

SKINHEAD SUBCULTURE

Project 1991-1993

Interim Report No 1

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Searchlight Information Services

Study of the skinhead subculture

Research period 1991 to 1993

First Interim report

In the spring of 1981 Gerry Gable, now the editor and publisher of Searchlight magazine, was a reporter on The London Programme, which at that time was a serious weekly current affairs programme transmitted by London Weekend Television. For more than two years he had urged his editors to take an in-depth look at solvent abusers of whom 95 per cent are teenagers, in many cases skinheads.

Youngsters were and still are dying as a result of this widespread problem. In April 1981 he was given the green light for a fast turnaround television programme on the problem. The programme won high praise for its tough but sensitive approach and has since been used by police officers and social workers in their training schemes.

The brief entry into the twilight world of these thousands of young people brought home to Gerry Gable the harsh realisation that a whole section of society, the skinheads, has been abandoned by all except the nazi movements.

Ten years later in spring 1991 Searchlight had raised enough international interest and funding to start a three-year project. Searchlight Information Services has brought together a team of people who understand neo-nazism and its devious recruitment methods. They also care deeply about youngsters who have been thrown on the social and economic scrapheap in the last decade of the twentieth century.

We believe that by making people properly aware of this growing subculture and its links with neo-nazism and violence, we may force government agencies, parents, teachers and other young people to try and tackle the problem rather than thrust it away from us.

The project's coordinator and reporter is Stephen Silver. He is in his twenties, has been a student organiser, was a trainee research journalist with Searchlight and spent 16 months working for the Tyne & Wear Anti-Fascist Association as its full-time organiser and researcher. He has been joined in compiling our first interim report by Leonard Zeskind, research director of the Center for Democratic Renewal in Atlanta, USA, and Graeme Atkinson, the European editor of Searchlight magazine, who like Zeskind in the USA is backed up by a network of researchers around Europe. Early next year Professor Michael Billig of the Social Psychology Department at Loughborough University in Britain will start research into the problem from an academic angle.

We shall be preparing a series of interim reports of our findings as our research develops, an academic guide to the skinhead phenomenon and a paperback book for people with a lay interest. We are also hoping to produce at least one television programme. The programme will end in 1993 with a seminar.

We are grateful to the following institutes and foundations for their generous financial help and commitment to the project:

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Original Skinheads - Background

First appearing on British streets in the late 1960s, the skinheads were the voice of rebellious working class youth. An offshoot of the mods, skinheads emulated the Jamaican rude boys, appropriating some of their dress style and their music. The music they listened to was mainly ska and reggae music, following stars like Desmond Decker and other black artists. In the dance halls and clubs, original skinhead dress differed little from the smart mod attire and consisted of tonic suits, brogue shoes and Ben Sherman shirts.

Skinheads were proud of their working class roots and outside the clubs they wore the distinctive uniform of Dr. Martens work boots, shortened jeans and braces, which survives today as their basic dress style. Skinheads stood in stark contrast to the much larger and more middle class "Peace and Love" and "Flower Power" culture of the hippies whom they viewed with contempt.

Sharing the same taste in music, black youths who were known as rude boys and skinheads often frequented the same clubs and in some cases there were even Afro-Caribbean youths running with skinhead crews. Whilst those early skinheads listened to black music, the attraction was the music and not black people. Afro-Caribbeans were viewed with caution, based on the accurate belief that they would not be pushed around and would fight back if attacked.

Britain's other large ethnic minority, the Asians, most of whom had come to Britain fleeing from persecution in East Africa, were viewed with a different and far more hostile attitude. Asians were seen as a soft target, weak and defenceless, and if attacked would be less likely to retaliate.

Between 1969 and 1971 Britain's Asian population, especially young people, came on the receiving end of racist violence meted out by gangs of skinheads. This vicious activity was known as "Paki bashing" and in some cases led to racist murders and in others victims suffered serious injuries.

The skinhead cult rejoiced in machismo, and while they were not the first or only section of society to be involved with "queer bashing" (attacks on homosexuals), it became (and continues to remain) strongly associated with them. "Queer bashing" did not mean attacks on just gays but on anyone who looked slightly

different or out of step with the skinheads' view of what to them was acceptable male appearance.

Skinheads were to become associated with violence on the football terraces too. In Nick Knight's book "Skinhead", he quotes from an article written by Ian Walker in the magazine New Society in 1980 where he recalls seeing 4000 skinheads at a football match in 1968:

"They all wore bleached Levis, Dr. Martens, a short scarf tied cravat style, cropped hair. They looked like an army and, after the game went into action like one."

In the early 1970s many of these original skinheads became tired of the subculture and gradually moved away from it. Most of them simply "grew up". What once had a sizeable following quickly diminished and left only a tiny hard-core minority.

The Skinhead Revival & "Oi" Music 1976-1981

Between 1972 and 1976 there were very few youngsters following the skinhead dress style. The cult no longer constituted a profitable segment of the youth culture market and those skinheads that were left were driven onto the social margins.

During this period many of those skinheads that were left became involved with the British fascist organisations, the National Front and British Movement. Both organisations vied for skinhead support; for the National Front and British Movement these rough and ready youngsters were ideal cannon fodder to be used for racist attacks and the intimidation of political opponents. During the skinhead revival, thousands were to join the ranks of the NF and the even more hard-line nazi BM.

In 1976 punk rockers made their first appearance on British streets and it was on the back of the punk music that the skinhead revival was to take place. By the end of 1977 the skinheads were visibly back, but there were great differences between these skins and the original skinheads.

The music that this second generation of skinheads followed was initially bands like SHAM '69 (who were at the centre of the skinhead revival), the Angelic Upstarts and Cockney Rejects. The slightly later two-tone music of bands like Madness, the Specials and the Beat had large skinhead followings, but it was the former bands that were to form the foundation of what was to become known as "Oi" music and were to acquire a racist skinhead following that they would be unable to get rid of.

