on the internet
- **World War One:** using the commemoration of the centenary to highlight the role played by Muslim soldiers in fighting for Britain

- **Srebrenica:** commemorating the genocide in Srebrenica to ensure lessons are learned for the future
- **Woolwich:** the Group has been asked to refocus their priorities in light of the Woolwich attack and the aftermath

Membership

The group comprises:

- A secretariat provided by the DCLG
- Officials from other relevant Government departments
- Independent members acting in a personal capacity, including academics and members of the Muslim community

Government members include:

- Department of Culture Media & Sport
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- Research, Information and Communications Unit, Home Office
- Crown Prosecution Service
- Home Office
- Ministry of Justice
- Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism, Home Office
- Government Equalities Office
- Department for Transport
- Department for Education
- Attorney General's Office
- Business, Innovation and Skills

Independent members are:

- Akeela Ahmed
- Dr Chris Allen
- Imam Qari Asim
- Iftikhar Awan
- Iqbal Bhana
- Dr Matthew Goodwin
- Sarah Joseph
- Nick Lowles
- Fiyaz Mughal
- Sarah Joseph
- Mudassar Ahmed

Akeela Ahmed,
independent member and
ex-chair of the Muslim Youth
Helpline, comments:

'In general I think it is very positive that the group was set up. At times it can feel like progress is slow, however I think this is part of working with government, which I am used to. As an independent member I can put forward my views on what I feel needs addressing, what is positive whilst also remaining able to be critical if required.

'Baroness Warsi was very good when there were a spate of attacks of mosques and Muslims post-Woolwich: she listened, took on board concerns and I was impressed with how she already had an awareness of what people on the ground were saying.

'There have been some key achievements this year, most notably the commemorating the genocide in Srebrenica which is hugely important in demonstrating the dire consequences of hatred.



“A lot more work needs to be done and it can feel like there is an overwhelming number of issues that need to be addressed urgently. However we have to prioritise. For my part, I am keen for community engagement and work on bridging the gap between British Muslims and those who would sympathise with the EDL, as well as ensuring anti-Muslim attacks are recorded by the Police correctly, and finally safety for Muslim schools and buildings.

Case study

Importance of building a campaign



Nick Lowles,
director, HOPE not hate,
www.hopenothate.org.uk
[@hopenothate](https://twitter.com/hopenothate)

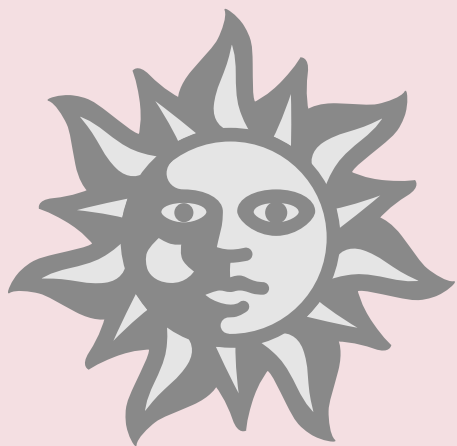
Born out of the Searchlight anti-fascist organisation, HOPE not hate (HnH) is a network of local groups – trades unions, community groups, faith groups, and concerned citizens, as well as MPs, councillors and noted celebrities – united in opposition to the far-right British National Party (BNP) and the hooligan-dominated English Defence League (EDL).

HnH mobilises thousands of volunteers every election, and has tens of thousands of followers on its Facebook group. Its director Nick Lowles explains:

“We had to do everything on a small budget. We started in Barking & Dagenham, Yorkshire, and then Stoke – we picked our target areas quite carefully, knowing where the BNP were likely to be strongest.”

“We started with a training seminar to give people a basic idea what’s happening in their community – re. the BNP – and to buy into our campaign. HnH is all about training. The support we give is training, and logistics, but most of the ‘action’ comes from within the communities themselves – we’re not doing that, they are.”

Lowles adds: “Doing this then gave us a large numbers (of people) campaigning in the community. Particularly trade unions: we got them to see their members on the ground as a resource.”



HOPE not hate

There are three key elements to developing HnH's strategy:

1 Building a community campaign

(i) Community campaign – organising and mapping out in the community.

