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“A Planet-Wide Race War”

The Global Circulation of White Supremacist Violence in the Late Twentieth Century

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Abstract: *This article examines how and why the global white power movement lurched into a string of real and metaphorical wars around the world in the late twentieth century. These campaigns drew heavily on veterans who had fought leftist national liberation movements on an array of battlefields. The detritus of Cold War militarization, many joined or were recruited into white power groups in the United States and Europe. Perceiving white decline on the world stage, they mobilized for combat across a string of battlefields from Rhodesia to Central America, Northern Ireland, and Yugoslavia. Over time, their visions of global race war turned inward as far-right white supremacist groups on both sides of the Atlantic launched attacks against enemies at home, including their own governments. Central to this campaign was the strategy known as “leaderless resistance,” wherein small cells of supposed “lone wolves” launched spectacular assaults in pursuit of revolutionary change. Inspired by leftist national liberation movements and Islamist terrorists, leaderless resistance was first deployed in the United States and quickly spread to Britain, Germany, and elsewhere in the 1980s and 1990s. This violence—both actual and imagined—was not simply a recent reaction to neoliberalism, globalization, and international Islamist violence, as many scholars hold, nor was it merely the product of enhanced communication via new social media technologies. Instead, this violence emerged and evolved in an earlier era, dating back to the 1970s, and gained ground through the very same processes that compelled mainstream globalization: transnational flows of capital, people, ideas, and goods.*

Keywords: white supremacy, political violence, terrorism, neo-Nazism, transnational right, global

US Navy veteran Shawn Fuller arrived in Ukraine in the early spring of 2018. He had come to join the simmering war against Russia, which had invaded Ukraine’s eastern territories in 2014 and occupied them still. Fuller was a competent soldier, having spent four years in the service, mainly on a ship in the Persian Gulf. But he had received an “other than honorable” discharge, the result of a drunken episode while he

was on leave in Dubai. Since leaving the Navy, Fuller's life had spiraled downward. He worked a series of dead-end jobs without direction or purpose. One night, he slashed a man with a knife during a bar fight in Texas, which got him six years of probation for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. In his free time, he pursued his growing interest in Nordic paganism, browsing white supremacist websites and Facebook groups, which led him to a man who was recruiting veterans for the war in Ukraine. "A lot of what he was saying made sense to me," Fuller recalled. With little to live for in the United States, Fuller packed his gear and headed to Ukraine.¹ Next thing Fuller knew, he was on the outskirts of Kyiv. He found his new unit holed up in a flophouse. Some two dozen foreign fighters were gathered with his recruiter, a Norwegian neo-Nazi and convicted bank robber. They were members of the Azov Battalion.² While the struggling Ukrainian military had deployed dozens of paramilitary units, Azov stood out. It was not just a militia. It was a neo-Nazi political movement with two publishing houses, social centers, youth camps, sports gyms, book clubs, and a vigilante force known as the National Militia, which patrolled the streets of Ukrainian cities. More than that, Azov was at the center of a vast network of far-right groups that stretched from the United States and Europe to New Zealand. Through the internet, Azov had recruited veterans and aspiring soldiers from around the world.³

In the context of the global white supremacist movement, Azov was peerless. As one of the most effective and lethal of Ukraine's paramilitary forces, it possessed a vast arsenal of weapons, drones, artillery, and armored vehicles. To those who joined Azov, the purpose of the war mattered less than what Azov itself represented. Fought between two presumably white nations, the war in Ukraine did not clearly register as an outright battle for white supremacy; more than that, Russia itself had emerged as an object of much admiration and inspiration among white supremacists globally.⁴ Given that the conflict did not fit neatly into the racial logic of white supremacy, many recruits joined Azov to gain combat experience they could deploy against domestic enemies in white

1 Fuller's story is recounted in Simon Shuster and Billy Perrigo, "Like, Share, Recruit: How a White-Supremacist Militia Uses Facebook to Radicalize and Train New Members," *Time*, January 7, 2021, <https://time.com/5926750/azov-far-right-movement-facebook/>.

2 Ibid.

3 Marc Bennett, "Ukraine's National Militia: 'We're Not neo-Nazis, We Just Want to Make Our Country Better,'" *Guardian*, March 13, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/13/ukraine-far-right-national-militia-takes-law-into-own-hands-neo-nazi-links>; Michael Colborne, *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global Far Right* (Ibidem, 2022), 10, 121–38.

4 As American neo-Nazi and white supremacist Richard Spencer put it in 2016, Russia was the "sole white power in the world" and held "the key to white survival." Quoted in Olga Kiyan, "White Nationalism in the United States and Russia: Transnational Ties, Domestic Impacts," *Harvard International Review*, April 29, 2021, <https://hir.harvard.edu/white-nationalism-in-the-united-states-and-russia-transnational-ties-domestic-impact/>. See also Antonis Klapsis, *An Unholy Alliance: The European Far Right and Putin's Russia* (Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, 2017)

supremacist struggles once they cycled back home. The Azov Battalion, in that sense, was a model to be recreated elsewhere. In the words of one American who joined the battalion through the Atomwaffen Division, an international neo-Nazi terrorist group, Azov is “the future.”⁵

From its inception, and especially since the start of the broader Ukraine war in February 2022, the Azov Battalion has drawn widespread concern and condemnation from policymakers, journalists, and scholars. Members of the US Congress, hoping to shut down its funding and recruitment networks, sought unsuccessfully to deem it a terrorist group.⁶ The British government, compelled by civilian watchdog groups, also struggled to halt Azov’s recruitment through domestic neo-Nazi groups such as National Action, proscribed by the United Kingdom in 2016 as a terrorist organization. In the eyes of British officials, Azov and its offshoots represented something novel: an internationally connected far-right movement mobilized for war on multiple fronts. As Mark Rowley, the former head of the UK’s counterterrorism office, explained about National Action in 2018, “For the first time we have a home-grown, proscribed, white supremacist, neo-Nazi terror group, which seeks to plan attacks and build international networks.”⁷

Rowley was not alone in arguing that the Azov Battalion and its international allies signify something new and different. The far right, in the eyes of many commentators and scholars, has long been parochial and reactionary, inwardly focused on the nation-state, especially overt white supremacists whose vision of belonging is firmly rooted in blood and soil.⁸ Only recently, these scholars contend, have these forces sought common cause with one another across national borders.⁹

5 Shuster and Perrigo, “Like, Share, Recruit.”

6 Michael Colborne, “U.S. Congress Accidentally Boosted Ukraine’s Far Right,” *Foreign Policy*, November 1, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/11/01/congress-max-rose-ukraine-azov-terrorism/>. Recently the Ukrainian military has sought downplay Azov. See Valerie Hopkins, “For Ukraine Military, Far-Right Russian Volunteers Make for Worrisome Allies,” *New York Times*, May 26, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/26/world/europe/the-leader-of-a-russian-group-involved-in-a-border-in-cursion-is-described-by-watchdogs-as-a-neo-nazi.html>.

7 Kevin Rawlinson, “Neo-Nazi Groups Recruit Britons to Fight in Ukraine,” *Guardian*, March 1, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/02/neo-nazi-groups-recruit-britons-to-fight-in-ukraine>.

8 This article uses the terms white supremacist and white power to describe a distinct set of movements and actors who make up the racist far right, which forms a significant part of the broader far right but is not entirely synonymous with it.

9 For works that examine the rise of the global far right as a recent phenomenon, see Cynthia Miller-Idriss, *Hate in the Homeland: The New Global Far Right* (Princeton University Press, 2022); Cas Mudde, *The Far Right Today* (Polity Books, 2019); Patrik Hermansson, David Lawrence, Joe Mulhall, and Simon Murdoch, *The International Alt-Right: Fascism for the 21st Century?* (Routledge, 2020); Liz Fekete, *Europe’s Fault Lines: Racism and the Far Right* (Verso, 2018); and Sabine von Mering and Timothy

But Azov was not a new phenomenon. Rather, it was only the latest iteration of a global white power movement that has been decades in the making. As historian Kathleen Belew has shown in a mainly American context, the white power movement's devotion to war and its recruitment of veterans have old origins.¹⁰ Indeed, for more than half a century, supremacist groups and activists have engaged in paramilitary actions that crisscrossed national borders. White supremacists recruited ex-soldiers from wars in Vietnam, Malaya, and the Congo, and enlisted in wars in Rhodesia, Central America, Northern Ireland, and Yugoslavia—experiences that shaped warlike fantasies and campaigns in their home societies. This violence supported and solidified a shared racial identity that, although rooted in blood and soil, transcended the nation-state. As one activist from England explained in 2000, “It’s not an American fight or a British fight or a German fight. It is a white fight, and we’ve got to win it.”¹¹ In that view, saving white supremacy anywhere meant fighting for it everywhere. American neo-Nazi William Pierce, author of *The Turner Diaries*, the bible of the armed US racist right since the late 1970s, summed it up in 1995: “We must understand that we are in a planet-wide race war, and survival of our race depends on our winning this war.”¹²

Thus, the globalized reverie of white supremacist violence embodied in the Azov Battalion has deep roots and stems from different forces than most scholars and policymakers identify. It is not simply a right-wing reaction to neoliberalism, globalization, and international Islamist violence, as many hold, nor is it merely the product of new social media technologies.¹³ Instead, the global white power movement

Wyman McCarthy, eds., *Right-Wing Radicalism Today: Perspectives from Europe and the US* (Routledge, 2013). Only a handful of works have explained far-right mobilizations from the era of World War II through the end of the twentieth century. See Martin Lee, *The Beast Reawakens: Fascism's Resurgence from Hitler's Spymasters to Today's Neo-Nazi Groups & Right-wing Extremists* (Little, Brown and Company, 1997); Jeffrey Kaplan, *The Emergence of a Euro-American Right* (Rutgers University Press, 1998); Jeffrey Kaplan and Tore Bjørgo, *Nation and Race: The Developing Euro-American Racist Subculture* (Northeastern University Press, 1998); Paul Jackson and Anton Shekhovtsov, eds., *The Post-War Anglo-American Right: A Special Relationship of Hate* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2014); Jean-Yves Camus and Nicolas Lebourg, *Far-Right Politics in Europe* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2017); and Daniel Geary, Camilla Schofield, and Jennie Sutton, eds. *The Global History of White Nationalism* (Manchester University Press, 2020).

10 Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America* (Harvard University Press, 2018).

11 Mark Cotterill, leader of the American Friends of the British National Party, a support group for the fascist British National Party, quoted in “American White Supremacist Groups Have History of International Conflict,” *Southern Poverty Law Center*, August 29, 2001, <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/reports/american-white-supremacist-groups-have-history-international-conflict/>.

12 Quoted in “Pan-Aryanism Binds Hate Groups in America and Europe,” *Southern Poverty Law Center*, August 29, 2001, <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/reports/pan-aryanism-binds-hate-groups-america-and-europe/>.

13 On the international far right as a product of new digital communication and media, see Patri-

emerged in the immediate post–World War II era and gained ground in the 1970s and 1980s via the same processes that drove mainstream globalization—cross-border flows of capital, people, ideas, and goods. Through these conduits and connections, white supremacist leaders, intellectuals, and activists fashioned a shared narrative of racial decline and redemption. Analogizing circumstances between countries and continents, they fused the challenges of civil rights, decolonization, and immigration into a global threat to white societies and white power.

Against this perceived threat they mobilized, seeking violence—both actual and imagined—at home and abroad. This article explores how white supremacists read international developments into domestic contexts, and vice versa, finding models and metaphors for militarized action against an array of enemies. Initially rooted in the Cold War, this campaign increasingly turned inward as far-right groups on both sides of the Atlantic launched spectacular attacks against enemies at home in the 1980s and early 1990s. Many would ultimately target their own governments. Central to this campaign was the strategy known as “leaderless resistance,” wherein small cells or individuals launched spectacular acts of violence in pursuit of movement goals. Inspired by leftist national liberation movements and Islamist terrorists, leaderless resistance was not simply a reaction to neoliberal globalization but an adaption to it. Even as white supremacists denounced neoliberalism as a danger to white societies and economic security, they used its mechanisms to spread the strategy and fantasy of leaderless resistance. As a result, leaderless resistance quickly spread from the United States to Europe and elsewhere in the late 1980s. Since then, the perpetrators of far-right mass violence have not only studied each other’s methods and manifestos. Much more than that, they have claimed that they are working toward the same goal, that they are part of a global movement. In their eyes, violent revolution, coursing across national borders, will lay the foundations for a new and vigorous white world order.