Parallel to the skinhead revival had been the growth of support for the NF. As part of the anti-fascist campaign against that organisation Rock Against Racism was set up, an initiative which put on concerts with punk and other bands playing. Largely because of RAR, punks generally became associated with anti-racism - the swastikas on T-shirts and badges that they sometimes sported was meant to shock people and worn more in bad taste than out of any allegiance to fascism. When the skinheads started sporting swastikas it took on a new and more sinister meaning - that of political allegiance.

In February 1978 SHAM '69 played at a RAR gig where skinheads chanted fascist slogans during the performance and fought with punks in the audience. SHAM '69 spoke out against the racism and violence of their skinhead supporters but could not shake off this section of their following. Throughout 1979 nazi skinheads disrupted a whole series of punk gigs and led in part to the decision by SHAM '69 to disband.

In the summer of 1979, SHAM '69's farewell gig, at the Rainbow in London, was wrecked by BM skinheads. The music newspaper Sounds, covering the gig, described the events.

"The pub opposite the Rainbow appeared to be a meeting point for the British Movement. And not just little kids calling themselves that either, there were real evil characters, including some of the BM Leader Guard with their swastika tattoos, 'This time the world' and the like. Passing black kids were assaulted and gig-goers subjected to 'Sieg Heil's and songs about the 'showers of Belsen'.....In between sets a gang of skinheads numbering about 200 ran riot through the unseated venue, pushing, shoving or just plain assaulting anyone else. The main instigators were about 40 BM hardcore headcases who assembled the hangers on.....the gig eventually had to be called off."

The following night, in Brent, a Jobs For Youth concert organised by the Young Socialists was abandoned after 100 skinheads tore down red flags and stormed the stage.

Whilst the largest music paper, the New Musical Express, had been giving positive coverage to Rock Against Racism, a rival newspaper, Sounds' had also carved out a niche for itself. Garry Bushell, a Sounds journalist, was giving regular coverage to the bands of the SHAM '69 mould and he is generally considered to be the person who put Oi music on the map when the rest of the press was either ignoring or criticising it.

While many of the bands and followers were not racist, the anti-establishment atmosphere of the Oi "scene" meant that criticism was unwelcome and there was also a general dislike for anti-racists and the left who were perceived to be "trendy" and "middle class". Oi had not only a skinhead following but also attracted punks.

Garry Johnson, in his book "Oi - a view from the dead end of the street", summed up Oi as being:

"....about real life, the concrete jungle, the old bill, being on the dole, and about fighting back and having pride in your class and background, Oi is anti politics 'cos they're all the same liars and cheats, but we know labour are the real traitors they let us down. Oi is rock 'n' roll, football, beer, sex, going to gigs having a laugh, fighting back, it's our life, our show, our world, it's a way of life".

Sounds released an Oi record through the Decca label in 1981 which caused considerable controversy. The album was titled "Strength Thru Oi!", a title which critics could only conclude was an allusion to the nazi "Kraft Durch Frei" (Strength Through Joy) slogan. The cover of the album carried a photograph of Nicky Crane, a British Movement member and previously the North Kent organiser. Crane had just been sentenced to four years imprisonment for causing an affray and conspiring to lead a skinhead mob in an attack on a group of black youths. The record producers airbrushed out Crane's nazi tattoos on the album sleeve.

In July 1981 a gig headlined by the Oi band the 4-Skins turned into a riot when it was staged in Southall. Prior to the gig skinheads had been causing a number of provocations, including handing out leaflets in support of Robert Relf, a

notorious fascist who had been a member of the British Ku Klux Klan in the 1960s and had numerous convictions for race relations offences. A number of recent racist attacks, carried out by people coming in from outside the area had also fuelled tension.

On the day itself, a number of serious violent assaults were carried out on elderly Asians. Local Asian youths, incensed by the provocations and the fact that large numbers of skinheads (many of whom were openly sporting neo-nazi regalia) had descended on the area for the gig, attacked the venue, the Hamborough Tavern, in a bid to clear the skins out of the area. In the ensuing fighting and rioting, 61 police officers were injured and the Hamborough Tavern was burnt to the ground.

In the wake of the Southall incident Decca withdrew the "Strength Thru Oi" record from sale after articles appeared in the press condemning the violence that had taken place at the gig. Quoted in the Daily Mail, the General Manager of Decca Records UK said

"Decca Records absolutely deplores and condemns the events on Friday night in Southall and as a result we have decided to delete the record."

"It is obvious that there is an association between some of the music and violence and this is extremely undesirable."

Venues cancelled Oi gigs and the police banned others, it was clear that the major record labels were also going to be unwilling to release Oi records. Some Oi bands sought to distance themselves from the racism and fascism that had become associated with the music but others further ingratiated themselves with fascist organisations. Oi was being driven underground and was to receive little further press attention.

The Politicisation of the Skinheads

In the competition for skinhead recruits in the 1970s, the British Movement had won the greater portion due to its emphasis on violence. The skinheads were to remain a mainstay of the BM's activists through its peak period in the late 1970s when it had 3000 members, until it went into decline after 1982 after a series of damaging splits provoked by the activities of Searchlight "supermole" Ray Hill,

who had been the organisation's deputy leader and an anti-nazi infiltrator at the same time.

For the National Front, its skinhead following was often a source of embarrassment to the leadership, which was attempting to create a party that in outward appearance would be a respectable organisation to the right of the Conservative Party, distinguishable primarily in that it had strong views on immigration. Photographs and stories appearing in the press of large contingents of "siege heiling" skinheads on NF marches helped contribute to what was to become the party's negative image as an outfit of goons and thugs and helped anti-fascists to label the organisation as nazi.

Throughout, when many of the most devoted nazis in the BM leadership had left the organisation, it was a hard-core following of skinheads that remained loyal because they were bonded to the organisation not just through the politics but through their subculture as well.