"We identify community leaders and then train them, for example local church leaders," says Lowles. "They know who the main people are in their own congregations. The Christian community was very important in the battle for Barking and Dagenham, for example, where we had a strong black African community, from countries such as Nigeria, as well as many recently-arrived east European Catholics from countries like Poland.

"We researched and found the main community groups, then the local non-governmental organisations, the mosques – everyone who was in any way against the BNP. We were getting these people – these leaders of the existing networks and organisations – to reach out to the rest of the people on the estates, the other members of the local community.

"Our job was to build bonds of common interest between everyone. We brought the 'old' Barking community together with the trade unions and the 'new' community from Africa and eastern Europe."

(ii) Trade unions – Getting local trade union members to understand what voting BNP *meant*, what would happen to the area if the BNP got control of the local council.

(iii) Showing the inefficiency of the BNP performance on the council – "Not only was this important, as

it was true, it also motivated local activists to then stand for other political parties themselves, something they might otherwise not have done. We just provided that little bit extra in the process. The idea was to help rejuvenate the interest in local democracy and participating in politics."

2 Online campaign

HOPE not hate is known nationally for its large online presence. Its Facebook group alone has more than 66,000 members.

"Doing any online campaign is just like mobilising any opportunities. However, you can't replace traditional campaigning with online campaigns alone. You still need face-to-face meetings, phoning people up ... so what we do is use very modern tech to mobilise people in a very traditional way (getting one person to call up, via phone, 10 people in their area)."

3 Targeting campaign

"This in our experience is also key," says Lowles, "getting key sections of the community out in support of your campaign. For example, we know through market research that women are twice as likely to vote against the BNP as men. They are much more against violence than men. So we produce literature for women that will appeal and interest them."

"In addition, we produced specific leaflets for the Muslim community, plus received endorsements from the Christian community."

Reprinted from the Cordoba Foundation: Introduction to Lobbying guide

Case study

Enough Coalition Against Islamophobia



Interview with **Shazia Arshad**,
Secretary. @enoughcoalition

What is the Enough Coalition?

The Enough Coalition Against Islamophobia (EC) is a broad coalition of organisations which campaign against Islamophobia in the UK. We range from anti-racism groups, to mosques, to anti-racism campaigners and activists. The network was established in 2011 as a direct response to growing Islamophobia in the UK. The launch event was held in east London, following attempts by the EDL to march in Tower Hamlets.

As a network, we aim to highlight issues of Islamophobia in the media, in politics and deal with issues around community security. This has involved being part of campaigns against the far-right English Defence League (EDL) to organising events.

What has the Coalition achieved?

One of our biggest achievements has to be the establishment of the Islamophobia Awareness Month (IAM), which launched in November 2012. This November (2013) will be our first anniversary. The month is a really important initiative – it gives a host of organisations the opportunity to band together under one banner to raise awareness of the issues that we all campaign on. We really hope that within a short space of time the month will take off and not only raise awareness, but actually tackle a lot of the issues facing Muslims in the UK today.

Do you view the extreme Right here as a threat, or as a failed force?

I wouldn't call them a threat, the reality is that they are a small minority, but neither can they be dismissed as a failed force. The Far Right in the UK seeks to stir up hatred and discord amongst communities across Britain: as long as they go unchallenged they will continue to spread their pernicious poison into areas of social deprivation and tension.

Where do you feel the main threat lies now: in violent far-right groups (such as the EDL and its splinter groups), in political movements (BNP, UKIP) or among mainstream politicians and/or media?

Definitely the mainstream, the problem is that the mainstream discourse has become, almost subconsciously, Islamophobic when talking about Muslims or Islam. The idea that there are negative connotations associated with Islam has become so accepted by mainstream society because of their continuous use in the media and by politicians. This then means that when far right groups and political movements use the same language and the same discourse, which they do, it is seen as somehow acceptable. It then encourages the Far Right to be accepted by the mainstream and feeds the Islamophobic monster even further.

To what extent does Islamophobia (or anti-Muslim hatred) 'bleed' beyond the boundaries of the traditional Far Right? Does that make tackling it a harder task (if it is widespread)?