Failures of White-Supremacist International Organization, 1930s–1960s

The fantasies and strategies of far-right paramilitary action, revolutionary violence, and planetary race war that coalesced across the Atlantic in the late twentieth century had old origins. In the 1930s, fascist movements in the United States, Britain, and Europe saw each other as potential allies in a shared struggle against liberalism, communism, and racial enemies, above all Jews.¹⁴ These affinities—political, personal,

cia Ann Simpson and Helga Druxes, eds., *Digital Media Strategies of the Far Right in Europe and the United States* (Lexington Books, 2015); Melody Devries, Judith Bessant, and Rob Watts, eds. *Rise of the Far Right: Technologies of Recruitment and Mobilization* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2021); and Cynthia Miller-Idriss, *The Extreme Gone Mainstream: Commercialization and Far Right Youth Culture in Germany* (Princeton University Press, 2018).

14 On transatlantic fascist networks in the interwar era, see Markku Ruotsila, “International An-

and performative—hinged on fantasies of violence, including, in its most extreme and fanciful iterations, plots to overthrow sitting governments. In the United States, a series of groups, from the Silver Shirts to the Christian Front, mimicked the paramilitary structure and aspirations of the early Nazi Party.¹⁵ In Britain, Oswald Mosley’s British Union of Fascists, hoping to replace democracy with dictatorship, trafficked in violence as an aesthetic and rhetorical device, though it largely refrained from using violence as a program of action against the state.¹⁶ Similar dynamics played out elsewhere in Europe, from France to Hungary to Romania. Small fascist and fascist-leaning movements also popped up in Latin America, though their racial politics did not sit easily alongside American and European notions of white supremacy.¹⁷ Yet, despite all their ideological affinity and substantial investments of time and money, fascists outside continental Europe failed to build a workable and lasting program for international collaboration.¹⁸ Historians have demonstrated their heavy dependence on, and unbridled affinity for, Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany—ties that, however, tended to marginalize them within mainstream political life.¹⁹ By the end of World War II, most fascist movements lay in tatters, and many leaders were in prison.

Yet fascism, especially Nazism, smoldered like an ember in the postwar era, providing a main framework through which white supremacists envisioned global collaboration and mobilization. The most ambitious effort to make Nazism serviceable to postwar white supremacist movements came from George Lincoln Rockwell, leader of the

ti-Communism Before the Cold War: Success and Failure in the Building of a Transnational Right,” and Arnd Bauerkämper, “Interwar Fascism in Europe and Beyond: Toward a Transnational Radical Right,” in *New Perspectives on the Transnational Right*, ed. Martin Durham and Margaret Power (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 11–66; and Joseph Fronczak, “The Fascist Game: Transnational Political Transmission and the Genesis of the U.S. Modern Right,” *Journal of American History* 105, no. 3 (2018): 563–88.

15 On plots by the Silver Shirts and the Christian Front, see Bradley W. Hart, *Hitler’s American Friends: The Third Reich’s Supporters in the United States* (St. Martin’s Press, 2018); and Charles R. Gallagher, *Nazis of Copley Square: The Forgotten Story of the Christian Front* (Harvard University Press, 2021).

16 See Stephen M. Cullen, “Political Violence: The Case of the British Union of Fascists,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 28, no. 2 (1993): 245–67; and Jon Lawrence, “Fascist Violence and the Politics of Public Order in Inter-war Britain: The Olympia Debate Revisited,” *Historical Research* 76, no. 192 (2003): 238–67.

17 The best summary of various European fascist movements in their emergent phases is Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (Vintage, 2004), 68–86, and 110–18.

18 The most sustained attempt to build a fascist international came from Mussolini’s Italy. But even with substantial state support, the movement was rent with dispute and division. See Michael Arthur Ledeen, *Universal Fascism: The Theory and Practice of the Fascist International, 1928–1936* (Howard Fertig, 1972).

19 See Hart, *Hitler’s American Friends*, 209–36; Graham Macklin, *Failed Führers: A History of Britain’s Extreme Right* (Routledge, 2020); and Jean-Yves Camus, “Nostalgia and Political Impotence: Neo-Nazi and Extreme Right Movements in France, 1944–1964,” in *The Development of the Radical Right in France*, ed. E. J. Arnold (Palgrave MacMillan, 2000), 195–216.

American Nazi Party, who founded the World Union of National Socialists (WUNS) in 1962.²⁰ Rockwell, a former US Navy pilot who fought in World War II, organized his American Nazi Party along militarized lines, recruited other veterans, and invoked the metaphor of war to describe its struggle at home and on the world stage.²¹ Within a few years, Rockwell had incorporated chapters in Britain, West Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, Sweden, Norway, Italy, Iceland, Ireland, Canada, South Africa, Australia, Argentina, and Chile.²² Rockwell's deputy liked to describe the movement as "[t]he only National Socialist organization today functioning on a world-wide basis." Many of its members were "veterans of the armed forces of their respective countries" who had fought "on opposite sides" during World War II and who now realized the "costly mistake of fighting each other—since only the Jews and the Communists profited from that bloody conflict." What Rockwell and his acolytes wanted was not a "large organization, but rather a tough, disciplined, fighting elite world force which can put an end to the disunity of the Aryan White Race, and finally give the White masses of the earth some real, world-wide leadership."²³ Thus, Rockwell was especially keen to recruit veterans from the American and British militaries as well as former Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS troops.²⁴ Only a militarized movement, modeled on the uniformed stormtroopers of interwar fascism, could save white societies from the intertwined threats of civil rights, decolonization, and growing migration from the global South, all of which Rockwell

20 Program of the World Union of National Socialists, Series 12, Sub-series 1, box 2, Searchlight Archive, University of Northampton, Northampton UK (hereafter Searchlight Archive).

21 See *Paramilitary Organizations in California* (California Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation, April 1965), ANP-4; "Ready for Inspection," *Stormtrooper* (publication of the American Nazi Party, Arlington, VA), May–June 1963, 18–19, New York Public Library (hereafter NYPL); "Headquarters Training Makes the Difference," *Stormtrooper*, July–August 1963, 22, NYPL; and American Nazi Party leaflet, "White Man . . . Unite and Fight," 1963, in FBI Rockwell File.

22 On the formation of the World Union of National Socialists, see "First Working Draft of the Cotswold Agreements," *The Rockwell Report* 1, no. 21 (August 15, 1962); George Lincoln Rockwell, "International Nazi Progress," *Stormtrooper*, August 1962, 9–10, NYPL; George Lincoln Rockwell, "Commander's International Report: England!" *Stormtrooper*, November 1962, 6–10, 20–34, NYPL; "International Nazi Progress," *Stormtrooper*, January–February 1963, 11, NYPL; "International Nazi Progress," *Stormtrooper*, November–December 1963, 4, NYPL; Paul Jackson, "Dreaming of a National Socialist World: The World Union of National Socialists (WUNS) and the Recurring Vision of Transnational Neo-Nazism," *Fascism* 8, no. 2 (2019): 275–306; and Frederick J. Simonelli, *American Fuehrer: George Lincoln Rockwell and the American Nazi Party* (University of Illinois Press, 1999), 81–95.

23 Form letter from Matt Koehl, World Union of National Socialists, Series 12, Sub-series 1, box 2, Searchlight Archive.

24 These included, just among the leadership of the World Union of National Socialists, Rockwell (US Navy), Colin Jordan (British Royal Army), Yves Jeanne (French Waffen-SS), J. R. Debbaudt (Belgian Waffen-SS), and Bruno Ludtke (German Wehrmacht).

and his allies fused into a global threat to white power. Each signaled, as Rockwell put it, the “first skirmishes in the World Race War.”²⁵

In Europe, kindred internationally minded far-right groups such as Jeune Europe also plotted armed action and revolutionary violence in pursuit of a continent-wide racial empire. Led by Jean-François Thiriart, a former Waffen-SS soldier and Nazi collaborator from Belgium, Jeune Europe established paramilitary training camps in a half-dozen countries. Much of its ranks comprised veterans from World War II and the Belgian Congo as well as the French Organisation Armée Secrète (OAS), a terrorist group that trafficked in white supremacy and waged war against the French state to prevent Algerian independence.²⁶

Civilian leaders in the United States, Britain, and Europe urged their governments and the United Nations to take firm action against these movements, particularly those with overtly neo-Nazi politics.²⁷ As a result of growing state scrutiny and popular antipathy, the World Union of National Socialists and its kin found it difficult to turn diffuse connections into a viable movement, let alone undertake revolutionary violence. Rockwell and those around him could not turn to foreign governments for support, as American and European fascists had done during the 1930s vis-à-vis Mussolini’s Italy and Hitler’s Germany.²⁸ Bereft of any kind of state backing, the World Union of National Socialists faced constant disputes over funds and strategy. More problematic was the fact that many of its leaders and members could not stay out of prison. When a former member of the American Nazi Party murdered Rockwell in 1967, the World Union of National Socialists lost its driving force. Its influence evaporated.²⁹

25 George Lincoln Rockwell, *White Power* (1966; repr., Revisionist Books, 2016), 213–14.

26 See Jean-François Thiriart, *Un Empire de 400 Millions d’Hommes: l’Europe* (L’auteur, 1964); and Jeffrey M. Bale, “The ‘Black’ Terrorist International: Neo-Fascist Paramilitary Networks and the ‘Strategy of Tension’ in Italy, 1968–1974” (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1994), 106–15. On the OAS, see Alexander Harrison, *Challenging De Gaulle: The O.A.S and the Counter-Revolution in Algeria, 1954–1962* (Praeger, 1989).

27 As Dr. S. J. Roth, the executive director of the World Jewish Congress’s European Division, explained in 1962, neo-Nazis around the globe “were united in their aim and purpose to foster hatreds against Jews and against coloured people, and to turn this hatred into an onslaught on democracy as a whole.” Quoted in “Movements ‘United’ in Race Hatred,” *The Times* (London), November 5, 1962.

28 When organizing the American Nazi Party, Rockwell had sought financial support from the United Arab Republic and its leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser, but failed to secure any backing. Still, much of the FBI’s early interest in Rockwell centered on his potential links to Nasser and the UAR. See the FBI Report “George Lincoln Rockwell: Registration Act—United Arab Republic,” May 11, 1959, Washington Field Office, in FBI Rockwell File. Letters exchanged between Rockwell and Nasser appear on pages 28–33 of that report.

29 Simonelli, *American Fuehrer*, 94–95, 131–45; Jackson, “Dreaming,” 304–6.

The failure of the World Union of National Socialists underscored the much broader collapse of the far-right across the United States, Britain, and Europe in the late 1960s. For Rockwell's immediate heirs, "centralized authority" was still the "natural expression in organizational terms of the race-wide basis of National Socialism."³⁰ But building a centralized international movement with clear ranks became increasingly difficult as many governments targeted explicitly white supremacist groups, and not only those with clear fascist or neo-Nazi sympathies. As hierarchical organizations with leaders and members, dues and offices, they proved vulnerable to infiltration, surveillance, and prosecution. In the United States, the civil rights-era Ku Klux Klan and other violent far-right groups crumbled as federal authorities arrested their leaders, disrupted their operations, and seized their properties.³¹ In Britain, the 1965 Race Relations Act criminalized the "incitement of racial hatred," enabling the government to prosecute leaders and activists from the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement and several other organizations.³² Authorities in West Germany and France also took legal action against overt and violent neo-Nazi and white supremacist movements, imprisoning their leaders and proscribing their groups.³³ Even when states did not take such active measures, or only did so intermittently, many far-right movements still struggled to gain a mass following in the late 1960s. This was especially true for groups that harkened back to interwar fascism or Nazism.³⁴ For a time, it seemed, governments in the United States, Britain, and Europe had managed to beat back the tide of far-right white supremacists and thus thwart their hopes for worldwide race war.

30 Matt Koehl, Editorial, *WUNS Bulletin* (Arlington, VA), no. 17, 3rd quarter, 1969, 1–2.

31 On decline of the Ku Klux Klan in the late 1960s and early 1970s, see John Drabble, "The FBI, COINTELPRO-WHITE HATE and the Decline of Ku Klux Klan Organizations in Mississippi, 1964–1971," *Journal of Mississippi History* 66, no. 4 (2004): 353–401; John Drabble, "'To Ensure Domestic Tranquility': The FBI, COINTELPRO-WHITE HATE, and Political Discourse, 1964–1971," *Journal of American Studies* 38, no. 2 (2004): 297–328; and David Cunningham, *Klansville, USA: The Rise and Fall of the Civil-Rights Era Ku Klux Klan* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 184–213.

32 On the 1965 Race Relations Act, see Gavin Schaffer, "Legislating against Hatred: Meaning and Motive in Section Six of the Race Relations Act of 1965," *Contemporary British History* 25, no. 2 (2014): 251–75. The earlier 1936 Public Order Act had already enabled the British government to act against the neo-Nazi group called Spearhead, which formed the nucleus of the National Socialist Movement. On Spearhead, see Macklin, *Failed Führers*, 297–98; G. Gable, "Britain's Nazi Underground," in *The Far Right in Western Europe*, ed. L. Cheles, R. Ferguson, and M. Vaughn (Longman, 1995), 258–59; and Richard Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain: From Oswald Mosely to the National Front* (I. B. Tauris, 1998), 230–52.