In addition to skinhead members of the NF and BM, there were also large numbers of skinheads who had little or no contact with fascist organisations but were ostensibly still fascists. Many other skins who were members of NF or BM knew so little about the policies of the organisations, apart from their views on immigration, that they were unable even to name the organisations' leaders. Further still, some skins defined themselves as supporters of the "Anti-Paki League", an "organisation" that in fact never existed.

In the early 1980s, led by skinheads such as Nicky Crane of BM (an organisation which had by then virtually ceased activity) and "Skrewdriver" band leader Ian Stuart Donaldson (known as Ian Stuart) of the NF (who has a conviction for an assault on an elderly black man), nazi skinheads remained an integral part of the British fascist scene.

Many skinheads are unemployed and a proportion have little prospect of ever gaining work due to the fact that they have become virtually unemployable (except in the most menial of jobs) by having their faces and necks tattooed. Most skinheads however are only involved for a few years in their late teens or early twenties before dropping out never to be involved again.

The de-skilling of the British working class and the subsequent lack of proper youth training initiatives has created a sense of hopelessness amongst many young people. The neglect and inadequate provision of recreational facilities for young people coupled with the compulsory attendance for school leavers who have no job on government organised training schemes (non-attendance means loss of social security benefit) only adds to the problem. When these factors are added to the housing shortage in the cities and the dilapidated state of many council owned estates, it is not surprising to find that fascist and racist ideas have some resonance for white working class youths.

Today, fascist theorists tend to have two approaches to the current political situation. The first is those such as the NF who still try to gain political power through the ballot box in the same way that Hitler's Nazi Party did. After achieving power democratically they would then be able to realise their political objectives.

The second approach is more relevant to the Nazi skinhead movement because of their nihilism. This theory maintains that the ballot box is a waste of time as there is no real possibility of being elected. Time is also considered to be running out for the 'white race'. Areas in the countryside where there has not been extensive immigration would become white enclaves while the cities would become killing grounds in a race war. The skinheads are expected to be the 'stormtroopers' as they have the least to lose.

Rock Against Communism / White Noise 1981-1986

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Anti Nazi League and Rock Against Racism had been partially effective in stemming the influx of young people into the NF. Rock Against Racism had captured young people's imagination and, impressed by the way music could be used to get a political message across, the NF were determined to turn the tables and use music for their own ends in a similar way. It was with this purpose in mind that Rock Against Communism was set up.

Set up in 1979, it was not until 1982 that Rock Against Communism was holding regular concerts. RAC was spearheaded by Ian Stuart's band, Skrewdriver, which re-formed in the autumn of 1981 and became the main driving force

behind RAC. RAC had a regular column (RAC News) in the NF's youth paper, Bulldog, a paper for which the editor, Joe Pearce, was twice jailed for breaching race relations legislation within its pages.

RAC was an organisation within an organisation. Run by the Young National Front it had its own membership scheme, badges and a quarterly magazine. Relatively unsuccessfully, through Bulldog, RAC attempted to draw other youth cults into its ranks but the backbone of the organisation was to remain its skinhead following.

Skinhead records that were not available in mainstream record shops became available through RAC as fascist bands found it increasingly difficult to get their records distributed not only due to the racist lyrics but also because of the violence that took place at gigs that these bands played. The bands found too that the only gigs that they were able to play were those organised by RAC.

In a bid to get around the record company boycott of the NF bands the NF set up "White Noise Records", the first release being an extended play record by Skrewdriver titled "White Power". Joe Pearce, in his book "Skrewdriver The First Ten Years - The Way It's Got To Be!", describes the significance of the independent label

"This was... (a) kick in the teeth for the musical establishment, not only because of the overt racism of the title track but because it was the first release on Britain's first and only Nationalist record label - White Noise Records".

Ian Anderson, the then vice-chairman of the NF, promoted the record and Skrewdriver began to receive considerable coverage in NF publications. By April 1983 RAC News was able to boast that:

"NEARLY FIVE HUNDRED people turned up to see Skrewdriver and two other bands play a concert for Rock Against Communism."

The bands and violence went hand in hand and it was Ian Stuart's band Skrewdriver that acted as a cover for the NF's Instant Response Group which meted out violence to the NF's opponents.

RAC did achieve some of what it set out to do and certainly drew into the ranks of the NF youngsters who would otherwise have never become involved were it not for the concerts and the records.

BULLDOG

10p

PAPER OF THE YOUNG NATIONAL FRONT

ISSUE No. 33

The Truth!



TELL US THE TRUTH!

MUGGERS are nearly always cowardly Black animals who attack defenceless White old ladies.

Out of 19,528 muggings carried out in London 11,000 were committed by Blacks while only 5,000 were committed by Whites. So even though there are less Blacks than Whites, they carry out more than twice as many muggings!

So this is the ugly truth that they don't want us to know. The Government, the police, and the newspapers are all trying to keep this secret from us.

The Government are trying to keep Black muggings quiet by refusing to carry out a special investigation into Black crime. When Tory MP Harvey Procter demanded a public inquiry into these latest crime figures he was told by William Whitelaw that the Government wasn't going to do anything to investigate Black muggings.

The police tried to keep the Black muggings quiet by refusing to publish the Black crime figures. It was only because Harvey Procter demanded to see them that the cops were forced to tell the truth.

The newspapers are trying to keep the Black muggings quiet by telling outright lies. The two cartoons on the right are good examples of these lies. They were printed in the *Sun* and they show muggers as being White skinheads. There is no evidence to show that skinheads carry out muggings but that doesn't worry the newspapers. All that they care about is making the Blacks look innocent. Somebody must take the blame for all the muggings carried out by Blacks - as long as the Blacks don't take the blame themselves!

It's about time we were told the truth about the violent Black animals that live in our cities. *Bulldog's* cartoon on the left is not likely to be seen in the *Sun*, but it is a lot closer to the truth!

TELL US THE TRUTH FOR ONCE - BLACKS, NOT WHITES, CARRY OUT THE MUGGINGS!