It's as I mentioned before, Islamophobia has become part of the mainstream discourse. A study by academics at the University of Lancaster looked at how many times a negative word preceded or succeeded the word Muslim in newspaper headlines and

stories. The results were shocking, yes, but the actual problem was that the language being used has meant that it is now completely acceptable to talk about Muslims or Islam in a negative or discriminatory way. And yes, it makes tackling it much harder. It means we are not talking about getting one far-right violent group banned, but actually a whole culture shift. We need a change in the discourse and in the language that the media and politicians use to talk about Muslims. It means that the whole discourse around Muslims and Islam in the UK has to be completely turned on its head, we need to stop thinking of them and us, but about communities and society as a whole.

What role in particular have groups such as the EDL played in spreading such fear and hatred – and how can it best be stopped?

Unfortunately, the EDL has gained far more publicity than it ever deserved. The reality is that it is still a small minority of extremists. However, the other reality is that this small minority has gone into large diverse, harmonious communities and sought to bring about and create problems. Their physical presence on the street and the rise in violent Islamophobic attacks against Muslims has of course spread fear. It means that some people may no longer feel safe on their streets, in their towns and are worried about the EDL's attacks on them, their families, their businesses and their homes.

We do need to ban the EDL, as long as they are allowed to exist and march with unfettered access to communities that don't want them there they'll continue to be a problem. But the problem goes much further than the EDL and we need to work to combat the larger problem of Islamophobia as well.

What about the role of social media in all of this – material shared in seconds via Facebook, Twitter, etc?

Social media has been a really interesting tool in this debate, it's given both the Islamophobes and its anti-campaigners the platform to openly challenge and debate and air their views. And whilst it is a useful tool for the campaigners it has allowed Islamophobes to, in some cases anonymously; attack Muslims and Islam in a vitriolic and dangerous way, stirring up further tensions. In some cases, they haven't been anonymous, Tommy Robinson the former leader of the EDL, used Twitter to spread his viscous brand of Islamophobia, he had a platform to add fuel to the Islamophobia fire.

How do you view the defection of the two EDL leaders recently?

Anything that moves people away from the EDL should be welcomed, but only if it means they have truly changed their views and in this case it doesn't seem that they have. If Tommy Robinson's recent Twitter feed is anything to go by, he seems to still be continuing to spout the same views unfortunately.

Anything else...?

I think the campaign the against Islamophobia has really taken off in the last few years, no longer are people allowing it to go unchallenged and this is a really positive sign. It means that we are working towards a future that will no longer see Islamophobia as part of the struggle against racism, but as a campaign that was won against the racists. But at the moment that time seems far off; we have a lot of work to do and a long way to go before we reach that point.

Case study

Bradford: Seeing off the EDL



Interview with ex-Respect councillor, and former co-director of STREET anti-radicalisation project, **Alyas Karmani**.

In 2013 a group of now-former Respect party councillors in Bradford, led by Alyas Karmani attempted to have the English Defence League deemed an illegal organisation, on grounds of terrorism.

The motion went before Bradford Council in October 2013, before being rejected.

The former Respect Party councillors Alyas Karmani and Ishtiaq Ahmed had put forward a motion for debate, asking for a petition to the Home Secretary Theresa May to proscribe (make illegal) the EDL and offshoot organisations “immediately”.

Karmani said at the time:

“I will put my neck on the line for this. I am going to get death threats. This is nothing to do with Muslims, but if we pander to these individuals we give them far too much – they do not represent the mainstream.

In their motion, entitled Proscription of the EDL, Karmani and Ahmed had claimed it was “no different to their counter organisation ‘Al Muhajiroun’ and its offshoots and reinventions like ‘Muslims against Crusades’ that were proscribed in 2010 under the premise that it contained individuals who glorified terrorism and incited racial violence and was not conducive to the public good and community cohesion”.

They described the EDL as a “conveyor belt for individuals to extreme right groups and movements that advocate direct action, terrorism and violence in the pursuance of their objectives” and wanted it banned under provisions in the Terrorism Act 2000.