33 The West German state, for instance, outlawed the Socialist Reich Party, the clearest successor to the Nazi Party, in 1952. See Lee, *Beast Reawakens*, 83–84. The West German constitution enabled the state to act against movements and individuals who threatened the political order. See Gerard Braunthal, *Right-Wing Extremism in Contemporary Germany* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), viii, 19–41. On legal actions in France, see Camus, "Nostalgia and Political Impotence."

34 France provides a good example of this. See Camus, "Nostalgia and Political Impotence."

New Battlefields

Within a few years, however, the far-right white supremacists on both sides of the Atlantic gained ground as shifting demographic, political, and economic dynamics produced resurgent resentments. In the United States, the apparent success of the civil rights movement, feminism, and immigration reform, followed by mounting economic crises in the 1970s, suggested to many on the right that the United States had entered into terminal decline. Meanwhile, failure in the Vietnam War unleashed broad feelings of government betrayal and breakdown.³⁵ In the United Kingdom, as the British Empire disintegrated and large numbers of non-white immigrants arrived from the Commonwealth countries, narratives of national decline and cultural disappearance imbued mainstream politics.³⁶ In France and West Germany, youthful revolt, new migration patterns, and economic crises fueled popular animosity against mainstream politicians, feelings often accompanied by nostalgia for the white supremacist past of imperial grandeur.³⁷ So, even though state scrutiny had chipped away at centralized and organized far-right groups, these shifts swelled the ranks of potential recruits for a new crop of white supremacist and far-right ideologues.

Sensing these changes in the late 1960s and early 1970s—the struggles of centralized far-right groups and the growing pool of disgruntled white men—white supremacist leaders in the United States and Europe groped toward a new strategy to replace the model of building a single, overarching organization. The result was a movement without a center. Members were dispersed but bonded through shared assumptions and affinities. And they were devoted to the cause of securing white power at home and on the world stage.³⁸

35 On post-Vietnam feelings of governmental betrayal, see Christian Appy, *American Reckoning: The Vietnam War and Our National Identity* (Penguin, 2016), 221–50; and Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 19–32.

36 Those anxieties registered most profoundly in Conservative MP Enoch Powell’s famous 1968 “Rivers of Blood” speech, which warned that large-scale immigration of non-whites threatened to unravel the racial fabric of the nation. On Powell, race, and memories of empire in postcolonial Britain, see Bill Schwarz, *The White Man’s World* (Oxford University Press 2011); and Camilla Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain* (Cambridge University Press, 2013).

37 On the French far right and its reaction to student and leftist protest in 1968, see Andrea Mamone, “The Transnational Reaction to 1968: Neo-Fascist Fronts and Political Cultures in France and Italy,” *Contemporary European History* 17, no. 2 (2008): 213–36. On French (and British) imperial nostalgia, see Patricia M. E. Lorcin, “The Nostalgias for Empire,” *History and Theory* 57, no. 2 (2018): 269–85. On French nostalgia for empire in more recent years, see Max Fisher and Amanda Taub, “Echoes of Colonial Conflict in Algeria Reverberate in French Politics,” *New York Times*, May 1, 2017. On West Germany, see Barbara Manthe, “On the Pathway to Violence: West German Right-Wing Terrorism in the 1970s,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 33, no. 1 (2021): 49–70.

38 On the far right’s “persistent failure to constitute international organizations” and its subsequent shift toward “relational networks for the transfer of signs, methods, vocabulary, and ideas,” see Camus and Lebourg, *Far-Right Politics*, 53–97, quote at 97.

This mobilization gained strength by harnessing and refracting violent dreams, discourses, and strategies that were circulating across Cold War battlegrounds. At first, this violence took on a defensive posture as leaders and activists mainly mobilized against perceived threats within white societies. In later years, it moved into a revolutionary register, seeking not merely the defense of white supremacy but the overthrow of the existing international order and the creation of a new one.³⁹ This was not a clean or straightforward shift: reveries of resistance and revolution blended into and gained strength from each other. But it was nevertheless rooted in broad fears of social unrest, gender confusion, racial change, economic decline, and decolonization—all of which signaled, in varied societies and countries, that the state itself had abandoned the mantle of white power. New white supremacist visions were hatched on battlefields, real and imagined, in Rhodesia, the United States, continental Europe, Central America, and the United Kingdom.

Rhodesia

While the far right on both sides of the Atlantic fretted over these changes, one place stood out as a paragon of white power untouched and therefore unchanged by the global revolutions of civil rights and decolonization. That was Rhodesia, the illegal secessionist state that split from the British Empire in 1965 to preserve white minority rule. From its birth in 1965, Rhodesia had been a pariah, the subject of international embargoes and constant pressure from the United Nations and the British government. But its status as a beleaguered island of white power amid a sea of African nationalism lent it a special luster for many on the right in the United States, Britain, Europe, and elsewhere.⁴⁰ After all, when Rhodesian prime minister Ian Smith declared independence, he explained that “[t]he white man is master of Rhodesia. He has built it, and he intends to keep it.”⁴¹ Indeed, independent Rhodesia was an “imperial idyll” out of time, where a small

39 Writing of the American white power movement, historian Kathleen Belew argues that 1983 marked the movement’s “revolutionary turn,” the point at which its leaders and members declared war against the federal government. See Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 4, 103–34. While that shift was indeed pronounced, earlier modes and models of far-right and white-supremacist revolutionary violence predated 1983. In the United States this included the Minutemen in the late 1960s and also remnants of the Klan in the 1970s. In Europe, the French OAS and Italian Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari also engaged in anti-statist violence with revolutionary aspirations.

40 Rhodesia captured the international white supremacist imagination even more than its neighbor, apartheid South Africa, itself a locus of significant concern and affinity.

41 Quoted in Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Harvard University Press, 2001), 196; and “1964: Not in My Lifetime; 1976: Within Two Years,” *Washington Post*, September 25, 1976.

number of white settlers monopolized land, capital, and political power, clinging to a pioneer identity that lingered on well after the heyday of empire.⁴²

Many in the American, British, and European far right found much to admire in Rhodesia. In the late 1960s, as Jim Crow segregation collapsed and decolonization brought greater non-white migration to the metropolises of declining European empires, Rhodesia held out the promise of a racially ordered society in which white power persisted in all aspects of life.⁴³ Nevertheless, the specter of violence hung over Rhodesia. Memories of white settlers being massacred in the Congo gained a prominent place in the minds of white Rhodesians and their overseas supporters, offering a nightmare scenario about what the collapse of white rule would bring. Such fears gained greater weight in the late 1960s as large-scale uprisings unfolded in many American cities, presenting veritable visions of race war. In turn, many in the British and European right feared that American-style racial violence would inevitably follow as more non-whites arrived from Asia and Africa.⁴⁴ Perhaps, they hoped, Rhodesia would be spared the fate of racial anarchy through the courage of its white population. Writing shortly before

42 Quote from Josiah Brownell, “One Last Retreat’: Racial Nostalgia and Population Panic in Smith’s Rhodesia and Powell’s Britain,” in *The Global History of White Nationalism*, ed. Daniel Geary, Camilla Schofield, and Jennie Sutton (Manchester University Press, 2020), 157–86, quote at 166. On Rhodesia’s pioneer myths, their legacy, and their incongruity in modern Rhodesian life, see Bill Schwarz, *The White Man’s World: Memories of Empire*, vol. 1 (Oxford University Press, 2011), 400–405; and Peter Godwin and Ian Hancock, *Rhodesians Never Die’: The Impact of War and Political Change on White Rhodesia, c. 1970–1980* (Oxford University Press, 1993), 20–21. On Rhodesian society after 1965, see Josiah Brownell, *The Collapse of Rhodesia: Population Demographics and the Politics of Race* (Bloomsbury, 2020), 3–10; and Gerald Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun: The United States and the War against Zimbabwe, 1965–1980* (University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 34–39.

43 This view often clashed with white Rhodesians’ understandings of themselves and their nation as many tended to see Rhodesia as a tolerant, evolving, and progressive multiracial state, in which black Africans were steadily advancing toward civilization and civility. See Allison K. Shutt, *Manners Make a Nation: Racial Etiquette in Southern Rhodesia, 1910–1963* (University of Rochester Press, 2015); and Brownell, “One Last Retreat,” 160. That framing was particularly powerful among mainstream conservatives such as William F. Buckley and those around him at *National Review*, who emphasized Rhodesia’s cordial race relations. See, for instance, James Jackson Kilpatrick, Rene Albert Wormser, and Walter Darnell Jacobs, “Rhodesia: A Case History,” *National Review*, May 16, 1967.

44 In Britain, Enoch Powell was the most powerful prognosticator of such racial violence. Referencing the 1967 Detroit riot to warn against unchecked non-white immigration to Britain, he explained that “at an interval of twenty or thirty years you can leave out ‘Detroit’ and insert ‘Birmingham.’” Quoted in Schofield, *Enoch Powell*, 214. Similar claims echoed in France. Far-right theorist Alain de Benoist, who began his political career advocating for the defense of French Algeria and Rhodesia, was horrified by the Harlem riot of 1964 and the Watts riot of 1965, seeing both as harbingers of racial violence in France once significant numbers of non-whites had migrated from Algeria and elsewhere in Africa. “For France and for Europe, it is a warning,” de Benoist wrote under his pen name, “because today’s America is, in some ways, the Europe of 1975, perhaps even before.” Fabrice Laroche [Alain de Benoist], “Terreur noire aux U.S.A.,” *Europe-Action*, no. 21, September 1964, 9–10. See also Fabrice Laroche [Alain de Benoist], “Je reviens d’Amérique,” *Europe-Action*, no. 34, October 1965, 9–12.

his death, George Lincoln Rockwell saw American riots through the lens of the Congo, where whites “waited too long before realizing what was up, and they are now dead, raped, or gone.” But in Rhodesia, Rockwell declared, “Whites have finally realized what was ahead and have made a brave stand to protect themselves, and civilization.”⁴⁵

Yet Rhodesia’s future was indeed in doubt as it confronted two powerful armed nationalist movements, known as ZANU (Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union) and ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People’s Union). By 1972, the insurgency threatened Rhodesia’s very existence.⁴⁶ At that moment, thousands of foreign volunteers—mercenaries of sorts—arrived hoping to save Rhodesia from almost certain collapse. The American contingent was the largest, followed by the British and smaller samplings of French and Portuguese. Many shared the common experience of having fought against leftist national liberation movements in one part of the world or another. Most of the Americans were veterans of the Vietnam War. The British contingent drew heavily from soldiers who had served in the colonies of Kenya, Burma, and Malaya. Other volunteers had fought in the Belgian Congo, French Algeria, and Portuguese Angola.⁴⁷ Beyond that common experience, most agreed that Rhodesia’s abandonment by the US and British governments required them to step up and fight. As one American mercenary put it, “The West isn’t doing its job. The U.S. especially isn’t doing its duty. If they’re too scared to fight the Communists, then people like me have to act independently. I consider it my duty to fight.”⁴⁸

In the view of many who volunteered for combat in Rhodesia, fighting communism meant fighting the tide of forced race mixing and social engineering that had already washed across the United States, Britain, and elsewhere. It meant reclaiming what had been lost at home. To exploit those sentiments, the Rhodesian government ran a vast propaganda campaign that portrayed Rhodesia as a land of prosperity and racial order in contrast to the decaying and crime-filled multiracial cities of the United States and Britain.⁴⁹ It also sent recruitment packets to racist groups such as the John Birch Society and Britain’s National Front, as well as to veterans’ organizations and active-

45 Rockwell, *White Power*, 271.

46 On the expansion of the Rhodesian war after 1972, see Paul L. Moorcraft and Peter McLaughlin, *Chimurenga! The War in Rhodesia, 1965–80* (Sygma/Collins, 1982); and David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe: The Chimurenga War* (Faber and Faber, 1981).

47 Kyle Burke, *Revolutionaries for the Right: Anticomunist Internationalism and Paramilitary Warfare in the Cold War* (University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 111; “Rhodesia and the Mercenaries,” *Searchlight*, no. 21, 1977, Searchlight Archive.