Lies!



Lies!



THE PAPER THEY WANT TO BAN

Bulldog

Concerts were initially mainly played in pubs in the London area but the bands had a national following and were starting to even gain an international following. With the increased following large sums of money became available through the sale of the records, T-shirts and other paraphernalia associated with the music industry. At this time nazi skinhead records began to appear on a West German based label, Rock-O-Rama Records, and were distributed in a number of European countries outside England and the USA.

In 1985 after a number of prosecutions Bulldog ceased publication. Its replacement was the short-lived New Dawn which gave over three pages each issue to RAC under the title White Noise. After a short time New Dawn was replaced by a new publication devoted solely to the music appropriately named White Noise.

In 1986 the first editions of White Noise were published. By now the nazi skinhead movement had become a network of magazines (known as skinzines) with dozens of titles produced by skinheads throughout Britain, Europe and the United States. Bands that were little known to the public had cult followings with gigs being held and records produced by Rock-O-Rama for bands such as Skullhead from Tyneside, Brutal Attack from South London, Combat 84 from West London, Bohse Onkelz from West Germany and Ultima Thule from Sweden. White Noise steadily gained support during this period.

Little over a year after the White Noise publication was founded, the main band, Skrewdriver, split away from it and along with three other bands set up its own publication, "Blood & Honour". The bands had become fed up with being ripped off financially by the NF leadership and seeing little of the large sums of money which were passing through the White Noise Club being put back into the music.

Skinhead Magazines (Skinszines)

Over the years an underground network of nazi skinhead magazines (skinszines) has been circulating amongst followers of the cult. Most of these publications are crudely produced photocopies with a few being professionally printed. The skinszines print interviews with the bands, song lyrics, reviews of gigs and racist articles and cartoons. Despite the clear breach of race relations legislation in

ISSUE 1. 1986

WHITE NOISE



stronger than before

some of the publications, there has been no action taken against any of the British publishers.

Nazi skinzines are usually produced by one person from home - many of the editors are unemployed and spend weeks putting an edition together. Merchandise is frequently sold through the publications often advertising one specific band that the editor has a connection with. Some of the editors are also band members with the contact address serving for both band and publication. Artwork and articles are often supplied by skinhead prisoners who the skinzines urge the readers to correspond with. Skinheads who have been convicted of violent or racist crimes are depicted as martyrs who are being persecuted by the state.

British publications that have been circulated carry titles such as : "British Oi", "Offensive Weapon", "Last Chance", "14 Up" and "Truth at Last". Nazi skinzines are produced across Britain and distributed to British and international contacts. At any one time there are usually around 20 current British publications in circulation.

Listings of available skinzines are usually carried in each edition, these are regularly updated due to the high turnover of publications. Many titles do not last more than three issues before they fold, often re-appearing under a new name.

An example of the crude racism that is featured in these publications can be shown from the song below, "Bloodsucker", which is performed by the band "No Remorse" and was printed in "14 Up":

*"Down there on the corner
Is the reaper dressed in black
Bleeds our nation of all he can
But refuses to go back
Filthy little Asian
With his corner shop
Governmental help
Gave him all he's got.*

So do not buy his offers

*Burn them to the ground
Ignore his pleas for mercy
Cos he puts you down.*

*Sells his goods at double price
That's how he makes his bread
Filthy little paki
Won't stop till he's dead.*

*He's the immigrant with the false grin
Behind it lies a mind of evil sin*

*Traitors there in parliament
Bought off by the Jews
Nationalist opposition
Is only bound to lose
Reject their corrupt system
Stand now for your race
Cos when we finally win
They will have no place."*

A considerable number of skinzines are produced outside Britain. There are currently homegrown editions being produced in Belgium, Brazil, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the USA. In Italy alone there are at least five publications currently in circulation. A large proportion of these skinzines are produced in the English language so that they will be more suited to international distribution.

As stated earlier, contact addresses often serve multiple purposes. Apart from serving for bands and publications, they are usually also the contact point for a local skinhead crew. With the politicisation that being in contact with other skinheads brings, it is common to find that an address, through a period of time goes through three stages : a skinzine address; contact for a skinhead crew; then finally a contact point for a fascist organisation.

This is exemplified in France where a publication which had run for some time called "Le Rebelle Blanc" ceased publication and re-emerged, not as a skinhead publication, but under the title "L'Empire Invisible". The paper had in fact

become the publication of the French Ku Klux Klan and was now a desk top published, slick production. The sinister nature of the magazine can be seen by the fact that one edition produced a list of 38 people currently serving prison sentences in order for readers to write off to them - the list included Brian Hosie a fascist currently serving a life sentence in a Scottish prison for carrying out a racist murder. Also included was Kev Turner from the band Skullhead who is currently in Acklington Prison in Northumberland.

Blood & Honour 1987-1989

Blood & Honour is a glossy publication which clearly outclasses all previous and contemporary nazi skinhead magazines. Covers of the magazine carry artwork with national socialist imagery and runes - with the Blood & Honour logo as the masthead - the logo incorporates the inverted three-pronged swastika of the South African neo-nazi organisation, the AWB.

Having left the NF and freed of the restrictions that were placed upon him by its leadership, Stuart set about building on the international links and following which had been built over the years. During 1987 and 1988 more and more young people were drawn into the nazi skinhead cult, not so much in England where it had originated but in Europe and the United States where large numbers of nazi skins started to appear on the streets. This, accompanied by an increase in racial violence, caused alarm for those groups who monitored racism in these countries.

Blood & Honour had several countries where it had a special interest in expanding its influence: West Germany, because Rock-O-Rama was the main recording company for all the nazi music and because Ian Stuart had a record contract with the company that was paying him at least four hundred pounds a month - the country's past was also of great importance; Sweden, where skinhead violence had led to the murder of at least one person and where Blood & Honour bands already had a sizeable following; Belgium and Holland where contacts had already been made at the annual international fascist gatherings at Diksmuide.