Speaking to Cordoba, Karmani denied his motion was a “knee jerk reaction”.

“This was a careful collaboration with [former BNP member, turned undercover mole] Andy Sykes [with whom Karmani has provided training workshops on extremism]. It was in response to the EDL planning to come to Bradford [which they did, in October 2013].

“Extremism feeds extremism, they are flip sides of the same coin,” said Karmani. “The EDL could not have been created without al-Muhajiroun and like them, they can be a conduit for certain individuals to move further onto violence. Even Tommy Robinson himself said he couldn’t control his group.”

Of his failure to win the council’s support, Karmani said: “Saying ‘Allah is a pedo’ [a favourite EDL chant] – is that freedom of expression or religious hatred? Banning Muslim groups wins votes, not banning the Far Right.

But I say, why allow for one group, not another? We know that far-right individuals have been arrested for firearms and explosives offences, yet they’re often not prosecuted under the Terrorism Act. Even London nail bomber David Copeland’s group, the National Socialist Movement [a split from Combat 18] has not been banned. There’s precedent here for the Home Secretary to react.”

EDL protest

In the end, about 600 EDL supporters held a protest in Bradford city centre in early October. It passed off without incident, with police and community leaders praising the people of Bradford for ignoring the protesters.

Council leader David Green (Labour) said: “I think proscription at this stage is a step too far.” He also slammed the EDL as “racist thugs”.

Councillor Glen Miller called the EDL an “abhorrent, racist organisation”, but added: “If they were proscribed tomorrow they would just call themselves something else. Banning them gives them the publicity they need.”

Bradford East MP David Ward gave his views on proscribing the EDL, claiming it would not be straightforward. He said: “We would have to be looking at brand new legislation.”

Mobilising the Muslim community against Islamophobia



Interview with Dr Abdullah Faliq

Expert on political Islam and radicalization, he is the Head of Research at The Cordoba Foundation; Media and External Relations secretary, Islamic Forum of Europe; and founding member of United East End and European Network on Religion and Belief respectively.

When did you first become aware of the Far Right in Britain?

I came to learn about the Far-Right and their message of hate during the 1980s as a child growing-up in Tower Hamlets. I also experienced first-hand the abuse and hatred from the National Front (NF), both verbal and physical. I was physically assaulted by two NF thugs on Whitechapel Road whilst walking home. I was only 11 at the time. Ever since, I have been involved in a number of anti-racist campaigns and networks, including the Youth Connection which was a borough-wide youth platform that challenged the racists in the borough.

How have you seen the Far Right change?

They have changed insofar as adapting their strategy and seeking new avenues to further their cause and message of hate, such as in the political domain, putting forward candidates in the European Parliament, for example. Whilst there was much for a few years of physical attacks, this resurfaced post-9/11 and 7/7 to targeting Muslims, especially those in leadership and politically active.

As the Rushdie Affair in 1988 marked a watershed moment for British Muslims to assert their Islamic identity (as opposed to their ethnic roots), so too have racist attacks concentrated on Muslims. This manifested in recent years in violence and provocative street protests by the EDL. Interestingly, whereas the NF took strength from the racist pronouncements of right-wing Government ministers like Enoch Powell, the EDL quoted Prime Minister David Cameron's Munich speech (delivered on the eve of an EDL rally, and attacking 'Islamist extremism') and the views of his Cabinet colleague Michael Gove, to try to legitimise its brand of violent anti-Muslim racist hatred.

What was your reaction to the guilty sentence handed down to Pavlo Lapshyn, the Ukrainian student who carried out mosque bombings and murder of an old (Muslim) man in Birmingham?

It was clear from the outset that these attacks were both racist and Islamophobic in nature. How so? The attack was on a mosque and the elderly man killed was a practicing Muslim returning from prayers. The authorities downplayed the Islamophobic nature of the attacks at the beginning. Contrast this with attacks by anyone vaguely linked to the Muslim community: labels of Islamic terrorists, etc are bandied around straight away.

What do you understand by the term "far right"? Is that different to historical fascism? And would we include modern parties such as UKIP or continental groups such as Geert Wilders' PVV within such a framework?