48 Robin Wright, “Speaking Out: Americans in Rhodesia,” *Washington Post*, September 12, 1976.

49 See David Caute, *Under the Skin: The Death of White Rhodesia* (Northwestern University Press, 1983), 183. On images of Rhodesian prosperity and ease, see Schwarz, *White Man’s World*, 407–8.

duty soldiers on US and British military bases.⁵⁰ It even published ads and interviews in paramilitary periodicals such as *Soldier of Fortune* magazine, whose editor, Vietnam veteran Lt. Col. Robert K. Brown, was a firm supporter of Rhodesia and often dressed in the Rhodesian Army's battle fatigues.⁵¹ Beyond pay and adventure, the Rhodesian government promised housing support, hoping that foreigners who joined its army would settle there as citizens, part of its attempt to rebuild its dwindling European-descended population after years of "white flight."⁵²

Yet foreign volunteers did not change the war in any meaningful way, and their combat fantasies withered in the face of suffering and death. By 1979, as one reporter noted, "[t]he majority found the routine too rough to last more than a few months." The desertion rate was "estimated to run about 80 percent."⁵³ Nevertheless, Rhodesia occupied an important place in the imaginations of many white supremacists across the globe. It signified resolute resistance to racial change, the willingness of white men to wage war in defense of white supremacy, even if that war put them at odds with their own governments. John Alan Coey, a medic from the outskirts of Cleveland, Ohio, who was killed fighting with the Rhodesian Light Infantry in 1975, explained his commitment to a vision of whiteness that superseded the nation-state. "I am helping to unify the Europeans, simply by my presence and association with these people," he wrote in 1972. "For they are coming to realize that there is no important difference between Americans, White Africans, or Europeans. . . . I believe that only when all European peoples are unified, can communism and the alien conspiracy be smashed."⁵⁴

Coey, like others who fought in Rhodesia or sympathized with its plight, believed white societies were facing a rising non-white tide that could only be turned back by resolute armed action. "Since coming to Rhodesia," he explained, "I have often heard people remark that it's 'inevitable' for this country and all of southern Africa to follow the 'winds of change' and go the same way as other former colonies to the north. This is rubbish and only indicates a lack of fighting spirit, guts, and the will to rule

50 On Rhodesia's recruitment of US and British nationals, see "SOF Interview: Major Nick Lamprecht, Rhodesian Recruiting Officer," *Soldier of Fortune*, Summer 1977. On volunteers' pay in Rhodesia, see James McManus, "Mercenary Trial Raises Rhodesia Connection," *Guardian*, June 9, 1976; Robin Wright, "Speaking Out: Americans in Rhodesia," *Washington Post*, September 12, 1976; "US Vets Fight for Rhodesia," *Boston Globe*, December 10, 1976; "Recruiting: Rhodesian Army (Regular Force)," CP 050/1 Part A 28, FCO 36/1872, Mercenaries and Recruitment for Rhodesia, National Archives, Kew Gardens, UK; and Letter from P. J. Barlow to Green, March 18, 1976, CP 050/1 Part A 22, FCO 36/1872, Mercenaries and Recruitment for Rhodesia, National Archives, Kew Gardens, UK.

51 Robert K. Brown, "American Mercenaries in Africa," *Soldier of Fortune*, Summer 1975.

52 On "white flight" in Rhodesia, see Brownell, "One Last Retreat"; and Horne, *Barrel of a Gun*, 87.

53 A. J. Venter, "Rhodesia's Tragic Terrorist War: The End is Near," *Soldier of Fortune*, June 1979.

54 John Alan Coey, *A Martyr Speaks: The Journal of the Late John Alan Coey* (New Puritan Library, 1988), 40.

a civilization built by better men.”⁵⁵ From New Zealand, a kindred spirit echoed that Rhodesian soldiers and volunteers were ready to sacrifice themselves “in order to show the spineless Western world that the White man has still the guts to fight against the evil tentacles of world communism and African barbarism.”⁵⁶

Although Americans and other foreign volunteers could not win the war for Rhodesia, their stories helped radicalize a large pool of right-wing men who saw in armed action a path to power. To those who had fought in Rhodesia—or more often fantasized about it—the collapse of its white supremacist government in 1979, which gave way to the increasingly authoritarian regime of African nationalist Robert Mugabe, foretold a frightening future that might befall other white nations. Reading Rhodesia into domestic politics, many right-wingers in the United States, Britain, and Europe feared that something similar would soon happen at home. In their view, non-whites, aided by liberals and leftists and other enemies, were working to subvert white societies from within and, ultimately, establish totalitarian states.⁵⁷

United States

Atlanta-born white supremacist leader William Pierce drew those fears and fantasies together in his infamous novel, *The Turner Diaries*. A former physics professor, Pierce had served in high-ranking positions within the American Nazi Party and the World Union of National Socialists before starting his own neo-Nazi group, the National Alliance, in 1974. For him, the bonds of whiteness superseded those of state and nation. “Race is everything,” he professed. Thus, “the destiny of America” was “inextricably linked by ties of blood and culture to those of the other white nations of the world, whether in Africa, the Pacific, or Europe.”⁵⁸

But in the aftermath of civil rights movements, increased non-white immigration, and decolonization, Pierce was convinced that white power was in retreat everywhere. The slow collapse of Rhodesia was particularly terrifying. Writing in 1976, Pierce had lionized Rhodesia as “one of the last bastions of the white world which has not fallen,” unlike other former colonies in Africa and the increasingly multiracial societies of the United States, Britain, and Europe. By contrast, Rhodesia “still had white men and

55 Quoted in “Killed in Action,” *Soldier of Fortune*, Spring 1976.

56 Member of the New Zealand National Front quoted in “Racism in New Zealand,” *Searchlight*, no. 37, 1978, Searchlight Archive.

57 On Rhodesia’s legacy since its collapse, see John Ismay, “Rhodesia’s Dead—But White Supremacists Have Given It New Life Online,” *New York Times Magazine*, April 10, 2018.

58 William Pierce, “America and the Third World,” *Attack!*, no. 24, 1973, University of Iowa Special Collections, Social Documents Collection [hereafter UISDC], MsC1075.

women who understand what it means to be white,” who still hoped to retain their biological supremacy as a “race of conquerors and masters.” Above all, they “understood that if they bare their necks to the enemy . . . they will have their throats ripped open” by marauding hordes of blacks. Therefore, they “will stand and fight, while everywhere else we are surrendering.” Indeed, Pierce said, “America’s fate” hung “on the same side of the balance with Rhodesia’s.” For the fall of Rhodesia would hasten the collapse of white power elsewhere. Whites would “keep retreating, keep surrendering, until there is no place left to retreat, no surrender to make but the final one.”⁵⁹ For him, the end of white rule in Rhodesia augured a most terrifying future for whites in the United States and Europe. They, too, would now face the specter of full-scale race war.⁶⁰ Yet Pierce also found inspiration in the kind of guerrilla warfare practiced by many African nationalists. Armed and mobilized cadres in Africa had overthrown minority regimes. Once non-whites had established their own dictatorships in the United States and elsewhere, whites would have no choice but to become guerrilla warriors.⁶¹

Published in 1978 amid the collapse of Rhodesia and growing fears of white decline in the United States and elsewhere, *The Turner Diaries* offered a tale of racial redemption. The book takes the form of a diary found in 2099, one hundred years after a cataclysmic war against a totalitarian American government known as the System. After the System confiscates weapons, roving gangs of African Americans terrorize the country, pillaging white homes and raping white women. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of whites are imprisoned. Earl Turner, the book’s protagonist, joins the Organization, a cell-based white liberation movement that wages guerrilla war against the System. Turner and his comrades rob liquor stores, hoard weapons, plot assassinations, and orchestrate the bombing of the FBI headquarters. As Turner is inducted into the movement’s elite inner sanctum, known as the Order, the revolution spreads. The insurgency lynches tens of thousands of “race traitors,” setting the stage for genocide against non-whites and

59 William Pierce, “Crisis in Rhodesia: White Survival Is at Stake,” *Attack!*, no. 45, 1976, UISDC, MsC1075.

60 Pierce regularly explored the problems and parables of white power in Africa in his articles in the National Alliance’s main publication, *Attack!*, which was retitled *National Vanguard* in 1978. See “The Black Man’s Gift to Portugal,” *Attack!*, no. 6, 1971; “Subversion in South Africa,” *Attack!*, no. 16, 1972; “America and the Third World,” *Attack!*, no. 24, 1973; “Churches Bent on Suicide,” *Attack!*, no. 46, 1976; “Has the White Race Become Too Liberal to Survive,” *Attack!*, no. 54, 1977; “American Consumption, Conservation, & the Third World,” *Attack!*, no. 55, 1977; “Afrikaners O.K. Racemixing in S.W. Africa,” *Attack!*, no. 58, 1978; “The Great Trek,” *National Vanguard*, no. 59, 1978; “The Afro-Asian Invasion of Europe,” *National Vanguard*, no. 60, 1978; “South Africa Choose Suicide,” *National Vanguard*, no. 74, 1980; and “Learning to Get Along,” *National Vanguard*, no. 79, 1980, all in UISDC, MsC1075.

61 These included African nationalists and the Black Panthers. See the collection of “Revolutionary Notes” and the article “What We Must Do Now,” published in *Attack!* in 1971–1972 and reprinted in FBI Washington Field Office Report, William Luther Pierce, September 21, 1972, 27–35, in FBI Pierce File. Pierce was also inspired by the French OAS and its guerrilla war against the French state to keep French Algeria. See “Roger Deguldre and the O.A.S.,” *Attack!*, no. 57, 1977, UISDC, MsC1075.

Jews. Eventually, Turner receives orders to fly a plane loaded with a nuclear warhead into the Pentagon. He dies but the attack sparks a global nuclear war.⁶²

In the aftermath, the Organization seizes control over the United States and then presses the white revolution into Western Europe. “A cleansing hurricane of change swept over the continent,” the book’s final narration explains. After the “blood flowed ankle-deep in the streets of many of Europe’s great cities,” the “great dawn of the New Era broke over the Western world.” To secure white rule across the planet, the Organization launched chemical, biological, and nuclear war throughout Asia. With billions dead and vast swaths of territory depopulated, a new transatlantic white state “spread its wise and benevolent rule over the earth for all time to come.”⁶³

Advertised alongside graphic stories about Rhodesia’s faltering war in *Soldier of Fortune* and other paramilitary periodicals, *The Turner Diaries* became a kind of bible for white supremacists around the world. At once an ideological primer and a how-to manual, it situated revolutionary violence within a racial frame above and beyond the nation-state. The Organization did not only fight for whites in the United States but instead for all white people worldwide. Through its vision of race war and planetary white power, *The Turner Diaries* helped inspire armed groups across the United States and Europe, many of whom began to see themselves as guerrillas arrayed against their own governments.⁶⁴

Yet *The Turner Diaries* owed much to leftist national liberation movements that had waged this kind of combat in the decolonizing world. It also borrowed the metaphors and modes of violence that some radical leftists in the United States and Europe had embraced in the late 1960s and early 1970s. For groups such as the Weather Underground and the German Red Army Faction, violence against the state—especially bombings—appeared as an expedient to revolutionary change at home and in the international arena.⁶⁵ This kind of large-scale revolutionary violence might have been inspiring, but it

62 Pierce published the book under the pen name Andrew MacDonald and serialized it in *Attack!* starting in 1975 before publishing it as a stand-alone book in 1978. See Andrew MacDonald [William Pierce], *The Turner Diaries* (National Alliance, 1978).

63 MacDonald [Pierce], *Turner Diaries*, 277–79.

64 See J. M. Berger, “The Turner Legacy: The Storied Origins and Enduring Impact of White Nationalism’s Deadly Bible,” International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, ICCT Research Paper, September 2016, <https://icct.nl/publication/turner-legacy-storied-origins-and-enduring-impact-white-nationalisms-deadly-bible>; Tanjev Schultz, “Transatlantic Ties of the Far Right: The NSU Case in Germany and Its Links to Actors and Incidents in the USA,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 35, no. 7 (2023): 1468–85; George Michael, “The Revolutionary Model of Dr William Pierce,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15, no. 3 (2003): 62–80; and James William Gibson, *Warrior Dreams: Violence and Manhood in Post-Vietnam America* (Hill and Wang, 1994), 220–27.

65 On leftist revolutionary violence in the wake of 1968—its goals, contexts, and strategies—see Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary*

also came with significant risks, both political and personal. Therefore, for many, foreign battlefields offered a more viable path to actual war. Abroad, white supremacists could engage in armed action against threatening enemies while also gaining experience that could be deployed in the domestic struggle. This was particularly appealing for Americans, given the global scope of US Cold War interventions, but others joined too.

Central America

In the early 1980s, Central America was the main attraction for US-based movements. There far-right groups cast their lot with El Salvador's right-wing state security forces and Nicaragua's anticommunist guerrillas, the Contras. Although neither force clearly served the ends of white supremacy at home or on the international stage, right-wing leaders and activists saw them as allies in the global struggle against communism, long viewed as the source of America's racial problems. Fighting communism on the front lines in Central America, they argued, would not only forestall its advance toward and within the United States.⁶⁶ It would also stamp out the flow of non-white migrants into the United States—who were often cast as tools of communist subversion—thereby preserving the nation's racial character and stock. Indeed, starting in the late 1970s, a string of white supremacist groups, led by the Ku Klux Klan, had devoted growing concern to the southern border, sponsoring months-long Border Watches. Through these efforts, armed Klansmen gained national notoriety as they captured and intimidated migrants crossing from Mexico into Texas and Arizona, efforts that inspired subsequent vigilante campaigns along the border.⁶⁷

For American white supremacists, the primary conduit to the battlefields of Central America was through the group known as Civilian Military Assistance, or CMA. Taking shape in 1979, CMA was led by Tom Posey, a Vietnam veteran, member of the Alabama National Guard, and Klansman from Decatur, Alabama.