Blood & Honour

WHITE
WARRIORS ON
THE MARCH
SQUADRON
INTERVIEW
ESTABLISHMENT
ATTACK ON IAN
STUART
ROCKING THE
REDS
GIG REPORT
PRIDE AND
THE GLORY
WHITE WHISPERS



AGAINST RED FRONT



AND MASS REACTION

Blood & Honour magazine issue 6

By 1988 Blood & Honour was generating some press attention. In a three page feature article in the Sunday People Ian Stuart Donaldson made it clear why he wanted to get young people involved:

"Eventually there will be a race war and we have to be strong enough in numbers to win it. I'll die to keep this country pure and if it means bloodshed at the end of the day, then let it be."

According to the article, Donaldson admitted that his contract with Rock-O-Rama had helped him build links with nazis in Europe:

"They are some of Adolf's SS who escaped the war trials and are now successful businessmen. I visit them and they visit me at our concerts and we discuss our common goal, getting rid of Britain's uninvited guests..... We have in America a network of contacts through the Ku Klux Klan and they are recruiting followers for us."

Stuart and his associates who run Blood & Honour have a wealth of experience at organising gigs, producing the badges, T-shirts etc and keeping the whole operation running in a semi-underground manner. The clandestine nature of the operation makes it very difficult for anti-racists to mount any effective opposition as the movement's only public face is its irregularly produced publication.

One place where Blood & Honour paraphernalia has been readily available was London's Carnaby Street where skinheads from all over England and even some from Europe would gather (often to buy goods that were banned in their own countries). There were a few shops in particular that became the centre of Blood & Honour's activities, these were Cutdown, Merc M and Badges.

During the early part of 1989 an anti-fascist campaign was launched against these shops and pickets were organised and questions asked in Parliament, all of which received press coverage and for the first time put real pressure on Blood & Honour.

It was during this time it came to light that it was the shop Cutdown that was the main international distribution point for this nazi propaganda. Strangely, this shop was owned by Jewish-born Andrew Benjamin who, under the alias Andrew St John, ran the Blood & Honour merchandising operation with Skrewdriver's drummer, Des Clarke, who at that time had only recently ended a term in prison for a serious assault on a police officer.

By March 1989 the anti-fascist campaign achieved its first success. Cutdown closed its Carnaby Street shop and moved premises and Merc M stopped displaying Blood & Honour goods. The pub that the nazis were using also shut down for a few weeks as a result of pressure exerted by London Anti-Fascist Action on the brewery. Blood & Honour was facing its first real opposition.

Blood & Honour's new premises was in Riding House Street, also in London's West End. This shop was promptly picketed by London AFA with their campaign continuing to receive press coverage. Other shops that had stocked nazi material were clearing their shelves of it.

Blood & Honour decided to hold a major concert in London in May 1989 which would be the largest organised by the far right anywhere. The concert was to have an international audience and would give the final word to anti-fascists who had been causing them so much trouble in recent months.

In the United States, the White Aryan Resistance advertised the concert through its network of telephone message lines and computer bulletin boards.

Thousands of leaflets were distributed advertising the concert under the name "The Main Event". The concert was to have bands from a number of countries appearing on the stage.

An idea of the kind of money that is generated by Blood & Honour can be gauged from ticket sales alone - at least 1000 tickets were sold at seven pounds fifty each and later on some at eight pounds.

As had become customary for the concerts a number of security measures were taken in a bid to make the cancellation of the event due to exposure by anti-fascists very difficult. The place where a gig is to be held is never advertised. Instead a meeting point is arranged for the night and the skins are then redirected from there on to the venue itself. Redirection points are often some distance from the venue and the organisers either put on coaches or move the skins in large numbers via public transport. Two or sometimes even more venues are booked for the night, all under false names, so if one is discovered they can redirect people to another venue. To add to the security the gig is usually advertised by leaflets distributed only to known supporters, they are not publicly advertised.

For the "Main Event" concert the redirection point was to be Hyde Park's Speaker's Corner. The proposed venue, Camden Town Hall, was discovered by anti-fascists a short time beforehand and the booking was promptly cancelled.

Anti-Fascist Action had issued a call to its supporters to assemble at Speaker's Corner one hour before the fascists were due to meet, making it difficult for people to be redirected. Hundreds of anti-fascists repelled attacks from marauding gangs of skinheads as they defended what had now become their own meeting point. A number of skinheads were injured in the melee and others were removed from the area by the police.

In the event a few hundred skins held a much smaller than planned gig in the back up venue, a pub in Kent, with only a couple of hundred skinheads in attendance. Other skinheads were herded away by the local police riot squad.

Blood & Honour 1990-1991- The New Political Alignment

The relative failure of the "Main Event" concert signalled a demise in the fortunes of Blood & Honour. A considerable number of gigs have been held over the past two years in London, Derby, Tyneside, Milton Keynes and Edinburgh but there has not been a gig held in Britain on the scale that was planned for the "Main Event". Blood & Honour still has a pool of some 1,600 supporters despite the fact the publication has not appeared for more than a year.

Andrew Benjamin, who had been running the Cutdown mail order business is facing prosecution for peddling racist propaganda and appears to be no longer involved with Blood & Honour's merchandising.

A number of Blood & Honour bands have groups of supporters who are organised to protect them at concerts. These 'security' groups include people who make a living doing similar work as bouncers at nightclubs and pubs. Skrewdriver Security and Skullhead Security both have members who have been involved in selling drugs. 'Security' groups have specially designed T-shirts so they can be easily identified.

The activities of the 'security' groups are not confined to the concert venues and they have also carried out violent racist attacks and attacks on anti-fascists. Skrewdriver Security is currently being organised by Mark 'the bear' Harvey who has just been released from prison where he served time for his involvement in a knifing of an Arab man which resulted in the man losing one of his kidneys.