My understanding of the term "far-right" refers to the relative position groups or individuals occupy within a political spectrum. It encompasses nationalists, fascists and racists, religious extremists, and other such political expressions. I would consider UKIP part of the "far right" that has deliberately packaged itself as a political party to

be accepted in society when in reality it is laden with racist and Islamophobic tendencies/worldview. Geert Wilder's PVV is much more bold and falls within the far right framework.

How does Islamophobia cross into the Far Right sphere... and when does it move beyond that fringe, too?

This is an important question and deserves a detailed explanation. Holding racist or Islamophobic views is not a majority position but a fringe position in society. To advance such a position enters into the far right sphere, as it entails a pejorative perception of Muslims. Commonly, this emanates from the misreading by the far right of the growing Muslim demographics across Europe. They conflate the issue of immigration with a perceived threat from Islam as an 'imported religion'. French commentator Gilles Kepel, for example, warned that 'Europe ha[d] become a battlefield', between two contending value systems – Islam and the European Enlightenment.¹ Describing Islam as 'a wicked, vicious faith'² and 'a cancer eating away at our freedoms and our democracy'³, the leader of the far-right British National Party (BNP), Nick Griffin, warned in 2007 that, due to the growing Muslim demographics, 'Europe is going to become Islamic, virtually without a fight'.⁴

British philosopher Roger Scruton, contends that Muslims in European countries have 'rival and inimical loyalties', which are a barrier to respecting demands of the secular state. Oliver Roy, like Kepel, believes that Muslims in Europe represent 'a new age of religiosity', which is likely to create social fragmentation (or 'recommunitarianism'), leading to the disintegration of secular society.⁵

Social anthropologist at Keele University, Pnina Werbner, says such fears and concerns are no longer in the domain of extremists, racists, the uneducated working class or the petit bourgeoisie but abound amongst Western liberals, intellectuals and the elite who pride themselves on enlightened tolerance.⁶ Promoting 'politics of recognition' the academic Charles Taylor, for example, excludes Muslims from the multicultural consensus by considering Islam as a religion incompatible with Western liberal society.⁷ Werbner goes on to suggest that racism, and especially hatred towards Muslims, is born out of economic and political contradictions, scarcities and uncertainties of modernity and late Western capitalism. In this sense, Islam is projected as the 'folk devil' in a form of 'arbitrary scapegoat[ing] racist paranoid conviction that only cultural, ethnic and racial purity can stem the breakdown of social order and the collapse of society'.⁸

This scapegoating also extends to Jews, liberals and other BME communities as they all apparently pose a threat to the essence and order of the nation, known as the *ethnos*.⁹ The *ethnos* is the moral foundation and purity of the nation, which needs protection from the "Other" – Muslims, Jews and so on. This is to be achieved through the subordination and destruction of the "Other". This is further developed and elevated to the 'Islamic Grand Inquisitor' – a reference to a political Islam that is much larger and more dangerous a threat than the Jew, for example:

The Islamic Inquisitor is not a disguised and assimilated threat as the Jew was; 'he' is not subservient and bestial like the black slave. He is upfront, morally superior, openly aggressive, denying the validity of other cultures – in short, a different kind of folk devil altogether.¹⁰

¹Parekh (2009:51). ²Nick Griffin, 'The Secret Agent', BBC, 15 July 2004. ³Nick Griffin on Channel 4 News, 9 July 2009. ⁴Nick Griffin, 'Islamisation of Europe', Clemson University, 24 October 2007 (video, part 1). ⁵Parekh (2009:51). ⁶Werbner, Pnina (2005). 'Islamophobia: Incitement to Religious Hatred – Legislating for a New Fear?' *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 21, No. 1, February, p.8. ⁷Werbner (2000). 'Divided Loyalties...' p.309. ⁸Werbner, Pnina (2005). 'Islamophobia: Incitement to Religious Hatred – Legislating for a New Fear?' *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 21, No. 1, February, p.6. ⁹Ibid. p.6. ¹⁰Werbner (2005). 'Islamophobia: Incitement to religious hatred', p.8.