Violence in the Sixties and Seventies (University of California Press, 2004); Stefan Aust, *Baader-Meinhof: The Inside Story of the R.A.F.* (Oxford University Press, 2009); Bryan Burrough, *Days of Rage: America's Radical Underground, the FBI, and the Forgotten Age of Revolutionary Violence* (Penguin, 2015); and Richard Vinen, *1968: Radical Protest and Its Enemies* (HarperCollins, 2018), 279–96. The Red Army Faction, ironically, served as an incubator for far-right politics. Horst Mahler, a founding member of the RAF, converted to the right while in prison. He later joined the far-right National Democratic Party and embraced Holocaust denial. See George Michael, "The Ideological Evolution of Horst Mahler: The Far Left–Extreme Right Synthesis," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 32, no. 9 (2009): 346–66.

66 "Vigilantes in Arizona Capture 15 Illegal Aliens," *New York Times*, July 7, 1986; Peter Applebome, "Paramilitary Group That Caught 15 Aliens Plans More Patrols," *New York Times*, July 8, 1986; Dudley Clendinen, "Anti-Communism Called the Thread Binding Group That Captured Aliens," *New York Times*, July 11, 1986; and Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 96–98.

67 On the Klan's Border Watch, see "The Great White Hope," *Newsweek*, November 14, 1977.

Posey had participated in violent Klan actions in his hometown but believed his talents as a soldier were better utilized on the frontlines of the global struggle against communism, which he identified as the main force driving non-white immigration into the United States. Through CMA, Posey recruited likeminded veterans and aspiring warriors from the Klan, the National Alliance, and other right-wing groups, as well as active-duty soldiers and National Guardsmen.⁶⁸ By 1983, Posey claimed the group had more than five thousand members nationwide.⁶⁹ Soon the CMA was working with US officials in El Salvador to smuggle weapons and military equipment from the United States to the Salvadoran security forces.⁷⁰

This campaign laid the foundations for a larger mission through which Posey and the CMA supplied weapons to—and occasionally fought alongside—Nicaragua's anticommunist Contra rebels. In sum, Posey bragged, CMA managed to transmit more than \$70,000 worth of guns and ammunition to the largest Contra group, the Fuerza Democrática Nicaragüense.⁷¹ In Nicaragua, the CMA joined a rogue's gallery of freelancers and gun runners, including Belgian mercenaries and Rhodesian military pilots.⁷² Yet the CMA operation soon collapsed after the Sandinistas shot down one of its supply flights in 1984, killing two Americans and causing a brief scandal for the Reagan administration.⁷³

68 See Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 77–100; Burke, *Revolutionaries for the Right*, 152–53; and Larry Martz and Vincent Coppola, “The Shadowy World of America’s Mercenaries,” *Newsweek*, November 3, 1986. They honed their skills at a string of paramilitary camps that appeared across the nation but were especially prominent in the South. See Timothy K. Smith, “In Alabama Woods, Frank Camper Trains Men to Repel Invaders,” *Wall Street Journal*, August 19, 1985. The CMA also recruited at *Soldier of Fortune* conventions and gun shows. See Iver Peterson, “Mercenaries in Fatigues Meet in Nevada Glitter,” *New York Times*, September 26, 1984.

69 Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 98.

70 Philip Taubman, “U.S. Army Officers Helped Private Group in Salvador,” *New York Times*, September 7, 1984.

71 Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 93. Here, too, Posey and the CMA maintained close connections with the CIA and the US military, which had turned to private groups to supply the Contras after Congress cut off all US aid to them in 1984. CMA contacts with US ambassador to Honduras John Negroponte and the CIA are documented in a series of cables from the US Embassy in Honduras. See cable from US Embassy Honduras to US Secretary of State, January 11, 1984, folder DRF/Contra-Military Activities 7, box 4, Oliver North Files; Cable from US Embassy El Salvador to US Secretary of State, January 26, 1984, folder DRF/Contra-Military Activities 7, box 4, Oliver North Files; Cable from US Embassy Honduras to US Secretary of State, September 3, 1984, folder DRF/Contra-Military Activities 7, box 4, Oliver North Files; Memo from CIA/DDO 7 to Robert McFarlane, September 11, 1984, folder DRF/Contra-Military Activities 6, box 4, Oliver North Files, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, Simi Valley, California.

72 James Lemoyne, “Shipping Contra Arms by the Seat of the Pants,” *New York Times*, December 5, 1986; “U.K. Security Firm with Thatcher Ties Had Role in Contra Aid, Data Indicate,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 25, 1987.

73 On the CMA crash and the public outcry that followed, see Michael Hirsley, “Paramilitary Free-

The failure of the CMA reinforced feelings of government betrayal and thus fanned anti-statist fantasies among the American right. Leader Tom Posey attributed the death of the CMA volunteers to weak-kneed liberals whose anticommunist resolve had crumbled in the wake of the Vietnam War. “You might say it was Congress that killed my men,” he declared, “because there would have been no reason for them to go if CIA funds had not been cut off.”⁷⁴ Posey’s frustration revealed a growing sense of disillusionment within the American movement. He and those around him had believed they were serving the ends of the state and its anticommunist mission. But when the Reagan administration distanced itself from their actions, Posey and others grew convinced that the government itself was an obstacle—not just to anticommunism but to the broader cause of white supremacy.

Other paramilitary schemes bore out similar patterns and generated similar resentments. In early 1981, federal authorities arrested ten men in Louisiana who were plotting to invade the tiny Caribbean nation of Dominica and overthrow its newly elected government. Dubbed the “Bayou of Pigs” by the press, this ill-conceived coup attempt had been organized through classified advertisements in *Soldier of Fortune* magazine that attracted a motley crew of Vietnam veterans, National Guardsmen, Klansmen, and neo-Nazis from the United States and Canada. The purpose of Operation Red Dog, as its participants called it, was to turn the island into a base for further offensives against leftist governments in the Caribbean. Its proponents also hoped to build hotel casinos and then use the proceeds, ideally millions of dollars in profits, to fund the Klan and other white supremacist groups back home, helping arm and train their members for future race war. Foiled at the last minute by an FBI infiltrator—the men were ready to set sail from Louisiana—authorities found dozens of guns, thousands of rounds of ammunition, Nazi and Confederate flags, and copies of William Pierce’s neo-Nazi newspaper, *National Vanguard*. Charged with violating the Neutrality Act, most pled guilty and received lengthy sentences.⁷⁵ Among those convicted was Klansman Don Black. Issued a nine-year sentence, Black was apoplectic. “What we were doing was in the best interests of the United States and its security in the hemisphere,” he told reporters. “We feel betrayed by our own government.”⁷⁶

lancers under Fire in Nicaragua,” *Chicago Tribune*, September 23, 1984; and “Senators Hear Official Story of Fatal Nicaraguan Adventure,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 11, 1984.

74 Don Oberdorfer, “Two Americans Called Volunteers: Pair Died in Nicaraguan Crash,” *Washington Post*, September 5, 1985.

75 See Stewart Bell, *Bayou of Pigs: The True Story of an Audacious Plot to Turn a Tropical Island into a Criminal Paradise* (Wiley, 2008).

76 David Schwab Abel, “The Racist Next Door,” *Miami New Times*, February 19, 1998.

United Kingdom

Black's sense of governmental betrayal reverberated across the Atlantic, most resoundingly in Britain. Since the 1960s, a growing racist populism had registered throughout much of the political landscape, driven mainly by fears about the large numbers of non-white Commonwealth migrants arriving in Britain. In the eyes of many Britons, especially those who supported Conservative MP Enoch Powell and the right-wing Monday Club, British elites were in cahoots with the migrants, whose presence threatened the racial composition and identity of Britain. Mainstream politicians were, in that sense, traitors to their own people. The suspicion that political elites—especially liberals—had sold out white British citizens to accommodate non-whites echoed the claims made by many Rhodesians whose sense of Britishness, always imbued by race, had demanded rebellion against the British government.⁷⁷

When Rhodesia collapsed, the sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland took its place as the clearest battleground upon which white Britons could wage combat in defense of their rights, privileges, and way of life against ethnic foes. For Protestant leaders such as the Reverend Ian Paisley, Northern Ireland was but one front in a global struggle to defend Anglo-Saxon societies and traditions. “The war is . . . everywhere,” one writer declared in Paisley's newspaper, *The Protestant Telegraph*. Its dimensions could be glimpsed in Africa, the United States, and the United Nations and now “in the training of young Roman Catholic men in Ulster in Black Panther urban guerrilla tactics.”⁷⁸ Loyalist paramilitaries drew the same links between domestic and overseas battlefields. As one put it, “The struggle of free people against communist revolution and liberal terrorism is the struggle of the Ulster Loyalist as much as it is the struggle of the white Rhodesians.”⁷⁹ This view rendered the Irish Republican Army (IRA) within the field of leftist revolutionaries worldwide, and figured Northern Ireland's Catholics as an alien enemy within Britain. As the IRA turned to guerrilla warfare against loyalists and the Northern Irish state, many on the British far right reckoned the struggle through the lenses of government betrayal and decolonization run amok. As in Rhodesia, they said, loyal British subjects were being abandoned by their own state and their own leaders.⁸⁰ The IRA's bombing campaign in London and other cities gave these appeals

77 Schwarz, *White Man's World*, 35–52, 425–38; Schofield, *Enoch Powell*, 264–318.

78 Michael Clark quoted in Daniel Geary, “From Belfast to Bob Jones: Ian Paisley, Protestant Fundamentalism, and Transatlantic Right,” in *Global White Nationalism: From Apartheid to Trump*, ed. Daniel Geary, Camilla Schofield, and Jennifer Sutton (Manchester University Press, 2018), 131–54, quote at 149.

79 Member of the Ulster Volunteer Force quoted in “What Their Papers Say,” *Searchlight*, April 1975, Searchlight Archive.

80 There was indeed a long history of symbiotic grievance and parable between Ulster and Rhodesia, dating back to the early twentieth century. See Donal Lowry, “Ulster Resistance and Loyalist Rebellion

a deeper sense of urgency. Decolonization had come home in the form of guerrilla war on the mainland—violence that unfolded at the very same time as many non-white immigrants arrived and many industrial jobs disappeared.⁸¹

In that climate, the National Front, the country's leading far-right white supremacist party in the late 1970s and early 1980s, published story after story about Northern Ireland, urging Britons to come to the aid of its loyalist community.⁸² Leader John Tyndall, long a supporter of both Rhodesia and Northern Ireland, had cut his teeth in the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement and World Union of National Socialists before softening his public image in the National Front. Yet he was still bound up with the international neo-Nazi movement, corresponding frequently with William Pierce and others abroad.⁸³

The National Front cultivated a hypermasculine and martial visage, and was thus especially fond of loyalist paramilitary groups such as the Ulster Defense Association (UDA) and Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF).⁸⁴ In turn, small but significant numbers of UDA and UVF men joined the National Front or flitted on its edges, even as loyalist paramilitary leaders sought to distance themselves from the National Front, which they deemed a “neo-Nazi movement.”⁸⁵ At the same time, National Front leaders talked of forming a “private army” from their ranks to fight alongside, or in lieu of, the British Army.⁸⁶ Such schemes did not pan out.⁸⁷ But in National Front strongholds,

in the Empire,” in *“An Irish Empire”? Aspects of Ireland and the British Empire*, ed. Sally Visick (Manchester University Press, 1996), 191–215, esp. 203–8.

81 Geary, “From Belfast to Bob Jones,” 144–47.

82 “The UDA and the National Front—The Killers and the Thugs,” *Searchlight*, July 1975; Martin Durham, “The British Extreme Right and Northern Ireland,” *Contemporary British History* 23, no. 2 (2012): 195–211.

83 Indeed, Tyndall had once explained to William Pierce that his shift into the National Front would achieve his aim of national socialism “without the open Nazi label.” See Letter from John Tyndall to William Pierce, 1967, quoted in Editorial, “The Two Levels of National Front Policy,” *Searchlight*, August 1978, 2.