Blood & Honour has always been particularly active in the North-East of England. On April 21st 1990 the Tyneside skinzine Unity and Blood & Honour held a gig in Newcastle with Skrewdriver, a local band Skullhead, and Brutal Attack topping the bill. The concert was billed as a St George's day gig but also served as a celebration of the anniversary of Hitler's birth. The event was attended by some 350 people.

Later in the year local Skullhead Security members were convicted for their part in a vicious attack on the owners of a Sunderland nightclub. Neil Carter, one of Skullhead's band members was jailed for nine months for the attack. One of the owners suffered two cracked ribs, a broken nose and cheek bone, and needed 20 stitches to his face. Not long after that Skullhead band leader Kev Turner, who has served prison sentences for assaulting a senior citizen and nearly blinding a man by shoving a glass in his face in a pub, was again imprisoned for his part in an assault.

A significant development on the nazi right has been the re-birth of British Movement, which had been semi-dormant for some seven years. Operating from Post Office boxes in Yorkshire and Derbyshire, the BM has been making a revival. The vast majority of new BM recruits have been made from Blood & Honour supporters. On demonstrations, such as the BNP-organised march in Thamesmead, S.E. London in May 1991, Blood & Honour skinheads have been photographed wearing illegal political uniforms sporting the arm patch of BM's inner core, the British National Socialist Movement.

A second development has been the setting up of Ku Klux Klan Klaverns in Britain and Europe. Again the bulk of the membership is comprised of nazi skinheads. Ian Stuart was one of the first to join up. It came as no surprise to find that Ian Stuart has made a record with members of the psychobilly band Demented Are Go (psychobilly is a musical style which is a fusion of rockabilly

and punk rock), targeting a North American audience - the name under which they are recording is The Klansmen.

The final political development is the relationship between Blood & Honour and the British National Party. Over the last few years the BNP, which came out of a split in the NF, has emerged as the main force in British fascist politics, overshadowing the NF. The BNP, which is a much more Hitlerian and openly nazi organisation than the NF, has an exceptionally large activist base considering its membership of approximately 1,400. Many BNP members have convictions for violent crimes. It has become apparent that leading Blood & Honour and BNP members have met to discuss joint areas of operation. To this end gigs in Scotland and Milton Keynes have been held, jointly organised by both groups. This is a significant development due to the fact that the BNP's leader, John Tyndall, has always expressed a dislike for skinheads.

The present political alliance of Blood & Honour, BM, KKK and BNP is disturbing in that all four organisations have violent track records. Racist attacks have become more co-ordinated with the new pool of activists that has now become available from the close collaboration of the organisations.

During the last two years there has also been an increase in concerts held in Europe some of which have had British bands topping the bill. In 1990 the British band, No Remorse, toured both the USA and Canada. In Italy a number of concerts have been held over the last few years, the first time ever in that country. There is no doubt that there is extensive contact between Blood & Honour supporters on an international scale.

The collapse of the socialist countries in Eastern Europe has seen skinheads from the West supplying propaganda and merchandise to skinheads in the East. The Swedish band Ultima Thule played a concert this year at a "Freedom Rally" in Estonia. Whilst there have been skinheads present in these countries for some years, the political vacuum that has been left in the former socialist countries has left fertile ground for the growth of a neo-nazi skinhead movement.

The most recent activity of Blood & Honour has been a concert in Rochdale and the publication of a new edition (August 1991) of the magazine. Skrewdriver have just completed a Blood & Honour European tour which included Sweden,

France and the former East Germany. Further concerts are planned for East Germany in October 1991.

Financial Resources of the International Skinhead Movement

The fact that the major record companies and distributors have little to do with racist skinhead bands has forced the groups to make alternative arrangements if they are to see their music on vinyl.

Over a period of more than ten years a production and distribution network has been built which has bases in Germany, France and England and is responsible for the appearance of Blood & Honour/Rock Against Communism goods across the world.

The bulk of goods are sold via mail order with some merchandise available in shops that cater for the wider skinhead audience. In London's Carnaby Street for example a limited display of the less obscene neo-nazi skinhead paraphernalia can be seen in some shops with the more hard-core material such as the Blood & Honour magazine available "under the counter" for those who know what to ask for.

The major producer of the records is the West German based Rock-O-Rama Records. The company is run by Herbert Egoldt and has been in existence since 1977. All records are sold by mail order - the majority of which in fact cater for other youth cults such as punk and psychobilly. A catalogue produced this year featured thousands of titles.

What is interesting about Rock-O-Rama is that while only a third of the records advertised in their catalogue are skinhead titles they receive undue prominence in the publication as most of the graphics, including the front cover, are reproductions of the front sleeves of nazi skinhead records. Almost all the major nazi bands have records sold through Rock-O-Rama and there is no doubt that Rock-O-Rama is the largest operator in the production of nazi skinhead music. The central role that Rock-O-Rama plays in the promotion of Blood & Honour/Rock Against Communism music makes it inconceivable that the



"White Rider" - Skrewdriver album produced by Rock-O-Rama

involvement is on a purely financial basis without any political sympathy to the ideas that are being promoted.

Rock-O-Rama have recently branched out into producing compact discs and have made a number of nazi skinhead titles available in this format. Skrewdriver, Skullhead, Klansmen, Combat 84 and Squadron all have albums on sale through Rock-O-Rama on compact disc.

In Britain some nazi skinhead records have been produced by Kent-based Link Records who also sell their merchandise by mail order. Copies of their free catalogue are available in alternative record stores. Link also re-release records in limited production runs (500+). The bulk of records produced by Link are Oi/ska/punk and while the motivation for producing the nazi skinhead records appears to be a purely financial one, it is interesting to note that for a considerable period of time they have had the distinction of being the only company in Britain producing this material.

The production of nazi skinhead music, as can be seen by looking at Rock-O-Rama and Link, is usually accompanied by ambiguity as to whether the motives of the companies are purely profit, politics or a combination of the two. There is one company where there is absolutely no doubt as to the reason for it producing these records - Rebelles Europeens, based in Brest, in France.