By this line of argument, this menace in the form of the 'Islamic Grand Inquisitor' must be confronted and destroyed in order to protect the nation's culture and moral foundation. This means physically uprooting and attacking various cultural symbols such as mosques, the destruction of graves, property and livelihood¹¹ and even attacking women wearing the hijab. In the post-9/11 climate, many Muslims are viewed as politically suspect, even as a 'fifth column'.

So in brief, the threat from the far right and other racists groups, no matter how they are packaged, poses a serious threat to Muslims and the greater cohesion of our society. It is easy for armchair observers to engage in futile intellectual discourse without properly taking into account the real impact on the ground. Far from it being an abstract intellectual exercise, Islamophobia or 'anti-Muslimism' is a reality today.

In what way do the organisations you work with “deal” with the issue of the Far Right: do you run initiatives against the extreme Right, campaign, educate, or alternatively do you face “hate” from such sources?

I work with a number of organisations. In terms of community mobilisation against the far right, I chair the Enough Coalition Against Islamophobia (ECAI), which organises events, workshops, campaigns, and works to raise general awareness about racism and Islamophobia. I am also involved with UAF, One Society Many Cultures, United East End, amongst others to carry out similar work. Our most successful record has been stopping the EDL from marching through the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The EDL saw the collective response from the community, united

against their message of hate and discord. I also work at the European level, to collaborate in mutual areas of work and share experiences, such as through the French Consortium Against Islamophobia. At the policy and academic level, through The Cordoba Foundation we engage with researchers, academics and policy-makers, producing briefing papers, reports and organise symposia. The foundation has published several reports on Islamophobia, including *Arches, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim Hatred: Causes and Remedies* (Vol. 4, Edition 7, Winter 2010), and the Spinwatch report entitled, *The Cold War on British Muslims: An Examination of Policy Exchange and the Centre for Social Cohesion*, jointly authored by David Miller, Tom Mills, and Tom Griffin (September 2011). This guide 'Spectre of Hate: Guide to the Far Right in the UK', is our latest input into research and awareness around the threat of the far right.

“Overall, through working with partners in the anti-racism movement, interfaith groups, politician and academics, we have built a strong alliance against racism and Islamophobia. But out of desperation, the far right are resorting to more extreme measures such as attacking mosques, property and individual Muslims. Like other community organisers, I have received death threats purporting to be from the EDL. But these threats only increase my resolve to challenge them. Today, people are more able and confident to challenge and confront the racists and Islamophobes.

¹¹Werbner (2005). Islamophobia, p.6.

On the grander stage, how can “we” best combat the rise of the Far Right? On the streets? Through political means? Via education?

We need to continue working in all these spheres.

Should we be reaching out and talking to “extreme Right” parties and individuals? If so, who is and is not “beyond the pale”?

I think talking is fine but I am not interested in meetings for meetings’ sake. Those associated with the far right know they are on the wrong, on the fringes of British society. The onus is on them to realise their lopsided worldview and embrace society where all are equal and respected.

What do you think the future holds: the rise of further support for far-right extremes, or greater harmony between all communities?

I think it will be a mixed bag: the far right will continue to spread their menace whether through organised groups like the EDL or through new offshoots or clandestine operations. At the same time, opposition to their hate will serve to bolster the relationships built between community, faith organisations and anti-racist campaigners. Just like poverty and disease, society will never be completely free from racism and Islamophobia, but we can all play our part to reduce their impact and keep them at bay.