84 One National Front member, neo-Nazi Steve Brady, sought to connect the UDA with a series of far-right terror groups in Europe. See “Brady Forgings Nazi Links for Loyalists,” *Searchlight*, August 1982, Searchlight Archive. Meanwhile, the UVF forged its own links with overseas neo-Nazi groups, such as Belgium's VMO (Flemish Militant Order), from which UVF men tried to purchase weapons in 1980. Arrested and indicted, the orchestrators received lengthy prison sentences. See “The Men Who Wanted the UVF to Bomb British Jews,” *Searchlight*, May 1983, Searchlight Archive.

85 Martin Walker, *The National Front* (Fontana, 1977), 160; “UDA and the National Front.”

86 “Northern Ireland: The Third Force,” *Nationalism Today*, no. 8, 1982, Series 13, Sub-series 2, box 1, Searchlight Archive; “Front Try Orange Card in Scotland,” *Searchlight*, April 1980, Searchlight Archive; “UDA Rebuffs YNA,” *Searchlight*, September 1981, Searchlight Archive.

87 See “NF Setback in Ulster,” *Searchlight*, May 1984, Searchlight Archive.

especially in England's northwest, where deindustrialization and burgeoning immigrant communities produced for many working-class whites a kind of siege mentality, the willingness of Ulster men to take up arms in defense of their communities was nothing short of inspirational. In the words of Martin Webster, deputy leader of the National Front, Ulster loyalists could teach something to British men who "had lost their guts to fight against the black invasion."⁸⁸ And so, in addition to dramatizing the cause of loyalist paramilitaries, the National Front sought to make war by raising funds, smuggling weapons, hosting UVA and UDF leaders, and urging British soldiers to view the war as one to save Britain itself.⁸⁹ In turn, members of the National Front saw the war in Northern Ireland as a way to "strike back against the perceived downfall" of the United Kingdom.⁹⁰

Leaderless Resistance in the United States

In Britain and the United States, then, a growing sense of anomie, alienation, and anger pervaded far-right politics in the late 1970s and early 1980s, sentiments that were catalyzed by the contraction of the welfare state amid the shocks of deindustrialization. Feeling pushed aside or ignored by their governments, and deeply troubled by the legacies of the civil rights, feminist, and gay liberation movements, many concluded that their nations had fundamentally changed. What had once been white countries—or more precisely white men's countries—they reasoned, were no more. Far-right white supremacist leaders were keen to exploit that rancor and rage. In their eyes, even conservative leaders such as President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher offered little salvation since both were devoted to neoliberal policies that sacrificed the working class on the altar of profit and privatization. One former Klansman, speaking in 1984 at a paramilitary convention, put it bluntly: "They don't take on the international bankers and the Federal Reserve; they think that's part of our glorious capitalist heritage. . . . They don't take on the Zionists at all because they are the Chosen and our Number One ally in the Middle East." And thus, they would not "take any stand for the white race and its preservation either."⁹¹

Only a violent revolution, it seemed, could set things right. To accomplish that, far-right leaders and activists worked toward a more decentered and destructive form of

88 "Webster Recruiting Drive Hits Ulster," *Searchlight*, September 1983, Searchlight Archive.

89 As an editorial in the National Front's *Nationalism Today* newspaper put it, "the war in Ulster is a war of national unity." See "Casting Eyes Across the Water," *Searchlight*, June 1984, Searchlight Archive.

90 Quote from James Bright, "Hands Across the Sea: Paramilitary Loyalism in England and Scotland," *Writing the Troubles*, April 1, 2019, <https://writingthetroublesweb.wordpress.com/2019/04/01/paramilitary-loyalism-in-england-and-scotland/>. See also Martin Durham, "The British Extreme Right and Northern Ireland," *Contemporary British History* 26, no. 2 (2012): 196–97.

91 Former Klansman Robert Weems quoted in Thomas Meaney, "White Power," *London Review of Books*, August 2019, <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v41/n15/thomas-meaney/white-power>.

violence called “leaderless resistance.”⁹² Chief among them was Louis Beam, a Vietnam veteran and Klansman from Texas. Beam had outlined the strategy of “leaderless resistance” in an influential tract that quickly spread far beyond the small Klan newsletter in which it first appeared. “America is quickly moving into a long dark night of police state tyranny, where the rights now accepted by most as being inalienable will disappear,” he warned in 1983. Sensing that the armed right in the United States had been fractured by years of infighting and infiltrators, Beam saw an opportunity. Rather than unite disparate bands under a single leader, Beam urged white supremacists to form a vast underground of independent cells, capable of working toward a common cause but self-reliant enough to withstand the collapse of other cells—a “thousand points of resistance,” as he put it.⁹³ Modeled on how Beam understood communist undergrounds, as well as the guerrilla heroics of *The Turner Diaries*, “leaderless resistance” refracted the wars of the decolonizing world into domestic terrorism. As one of Beam’s close allies explained, “Much of what we will have to learn has actually been well articulated by the leftist national liberation movements. What that entails is a resistance battle which partakes of guerrilla warfare techniques in every possible aspect.”⁹⁴

The American neo-Nazi group known as the Silent Brotherhood—or, reflecting its Germanophilia, the Brüder Schweigen—was among the first to explicitly take up the mantle of leaderless resistance. Led by Robert Mathews, an ardent white supremacist who had grown tired of the empty bombast emanating from many movement leaders, the Silent Brotherhood comprised Vietnam veterans, Klansmen, and members of the Aryan Nations, a neo-Nazi group headquartered in the mountains of Idaho. Starting in 1983, Mathews and his band of followers—never more than twenty men—launched a war against the federal government. Their ultimate goal was to spark a race war in the United States and then establish a white ethnostate in the Pacific Northwest. To that end, the Silent Brotherhood began robbing banks and armored cars, heists that yielded more than \$4 million, which Mathews circulated throughout the broader white supremacist movement. Mathews and his men also assassinated Alan Berg, a Jewish talk radio host in Denver who liked to antagonize white power groups. Soon Mathews and his dozen or so followers began to refer to their group as the Order, taking the name of the elite cadre of white warriors from *The Turner Diaries*.⁹⁵

92 Beam borrowed the term and basic strategy from an obscure essay by Ulius Louis Amoss, who had argued in the early 1960s for the use guerrilla tactics in the event of a communist takeover. See Jeffrey Kaplan, “Leaderless Resistance,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 9, no. 3 (1997): 80–95.

93 Louis Beam “Leaderless Resistance,” *The Seditonist*, February 12, 1992, <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~satran/Ford%2006/Wk%202-1%20Terrorism%20Networks%20leaderless-resistance.pdf>. This is a longer, republished version of an essay Beam published in 1983. See Beam, “Leaderless Resistance,” *Inter-Klan Newsletter*, n.d. (circa Spring 1983), accessed December 8, 2025, https://simson.net/ref/leaderless/1983.inter-klan_newsletter.pdf.

94 John Newell, “Past Lessons & Today’s Reality,” *White Aryan Resistance* 9, no. 3, Radicalism Collection, Michigan State University Library Special Collections, East Lansing, MI [hereafter RCMSU].

95 See Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood: Inside America’s Racist Underground*

The group collapsed in 1984 after Robert Mathews died in a fiery shootout with FBI agents on an island in Puget Sound. Over the next two years, the FBI rounded up its members, who were then convicted and sentenced to decades in prison—although an attempt to try them for sedition, alongside other white supremacist leaders, failed in 1988.⁹⁶ David Lane, one of Mathews’s closest comrades and the man who drove the getaway car at Berg’s assassination, soon became a global far-right celebrity and intellectual, all from the confines of prison, to which he was incarcerated for life. Since the 1980s, his Fourteen Words—“We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children”—has served as a rallying cry for militant white supremacists across the world.⁹⁷ He would also work to popularize leaderless resistance through his own esoteric white supremacist philosophy called Wotansvolk.⁹⁸

The Order—its violent example and the personal sacrifice of its members—elicited sympathy and support from kindred spirits abroad.⁹⁹ In the 1990s, Colin Jordan, the erstwhile leader of Britain’s defunct National Socialist Movement and former deputy of the World Union of National Socialists, sent money to help Robert Mathews’s widow. In 2004, Jordan would dedicate his novel *The Uprising*, a tale of white revolution against a Jewish government that derived much of its plot from *The Turner Diaries*, to Robert Mathews and imprisoned Order members David Lane and Richard Scutari.¹⁰⁰ Like Lane, Scutari also cultivated connections with white supremacist groups overseas. His influence was particularly strong among groups in Sweden and Finland, whom he encouraged to create a pan-Nordic neo-Nazi group called the Nordic Resistance Movement. Through regular correspondence from his prison cell, Scutari provided both ideological and tactical guidance. He recommended reading *The Turner Diaries* and other texts so that the Nordic Resistance Movement could learn the strategy of leaderless resistance. “There will come a time when all you guys have to go underground and operate covertly,” he warned. “This is why it is important that we should all be networking with others in other countries.”¹⁰¹

(The Free Press, 1989); Zeskind, *Blood and Politics*, 96–106, 301–7; Tom Stites and James Coates, “Siege Over, Neo-Nazis Surrender,” *Chicago Tribune*, April 23, 1985; Wayne King, “23 in White Supremacist Group Are Indicted on Federal Charges,” *New York Times*, April 6, 1985; Wayne King, “Neo-Nazi Dream of a Racist Territory in Pacific Northwest Refuses to Die,” *New York Times*, July 5, 1986.

96 Flynn and Gerhardt, *Silent Brotherhood*, 393–98; Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 171–84.

97 “Terrorist, ‘14 Words’ Author, Dies in Prison,” *Southern Poverty Law Center*, October 1, 2007, <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/reports/terrorist-14-words-author-dies-prison/>.

98 Kaplan, “Leaderless Resistance,” 89–90.

99 See for instance “Get Ready for War!,” *White Aryan Resistance*, July 2002, RCMSU.

100 Macklin, *Failed Führers*, 309; Colin Jordan, *The Uprising* (NS Publications, 2004).

101 Scutari quoted in Jeff Tischauser and Hannah Geis, “Neo-Nazi Order Member Released from Prison after Radicalizing Terrorist Group,” *Southern Poverty Law Center*, December 5, 2024, <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/hate-watch/neo-nazi-order-member-released-from-prison-after-radicalizing-terrorist-group/>. That group was based upon a Swedish organization that took the same name as

The Order represented the most violent vanguard of the American right in the 1980s. Beneath it lay a dispersed but increasingly radical constellation of old and new mobilizations.¹⁰² These included a more militarized version of the Klan that shed the white robes for combat uniforms, as well as the growing skinhead movement, which arrived in the United States in the early 1980s. First appearing in Britain, skinhead music—and the violent gangs that sprung up around it—provided another major conduit through which US far-right leaders and activists connected with kindred movements across the ocean.¹⁰³ Indeed, many saw skinhead music as the ideal way to radicalize young men and guide them toward violent action. As National Front organizer Eddy Morrison explained, it was a “powerful weapon for anyone who could turn it politically.”¹⁰⁴ Moreover, it served to inculcate a warlike mentality. “The skinhead revolt is a natural and inevitable development,” one National Front writer explained. “It is the return of the warrior.” In an “effete, over-civilized and self-abasing society,” skinheads rekindled “ancient barbaric qualities.” This is just what British society needed “in order to revitalize it and steel it for the coming struggle for survival.”¹⁰⁵

The skinheads’ emergence in the United States delighted American far-right leaders like Tom Metzger, founder of White Aryan Resistance (WAR), a neo-Nazi group headquartered in southern California.¹⁰⁶ An Army veteran and television repairman, Metzger had formed White Aryan Resistance after breaking from the Klan. He imagined his movement as a violent vanguard of racial revolution and saw white

Tom Metzger’s US-based skinhead movement: White Aryan Resistance. On the group’s formation and embrace of leaderless resistance, see Tore Bjørge and Jacob Aasland Ravndal, “Why the Nordic Resistance Movement Restrains Its Use of Violence,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 14, no. 6 (2020): 37–48.

102 Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 103–34; Zeskind, *Blood and Politics*, 27–106.

103 See Ryan Shaffer, “The Soundtrack of Neo-Fascism: Youth and Music in the National Front,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 17, nos. 4–5 (2013): 458–82, esp. 472–75; Ryan Shaffer, “British, European, and White: Cultural Constructions of Identity in Postwar British Fascist Music,” in *Cultures of Post-War British Fascism*, ed. Nigel Copsey and John E. Richardson (Routledge, 2015), 144–45; Timothy S. Brown, “Subcultures, Pop Cultures, and Politics: Skinheads and ‘Nazi Rock’ in England and Germany,” *Journal of Social History* 38, no. 1 (2004): 164–65; and “Blood & Honour,” *Southern Poverty Law Center*, accessed November 28, 2017, <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/blood-honour>.

104 Morrison quoted in Robert Forbes and Eddie Stanton, *The White Nationalist Skinhead Movement: UK & U.S.A., 1979–1993* (Feral House, 2015), 10.