Rebelles Europeens is distinguished by the fact that it produces only fascist records. Despite this fact its catalogue is still able to advertise just under 200 titles, a selection of which are also available on compact disc. Records are pressed in runs of 1,000 discs.

Rebelles Europeens was set up in 1985 and is run by Gael Bodilis. Bodilis is a racist who tried to organise an international nazi skinhead concert in Brest, France, which was banned by the police shortly before it was due to start and resulted in considerable disturbances when the skinheads discovered they had no venue. For his efforts Blood & Honour ran an article which said:

"Blood & Honour would like to praise the organiser of the gig, Gael Bodilis. He lost a lot of money but gained a lot of respect.

French and other European skinheads should support his record label 'Rebelles Europeens' as he is at the forefront of the R.A.C. movement in France and



Rebelles Europeens January 1991 catalogue

without his courage and determination many French bands would be un-recorded."

In a one-off interview with one nazi skinzine the usually publicity-shy Bodilis was asked why he created Rebelles Europeens:

"...The reason for its creation was quite simple, no label wanted to produce politically engaged bands without self censorship. I had to give them the same opportunity to do so as other bands...."

" Music is an excellent way of spreading those ideas and it was becoming more and more necessary to have these skinhead bands known. Obviously there is one factor that I am not interested in PROFITABILITY. The Jews could probably talk about it better than I do."

Rebelles Europeens produces a glossy catalogue and in addition to nazi skinhead records also sells T-shirts, patches and books and original nazi military music. As with Rock-O-Rama, Rebelles Europeens accepts money in most currencies and sells to an international market.

In Britain there are a number of skinheads who buy bulk orders of records from the producers (presumably at a discount) and then distribute them via their own mail order service. There are a few mail order services that clearly have a large stock of merchandise. Records are also available at gigs or by writing directly to the bands. Some skinheads clearly supplement their income by running small amateur mail order services, often within their skinzine, selling records and sometimes pirated copies of albums.

In the past Cutdown was the main distributor for Blood & Honour paraphernalia but since its closure there have been a number of other sources, the most important of which today is Thunor Services which is run by people at the heart of Blood & Honour.

Thunor Services operates from a private post box in London. In addition to being the largest outlet for the T-shirts, badges etc. Thunor Services also sells postcards of officers of the Waffen SS and full colour reproductions of SS recruitment posters.

THUNOR SERVICES



Catalogue No 3

Thunor Services catalogue - Blood & Honour merchandise is sold via mail order

Anti-Racist Skinheads

There have always been in existence groups of skinheads who have been either actively anti-racist or just not involved with the nazi skinhead 'scene'. Over recent years their presence has grown and is offering a more direct challenge to the nazi skinheads than in the past. The wider anti-racist movement has always had difficulty in accepting anti-racist skinheads due to the difficulty in distinguishing between them and their neo-nazi counterparts.

In the last two years an initiative that began in the United States has started to take root in Britain. Anti-racist skins have been producing leaflets and stickers etc which use the logo of SHARP (Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice). The SHARP logo itself incorporates the Trojan symbol, the emblem of Trojan records, the label that was responsible for so much of the early skinhead ska and reggae music in the late 1960s.

SHARP sections have sprung up in a number of places including North East England, Kent, Northern Ireland and Wales. The best example of SHARP propaganda is actually produced in Germany by the Berlin section who produce a 40 page professionally printed magazine called Skintonic.

In Britain SHARP is increasing its influence and a number of gigs have been held in the name of SHARP. There are also some skinhead fanzines that promote SHARP though there is no national British SHARP publication.

A weakness of SHARP is that there is no national organisation and sections exist on a purely local level. This limits the work of SHARP skinheads as they are trying to combat a highly organised neo-nazi structure that is not only locally based but also has a national (and in fact international) structure.

Individual SHARP skinheads who have received press attention have often been targeted by Blood & Honour supporters and been subsequently beaten or intimidated. In July 1991 for example the George Robey pub in North London had tear gas thrown into it as a response to ska concerts that had been held there, which were supported by SHARP skinheads. A return gig planned by SHAM '69 as part of a punk revival concert to be held in mid September has also been threatened with violence by Blood & Honour skinheads.

Unicorn and Skank records produce albums by a number of SHARP bands including No Sports, Casino Royale and Machtoc. These two record labels have also been the organisers of ska festivals that have attracted SHARP skins.

In addition to the directly anti-racist publications are others that cover ska/skinhead music but fall into neither the anti-fascist nor the fascist camp. The main publisher of these magazines is the Glasgow based Zoot who produce three titles, Zoot, Beat of the Street and the newspaper-style Skinhead Times. A book is due out from the same publishing house titled "Spirit of '69" which will be a history of the skinhead movement.

by Stephen Silver, project co-ordinator

European Section

Germany

As a minority youth subculture, skinheads have been present in the former Federal Republic of Germany since the early 1980s. The "style" of the majority was largely imitative of the cult's British originators and extreme right from the outset.

Today, according to "insiders", the scene in western Germany numbers approximately 4,000 people, mainly male, aged 14 to 25 years old and disproportionately working class in social origin.

The main centres of rightist skinhead activity are : Gottingen, Bielefeld, Hannover, Hamburg, Stuttgart and west Berlin. The rightists' strength is put variously at between 2,000 and 3,000. In sub-cultural terms, the rightists who follow neo-nazi groups like the FAP and the late Michael Kuhnen's "Bewegung" do not have it all their own way.

Clear establishment of the link between the rightist skinheads and racism and violence has led to a process of differentiation within the scene and the differentiation, in turn, to a polarisation.

This has been exemplified in two ways. Firstly, the rightist skinheads because they shave their heads are known as "boneheads". Secondly, the non-"bonehead" skinheads have begun to organise themselves into an independent political formation : SHARP.