Resources

- **Christian Muslim Forum**
www.christianmuslimforum.org | [@chrismusforum](#)
- **Collective Against Islamophobia in France**
www.islamophobie.net
- **EDL News**
www.edlnews.co.uk | [@edlnews](#)
- **Enough Coalition Against Islamophobia**
www.enoughcoalition.co.uk | [@enoughcoalition](#)
- **European Network on Racism**
www.enar-eu.org | [@ENAREurope](#)
- **European Network on Religion and Belief**
www.enorb.eu | [@enorb_eu](#)
- **FEMYSO (Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations)**
www.femyso.org | [@femyso](#)
- **HOPE not hate**
www.hopenothate.org.uk | [@hopenothate](#)
- **Institute for Race Relations**
www.irr.org.uk | [@IRR_News](#)
- **Islamic Forum of Europe**
www.islamicforumeurope.com | [@IFE1970](#)
- **Loonwatch**
www.loonwatch.com | [@loonwatchers](#)
- **Matthew Goodwin**
www.matthewjgoodwin.com | [@goodwinmj](#)
- **Muslim Engagement and Development**
www.mend.org.uk | [@mendcommunity](#)
- **One Society Many Cultures**
www.naar.org.uk
- **Radicalism and New Media Research Group**
www.radicalism-new-media.org
- **Searchlight**
www.searchlightmagazine.com | [@SearchlightMag](#)
- **Spinwatch**
www.spinwatch.org | [@spinwatch](#)
- **The Bridge Initiative**
bridge.georgetown.edu
- **The Cordoba Foundation**
www.thecordobafoundation.com | [@CordobaFoundati](#)
 - Arches – Islamophobia in Europe edition
 - Spinwatch report on Policy Exchange
 - Spinwatch report: The Henry Jackson Society and the Degeneration of British Neoconservatism.
- **Unite Against Fascism**
www.uaf.org.uk | [@uaf](#)

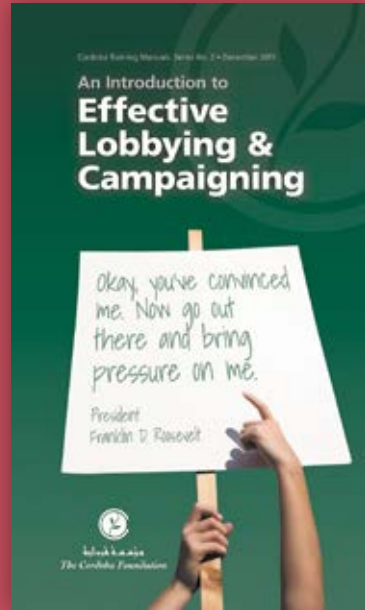
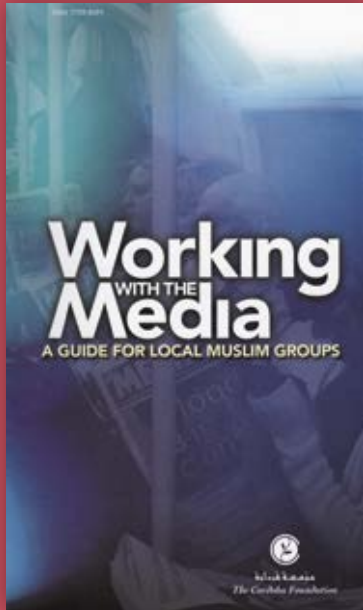
Postscript

Since this guide was first commissioned, the headlines have been filled with news about intolerance, hate crime, racism and new anti-immigrant movements developing across the European continent. Despite a large number of refugees and migrants now travelling onto the continent, we can take heart that – at least here in the UK – the organised far right remains very weak. Groups such as the British National Party, English Defence League and National Front are a shadow of their former selves.

However, there is a worrying rise in both right-wing populist movements, as well as governments kow-towing to pressure from the media and movements such as UKIP, in order to remain ahead in the polls. Yet governments can never do 'enough' to satisfy supporters of such xenophobic movements, as they are often linked to a protest against the government itself (which, by default, is not believed by the supporters of these ultra-right parties). In countries such as Hungary, which is building a fence to keep out migrants and has tough policies vs many immigrants and minorities, the government itself stands accused of leaning as far to the right as some far-right parties.

Recent polling in the UK shows that public attitudes towards refugees are softening, although there appears to have been a sad rise in Islamophobic incidents against Muslims in London. Yet continent-wide the picture is complex: not every country is facing an upswing in far-right groups, and we should be wary about overusing certain terms if we're to combat the fear that often leads to prejudice and then outright racism or hate crimes. In order to combat the fear we need to define the problem: we hope that this guide will be just one more tool in your armoury to help you do so.

Notes



www.thecordobafoundation.com



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