105 “The Return of the Warrior,” *Nationalism Today*, no. 9, 1982, Series 13, Sub-series 2, box 1, Searchlight Archive. It is likely that this was written by Derek Holland or Nick Griffin, editors of *Nationalism Today*.

106 As the FBI noted in 1989, a growing number of “skinheads are currently associated with WAR.” FBI, San Diego SAC, Domestic Security–Terrorism, “White Aryan Resistance, also known as White American Resistance,” May 19, 1988, 4, in the FBI’s FOIA Reading Room. Tom Metzger would later boast that he “was the first in the country to recognize skinheads and befriend them.” See “Tom Metzger,” *Southern Poverty Law Center*, accessed August 14, 2025, <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/individual/tom-metzger>.

power music as the best way to politicize young, disillusioned white men. It was, simply, “the most powerful message in the country today for the white race.”¹⁰⁷ He labored to link White Aryan Resistance to American skinheads and, through them, to kindred movements in Britain and Europe. He hawked a growing catalog of neo-Nazi music and sponsored international white power music festivals, which drew new recruits at home while boosting his profile abroad.¹⁰⁸

As Metzger sought to mobilize skinheads as shock troops for race war, he also embraced leaderless resistance. He like to call Robert Mathews the “father of America’s Second Revolution,” and conducted a pilgrimage to the cabin on Puget Sound where Mathews had died.¹⁰⁹ With Mathews in mind, Metzger advised his skinhead recruits on how to launch a violent revolution, and lionized the personal sacrifice that entailed.¹¹⁰ One article in his group’s eponymous newspaper explained that “[y]oung terrorists, or freedom fighters, gain eternal glory by joining the fight, and reverence toward them is amplified by martyrdom or sainthood if they perish in the course of violent duty.”¹¹¹

Others also saw the skinhead movement as a means of leaderless resistance. For William Pierce, the author of *The Turner Diaries*, the skinheads would be the vanguard of the coming race war in America. “We will win the war only by killing our enemies,” he proclaimed in 1989. Skinheads were poised to spearhead that campaign through

107 Metzger quoted in Martin Durham, *White Rage: The Extreme Right and American Politics* (Routledge, 2007), 31.

108 These festivals began in 1989. See Andrew Pollack, “Boredom and Rain End Racist Rally,” *New York Times*, March 6, 1989; “Aryan Fest, ‘89,” *White Aryan Resistance* 9, no. 3, 1989; Tom Metzger, Editorial, *White Aryan Resistance* 9, no. 3, 1989, RCMSU. By the late 1980s, Metzger had formed a friendship with Nick Griffin and several other young National Front activists. See Nick Griffin, “An Interview with Tom Metzger,” *Nationalism Today*, no. 31, Series 13, Sub-series 2, box 1, Searchlight Archive. Metzger also subscribed to neo-Nazi band leader Ian Stuart’s Blood & Honour newsletter, and published ads for Skrewdriver in WAR’s newspaper. See “Pan-Aryanism Binds Hate Groups.”

109 Tom Metzger, Editorial, *White Aryan Resistance*, October 1997, University of Michigan Library Special Collections, Ann Arbor, MI [hereafter UMLSC]. For more on Metzger’s praise for Mathews, see Raphael S. Ezekiel, *The Racist Mind: Portraits of American Neo-Nazis and Klansmen* (Viking, 1995), 79. On Mathews and DePugh, see Form Letter from Tom Metzger, *White Aryan Resistance*, February 22, 1988, White Aryan Resistance records, page 0033, The Gordon Hall and Grace Hoag Collection of Dissenting and Extremist Printed Propaganda, Brown Digital Repository, Brown University Library, Providence, RI [hereafter GHGHC].

110 See “Tom Metzger’s Message to the Gathering of the Klans,” WAR flier, September 14, 1992, White Aryan Resistance records, page 0077, GHGHC. See also the seven-part series by Edward Kerling titled “Whitey Revolutionary,” published in *White Aryan Resistance* between November 1995 and August 1996; WAR Staff, “Why I Believe in Murder,” *White Aryan Resistance*, July 1996; James Mason, “The Revolutionary Position,” *White Aryan Resistance*, August 1996; Daniel Kuehne, “Thoughts on the Militia,” *White Aryan Resistance*, August 1997; and “Why Racist Cells Are Hot in Canada,” *White Aryan Resistance*, April 2000, all in UMLSC.

111 Quote from “The Potential Terrorist,” *White Aryan Resistance*, November 1995, UMLSC.

low-level assaults by vigilantes—someone who “cracks the enemy’s skull in the street with a baseball bat, rips his face open with a bicycle chain, or breaks his legs across a curbstone.” For that was a “healthy red-blooded response to the current situation in America’s cities.”¹¹²

Pierce’s embrace of the skinheads reflected his deepening belief that individuals could and should undertake racial violence on their own accord, independent of any group or organization, including small terrorist cells such as the Order.¹¹³ His 1989 novel, *Hunter*, a kind of prequel to *The Turner Diaries*, told the story of a Vietnam veteran who murders interracial couples and civil rights leaders.¹¹⁴ Pierce dedicated the book to Joseph Paul Franklin, a former member of the American Nazi Party who killed at least twenty-two people—the very same kinds of people targeted in *Hunter*—over the course of ten years in the late 1970s and early 1980s. As Pierce put it, Franklin knew “his duty as a white man and did what a responsible son of his race must do.”¹¹⁵ By the mid-1990s, William Pierce had also started his own record label, Resistance Records, which imported and sold vinyl and cassettes to and from Europe and Canada. It was, in his eyes, the ideal recruiting tool. “Music speaks to us at a deeper level than books or political rhetoric: music speaks directly to the soul,” he explained in 1999. “Resistance Records will be the music of our people’s renewal and rebirth. . . . It will be music of defiance and rage against the enemies of our people. It will be the music of the great cleansing revolution which is coming.”¹¹⁶

Resistance Records helped Pierce cultivate and correspond with a cluster of far-right figures in France, England, and Germany. That, in turn, enabled him to secure European-based publishers for his books. As a result, said one expert, Pierce became “undoubtedly the most well-known American right-wing figure in Europe.”¹¹⁷ Indeed, by 1993, *The Turner Diaries* had been translated into a half-dozen languages, selling hundreds of thousands of copies in Europe, South Africa, and elsewhere. The international skinhead movement known as Blood & Honour hawked copies in the back pages of its monthly

112 William Pierce, “Guest Commentary,” *White Aryan Resistance* 9, no. 3, 1989, RCMSU.

113 Durham, *White Rage*, 107–9.

114 Pierce also published this novel under his pen name. See Andrew MacDonald [William Pierce], *Hunter* (National Vanguard Books, 1989).

115 Quoted in “Murder’s Price,” *Southern Poverty Law Center*, February 25, 2014, <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/reports/murders-price/>. Pierce denied that *Hunter* advocated murder or leaderless resistance as viable strategies. See Michael, “Revolutionary Model,” 70–71.

116 Quoted in Nancy S. Love, *Trendy Fascism: White Power Music and the Future of Democracy* (State University of New York Press, 2016), 2.

117 “National Alliance Leader, William Pierce, Looks to Build Far-Right Alliances,” *Southern Poverty Law Center*, March 15, 1999, <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/reports/national-alliance-leader-william-pierce-looks-build-far-right-alliances/>.

magazine. Free versions of the novel also circulated as samizdat via personal networks and was serialized in white power periodicals.¹¹⁸

Leaderless Resistance in Europe

Through these networks and connections, leaderless resistance crossed the Atlantic. In Britain, it was picked up by the neo-Nazi skinhead group Combat 18—the 1 and the 8 stood for the first and eighth letters of the alphabet, A and H, the initials of Adolf Hitler—which began as the armed wing of the British National Party (BNP). The BNP had split from the National Front to become the nation's most prominent far-right party in the early 1990s. Among Combat 18's founders were Harold Covington, an American who had joined the successor to the American Nazi Party before emigrating to Rhodesia, where he claimed to have fought in the Rhodesian Army, and Charlie Sargent, a neo-Nazi thug who ran an illicit white power music business.¹¹⁹ Under their leadership, Combat 18 spiraled beyond the control of the BNP. At that point, Combat 18 rejected the path of electoral politics and embraced revolutionary violence and terrorism.¹²⁰ A “big nationalist party or movement winning power via the polls is not going to happen,” Charlie Sargent explained. Instead, leaderless resistance was the proper path. In its publications and internal communiques, Combat 18 explicitly modeled itself on both *The Turner Diaries* and the Order, Robert Mathews's neo-Nazi terrorist group.¹²¹

In 1992 and 1993, Combat 18 launched a string of violent attacks on liberal politicians, leftist organizers, South Asian and West Indian immigrants, and other foes.¹²² This set the stage for larger aspirations. By 1997, the group explained, “active members of

118 See Blood & Honour catalog, undated, circa 1992, Series 12, Sub-series 2, box 1, Searchlight Archive. Colin Jordan, erstwhile leader of the National Socialist Movement, sold *The Turner Diaries* in the back pages of his *Gothic Ripples* magazine, a revival of fascist Arnold Leese's publication. See Macklin, *Failed Führers*, 309.

119 On the founding of Combat 18, see “Assault, Arson and Death Threats in Combat 18 in Operation,” *Searchlight*, April 1993, 3–11; “Drug Dealers, Thieves and Boot Boys. C18's Leadership Exposed,” *Searchlight*, April 1993, 7–9; and “Covington: Mastermind of Terror,” *Searchlight*, April 1993, 12–13. On Covington's past, see “Top Nazi Poses and Early Problem for New MI5 Boss,” *Searchlight*, June 1992, 3–5.

120 “The Aims of Combat 18,” *Combat 18*, no. 3, n.d., Series 12, Sub-Series 12, box 1, Searchlight Archive.

121 As one Combat 18 flyer indicated, “The Turner Diaries and The Order is the C18 role model.” C18 Pamphlet, n.d., Series 12, Sub-Series 12, box 2, Searchlight Archive.

122 See Nigel Copsey, *Contemporary British Fascism: The British National Party and the Quest for Legitimacy* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 65–66; and Daniel Trilling, *Bloody Nasty People: The Rise of Britain's Far Right* (Verso, 2013), 68–70.

C18 were making contact with likeminded people across Europe and forming cells, procuring explosives and weapons.” The goal was to launch “an international terror/sabotage campaign by TOTALLY autonomous groups and cells.”¹²³

This strategy, it was hoped, would bring maximum violence while shielding its perpetrators from outside scrutiny. As one pamphlet outlined, “The police and Searchlight,” the country’s leading anti-fascist group, “would find it impossible to infiltrate the activities of each or estimate the numbers involved in the movement.” Indeed, Britain’s skinheads had already formed “an underground network of national socialist papers and fanzines” that Combat 18 cells could utilize to “keep in touch,” in much the same way that Tom Metzger’s White Aryan Resistance had worked through American skinhead groups. “Back in the USA,” said one Combat 18 writer, “White Aryan Resistance has been pioneering the ‘cell system’ whereby local WAR chapters acted largely autonomously.” Members turned to the WAR headquarters in Fallbrook, California, “for literature, tapes, and technical advice” but “devised their own particular strategy and operations.” It did not matter whether one was “setting up propaganda or a paramilitary cell.” The “principle remains the same. Small, decentralized, discreet.”¹²⁴

Meanwhile, neo-Nazi skinheads made dramatic progress in reunified Germany after 1990, especially in the former East, where the dissolution of communist rule and state-run industry triggered soaring unemployment and frustration among young men. In that climate, far-right groups from the former West—some legal, others underground—found thousands of eager recruits. Looking back on the grandeur of the Third Reich, which few neo-Nazis had any direct experience living under, they turned their ire against Germany’s growing migrant population. In 1991, in Hoyerswerda, neo-Nazi toughs attacked Vietnamese refugees and tried to set fire to their homes. In 1992, several hundred neo-Nazi skinheads launched an orgy of violence in the coastal city of Rostock, home to a few thousand Romanian and Turkish migrants, who sheltered in dilapidated apartment blocks. Starting on August 22 and continuing for three days and nights, gang of skinheads pummeled migrants and threw petrol bombs and Molotov cocktails at their residences. Thousands of onlookers cheered them on. The German neo-Nazi skinhead movement had burst into the national consciousness in the most provocative fashion, at once escalating fears and fantasies of race war.¹²⁵

123 Combat 18, “Which Way Now White Man?,” *Strikeforce*, no. 1, circa 1997, Series 12, Sub-Series 12, box 2, Searchlight Archive.

124 Combat 18 flyer, n.d., Series 12, Sub-Series 12, box 2, Searchlight Archive.

125 On Hoyerswerda and Rostock, see Panikos Panayi, “Racial Violence in the New Germany 1990–93,” *Contemporary European History* 3, no. 3 (1994): 265–87; Ester Adaire, “This Other Germany, the Dark One: Post-Wall Memory Politics Surrounding the Neo-Nazi Riots in Rostock and Hoyerswerda,” *German Politics and Society* 37, no. 4 (2019): 43–57; and Landis MacKellar, “*Ausländerfrei!* The Hoyerswerda Pogrom, 1991,” *Journal of Right-Wing Studies* 3, no.1 (2025): 210–20. Skinhead bands beyond Germany seized on the riots as an exemplar of action and valorized them in song. See,

As these movements and modes of violence coalesced, the skinhead movement served as a conduit to war in Eastern Europe. In the early 1990s, neo-Nazis affiliated with Combat 18 and Blood & Honour made their way to splintering Yugoslavia, where they joined and fought alongside Serbian and Croatian forces.¹²⁶ Their ranks comprised Germans, Americans, Britons, Austrians, and others, and they viewed the struggle in stark political and racial terms. No matter which side they joined, Croat or Serb, they believed they were helping save white civilization against alien Muslim enemies. As one volunteer who served with the Croatia Defense Association explained, “Even though political warriors at home have enough urgent tasks to perform, we view the support of the valiantly fighting and suffering Croatian people as an important issue.”¹²⁷

Although the impact of the neo-Nazis on the Yugoslav wars was negligible, their presence stemmed from the diffuse patterns of collaboration that had come to define the transnational white power movement at the close of the twentieth century. In the early 1990s, stories of the war in Yugoslavia circulated through white power publications in the US and Europe, suggesting that new lands were now ripe for white supremacist mobilization. Indeed, far-right groups in the West were thrilled by the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. For many white power leaders and ideologues, the Cold War had divided white peoples in the West and East for too long. But now the end of the Cold War raised hopes for a great unmixing of the world’s peoples through the establishment of ethnostates.¹²⁸ In that regard, ethnic cleansing in Yugoslavia—as well as Chechnya—foretold the arrival of a long-awaited outcome.¹²⁹ Speaking about the potential for vast bloodshed in his country, one Norwegian right-wing leader claimed, in a mix of fear and anticipation, that “Norway will become the next Yugoslavia.”¹³⁰ Many others felt the same.

for instance, No Remorse, “Barbeque in Rostock,” *Barbeque in Rostock*, ISD Records, 1996.

126 See “Yugoslavia: Fascists Get In On the Act,” *Searchlight*, October 1991, 18; “Yugoslavia: Nazi Legion Goes to War,” *Searchlight*, November 1991, 16. “Yugoslavia: Neo-Nazis Behind Journalists Death?,” *Searchlight*, April 1992; “Germany’s Secret Balkans Plan,” *Searchlight*, July 1992, 12–16; and “Fascist Mercenaries Fight for Serbs,” *Searchlight*, August 1993, 14.

127 Lee, *Beast Rearwakens*, 297–98.

128 See the four-part series on “Russian Nationalist & Separatist Organizations” that ran in *White Aryan Resistance* from June through September 1994 in UMLSC.

129 See “Fascist Terror Boils Over,” *Searchlight*, October 1992, 18–21; “Former Soviet Bloc Ravaged by Nationalism” *Searchlight*, January 1992, 16–17; “How Jews Inflamed the Balkans,” *White Aryan Resistance*, May 1994; Dragan Petrovic Bajba, “From Serbia,” *White Aryan Resistance*, February 1995, UMLSC; “From Chechnia with Love by an Associate,” *White Aryan Resistance*, January 2003, RCMSU. Bosnia remains an important zone of neo-Nazi and far-right organization and violence. See Hikmet Karcic, “Bosnia and Herzegovina Is Fertile Ground for the Far Right,” *Newsweek*, March 30, 2021, <https://www.newsweek.com/bosnia-herzegovina-fertile-ground-far-right-opinion-1579508>.

130 Carl Hagen quoted in “Nazi Jailed for Refusing Military Service,” *Searchlight*, March 1993, 22.

Even though the transatlantic contingent of neo-Nazis had mainly fought against Muslims in Yugoslavia, many in the broader white supremacist movement admired Islamist terror groups whose campaigns against the United States escalated in the early 1990s. Violent Islamists intrigued white power leaders not only for the use of decentralized violence but also for their hostility to the state of Israel, which Islamists and neo-Nazis identified as the head of a global Jewish conspiracy. Neo-Nazi affinity for Islamist violence reached a peak after the car bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993. The explosion killed six people and injured thousands. If the bomb had been slightly more powerful or positioned closer to the concrete foundation, it would have demolished the central support columns of the North Tower and sent it crashing into the South Tower, destroying both and killing tens of thousands of people. Tom Metzger, leader of White Aryan Resistance, was impressed and inspired. “A handful of Arab Semites did more damage in one operation than the entire racial right-wing has accomplished in decades,” he wrote. For too long, “misguided young Aryans” had been throwing “their lives away on absolute suicide missions” or doing “decades of prison time for having machine guns they will never fire and grenades they will never throw.” Meanwhile a “few so-called inferior ragheads” caused massive “panic with one operation. Had these people been a bit more sophisticated, the entire center would have collapsed in a pile of New Order rubble.”¹³¹ As Metzger’s comments suggested, Islamist radicals such as Ramzi Yousef, who had plotted the attack with only minimal connection to formal Islamist groups, embodied the kind of leaderless resistance that white supremacists could and should enact. Yousef’s choice of target and weaponry and his desire to inflict mass destruction—these were the things to follow.

Conclusion

In all these ways, visions of race war—the circulation of stories and strategies, fears and fantasies, means and missions—wove the fabric of the global white power movement after 1945. Over time, this activity became increasingly decentralized. Rather than a single overarching organization such as the World Union of National Socialists, it took shape as a set of loose and overlapping networks. It flew under the radar of state authorities and was therefore hard to slow or stamp out. Coursing through the channels of “deviant globalization,” it forged the common language and strategies through which white supremacists enacted violence in pursuit of a transnational campaign to defend or reclaim white power worldwide.¹³² It pulled disparate groups and actors together

131 Tom Metzger, Editorial, *White Aryan Resistance*, May 1994, UMLSC. See also “Can We Learn from Hamas,” *White Aryan Resistance*, December 1994, UMLSC.

132 I borrow the notion of “deviant globalization” from Nils Gilman and his edited volume on illicit markets in oil, animals, body parts, drugs, sex, weapons, and other commodities. See Gilman,

and guided young men—including many veterans and aspiring warriors—into white supremacist politics. And it drew heavily on the memories and metaphors of war that connected the battlegrounds of Rhodesia, Central America, Northern Ireland, and Yugoslavia with the apparent decline of white societies in the United States, mainland Britain, and Europe. In the view of many in the white power movement, each place was but one battleground in a planetary race war.

The multifaceted and increasingly interconnected global white power movement of more recent decades stemmed from these roots. Starting in the mid-1990s, the emergence of the internet dramatically enhanced the ability of leaders and activists to connect, collaborate, and disseminate their ideas globally—often without leaving their home countries.¹³³ In conjunction with an ever more globalized mass media landscape, the internet also helped popularize the strategy of leaderless resistance, producing a mimetic process of copycat violence that stretches from Robert Mathews to Timothy McVeigh to David Copeland to Dylan Roof to Anders Breivik to Brenton Tarrant, with many others in between, and that includes more structured terrorist cells such as Germany’s three-person National Socialist Underground. They were not “lone wolves” but rather members of a decentralized movement that spanned states, nations, and borders.¹³⁴ Whether deeply embedded or only loosely connected, they all saw themselves as soldiers in a global struggle to save the white race.

As in earlier years, visions of global race war remained bound up with actual war. Nowhere was this clearer than in the global “war on terror,” which amplified militarized thinking and action and further eroded the boundaries between war at home and abroad.¹³⁵ Through it, white supremacists found new enemies—Islamists in particular, Muslims more generally—who joined the old cast of villains: leftists, communists, immigrants, and non-whites. At the same time, varied armed conflicts in northern Africa and the Middle East triggered swelling flows of mainly Muslim refugees into Europe and, to a lesser extent, the United States, heightening white supremacist fears of

Deviant Globalization: Black Market Economy in the 21st Century (Continuum Books, 2011).

133 As one American activist put it, cyberspace allowed white supremacists to “spread ourselves across the planet” since no one could “arrest our thoughts.” Carl Abrahamson, “Declaration of Independence of Cyberspace,” *White Aryan Resistance*, March 1996, UMLSC.

134 See Benjamin R. Teitelbaum, “The New Face of Global White Nationalist Terror,” *Foreign Policy*, June 25, 2015; Kathleen Belew, “There Are No Lone Wolves: The White Power Movement at War,” in *A Field Guide to White Supremacy*, ed. Kathleen Belew and Ramón A. Gutiérrez (University of California Press, 2021), 312–24.

135 See Michael Sherry, *The Punitive Turn in American Life: How the United States Learned to Fight Crime Like a War* (University of North Carolina Press, 2020); Osamah F. Khalil, *A World of Enemies: America’s Wars at Home and Abroad from Kennedy to Biden* (Harvard University Press, 2024); and Arun Kundnani, *The Muslims Are Coming: Islamophobia, Extremism, and the Domestic War on Terror* (Verso, 2015).

invasion and replacement.¹³⁶ Large-scale wars—particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan—left behind a substantial pool of combat-experienced veterans, which far-right and white supremacist groups on both sides of the Atlantic sought to recruit. Many veterans who joined up were inclined to view their own societies through the prism of war and were eager to undertake warlike action against domestic enemies. In recent years, the Atomwaffen Division, a neo-Nazi “accelerationist” terror group, has worked to recruit veterans in its quest to overthrow the US government by fomenting mass unrest and race war.¹³⁷ A similar story has unfolded in Canada, Britain, Germany, and other countries where far-right movements have sought out veterans or worked to radicalize active-duty soldiers.¹³⁸

From this vantage, the Azov Battalion and its network of overseas supporters and allies does not appear to be particularly novel. Rather, it signifies the culmination of a historical process that dates back nearly seventy years. For decades, white supremacists have mobilized for real and imagined combat in defense of a shared racial identity that, although rooted in blood and soil, transcended national borders. Grasping the full dimensions of this requires a global frame of understanding.

136 Such fears had deep roots, stretching back to the age of decolonization, but they gained more adherents across the right around the turn of the twentieth century. Two influential iterations are Patrick J. Buchanan, *The Death of the West: How Dying Populations and Immigrant Invasions Imperil Our Country and Civilization* (St. Martin's Press, 2001); and Renaud Camus, *Le Grand remplacement* (David Reinharc, 2011). On the impact of the “great replacement” and notions of “white genocide,” see Sarah Bracke and Luis Manuel Hernández Aguilar, “The Politics of Replacement: From ‘Race Suicide’ to the ‘Great Replacement,’” in *The Politics of Replacement: Demographic Fears, Conspiracy Theories, and Race Wars*, ed. Sarah Bracke and Luis Manuel Hernández Aguilar (Routledge, 2023), 1–19.

137 US Congress, Hearing Before the House Subcommittee on Armed Services, *Alarming Incidents of White Supremacy in the Military—How to Stop It?* 116th Cong., 2nd Sess., February 11, 2020, Report no. HASC 113-63 (US Government Printing Office, 2021); A. C. Thompson, “Ranks of Notorious Hate Group Include Active-Duty Military,” *ProPublica*, May 3, 2018, <https://www.propublica.org/article/atomwaffen-division-hate-group-active-duty-military>; Christopher Mathias, “Army Investigating Soldier’s Alleged Leadership In Neo-Nazi Terror Group,” *HuffPost*, May 3, 2019, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/atomwaffen-division-army-soldier-investigation-corwyn-storm-carver_n_5cb5350e4b0e4d7572fde38.

138 Philip McCristall, David C. Hofmann, and Shayna Perry, “The Nexus of Right-Wing Extremism and the Canadian Armed Forces,” in *Right-Wing Extremism in Canada in the United States*, ed. Ryan Scrivens, Jeff Gruenewald, and Barbara Perry (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), 409–42; Claudia Wallner, Jessica White, and Simon Copeland, *Defending Our Defenders: Preventing Far-Right Extremism in UK Security Forces* (Royal United Services Institute, 2024), <https://static.rusi.org/defending-our-defenders-final-proof.pdf>; Ben Quinn, “Attractiveness of British Military for Far Right Continues to Be a Threat,” *Guardian*, May 31, 2021; Peter Kuras, “How Right-Wing Extremists Infiltrated Germany’s Armed Forces,” *1843 Magazine (Economist)*, October 21, 2022, <https://www.economist.com/1843/2022/10/21/how-right-wing-extremists-infiltrated-germanys-armed-forces>; and Florian Flade, “The Insider Threat: Far-Right Extremism in the German Military and Police,” *CTC Sentinel* 14, no. 5 (2021): 1–10.