In Germany today, like in Britain, SHARP groups have adopted the "Trojan" emblem of their US counterparts and have an organised presence in several centres including Hamburg, Frankfurt, Berlin, Munchen-Gladbach and other cities.

SHARP members, also known as "redskins", estimate that about 50% of the west German skinhead scene is anti-racist and owes allegiance to SHARP or is non-political. This estimate may be slightly exaggerated but confirmation is difficult due to the lack of accurate empirical data.

What is certain is that the two scenes are opposites : the music of the rightist boneheads is "Oi" which is openly racist and promotes nazi ideas. For the SHARP redskins the preferred music is Afro-Caribbean ska and already several redskin bands have surfaced, for example, "No Sports" and "El Bossa and the Ping-Pongs".

In east Germany the skinhead scene has mushroomed since 1987/88 and has taken advantage of the dramatic political changes that led to re-unification of the two German states in October 1990.

It is estimated from various sources, including the east-Berlin-based Gemeinsames Landeskriminalamt fur die neuen Bundeslander, that the numerical strength of the skinhead scene is at least as big as in western Germany.

Contrary to popular wisdom, the skinhead phenomenon is not new in the east. As early as 1987, skinheads in east Berlin were arrested for daubing nazi and anti-semitic slogans in the city. These skinheads were known even then to be in contact with nazi skinheads from West Berlin and to be influenced by groups like the FAP and the Nationalistische Front.

Today, the scene there is, again according to SHARP's assessment, more than 80% nazi with only a minority adhering to anti-racism. The record of violence and murder by both east and west German nazi skins is well known and is being closely monitored and catalogued as part of this project.

For its part SHARP claims small but active groups in east Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden and Erfurt with the nazi skins also active in these cities as well as in Guben, Gorlitz, Cottbus, Schwerin, Eisenhutzenstadt, Magdeburg and Rostock. The nazi-oriented boneheads were also strongly in attendance at the funeral of Dresden nazi Rainer Sonntag on June 15th this year.

Musically, the boneheads, east and west, follow a variety of bands including the British "Skrewdriver" and "No Remorse", the French "Legion 88" and "Kontingent" as well as "Bohse Onkelz" (who claim to have renounced racism) and groups like "Sturmtruppen" and "Bunker 84" in Germany.

Much of the "Oi" music is a direct incitement to racial hatred and violence and acts as a symbol along with other paraphernalia like the sew-on "Stolz ein

Deutscher zu sein" shoulder patches and runic buttons. German boneheads have not - apart from "Skrewdriver" T-shirts and the Celtic Cross - adopted international symbols. For the redskins, the assumption of the US "Trojan" symbol has been a reflection of their anti-racism and anti-chauvinism.

Despite the lack of international bonehead symbols, there is evidence of international bonehead links : the distribution networks (see above), international gatherings in Brest 1988, London 1989, Dixmuide each summer and, increasingly, Wunsiedel in Bavaria each August at the Rudolf Hess commemoration. (Attending there in 1990 were boneheads from France, Belgium and the Netherlands.) The skinhead movement in Budapest gives as its contact address an address in Bielefeld, Germany, a place that has been the centre of neo-nazi youth activity over the last six years.

It is known that some German bonehead groups have links to Scandinavia, especially Sweden, and that members of the bonehead/soccer hooligan "Borussia Front" led by FAP member Siegfried Borchhardt are attempting to set up meetings with Swedes to plan violence at next June's European Nations Soccer Championship finals in Sweden.

The attitude of the authorities is difficult to determine. There is an unspoken recognition that the boneheads are a menace. The most recent report of Germany's domestic secret service, the Verfassungsschutzbericht for 1989, estimates that 10% of the then 2,500 (rightist) skinheads were part of the "potential for political violence".

Certainly arrests of nazi boneheads are made : more than 80 in Gottingen during the first six months of 1991, almost 300 in the new state of Brandenburg in the same period and several on charges of desecrating Jewish cemeteries in Baden-Wurttemberg.

However, there is little sign that positive steps have been taken to undermine the scene. Redskins say that the authorities, especially in the schools, do not differentiate between themselves and non-political skinheads on the one hand and the fascist boneheads on the other and that the generally repressive "they're all the same" approach has enabled the bonehead element to grow and expand rapidly into east Germany.



German 'Sturmtruppen' album produced by Rebelles Europeens

Skinhead Violence

To illustrate the involvement of German skinheads in neo-nazi and racist violence, we have compiled a list of incidents reported in a short period in May to early June 1991.

Violence was reported in both parts of Germany, in some cases with serious trouble occurring in several locations on the same day. For mid to late May, much of the nazi action was centred on Berlin.

For example, on May 10th at Muggelsee in east Berlin an organised group of between 60 and 70 fascist skinheads attacked a garden pub, beating and injuring several guests. In other incidents on the same day, skins boarded a bus in Kopenick and assaulted passengers and attacked a boat hirer and his 17-year-old daughter in Weissensee.

Within hours of these attacks there were two attempts by skinheads to fire-bomb a home for asylum seekers in Liebertwolkwitz, near Leipzig.

A few days later, on May 24th, there was an attack on a mosque in the town of Rietberg-Neuenkirchen, near Gutersloh, which racists burned down. The mosque and a shop in the same building were gutted and damage ran into hundreds of thousands of DM. Neo-nazi skinheads then ran amok in Sachsenhausen, near Weimar, after a rock concert on May 26th. According to police, 250 boneheads from all over east Germany had turned up to hear right-extremist rock bands.

The weekend before, in Sondershausen, right-extremist skinheads had attacked people at a campsite on two days running with baseball bats, sticks and distress pistols. Police, aided by reinforcements from Nordhausen, arrested 18 of the raiders.

Again on May 26th, a 70-strong gang of neo-nazis, many of them skinheads armed with iron bars, wooden clubs, gas pistols and knuckle-dusters, stormed a gay and lesbian festival at Mahlsdorf in the suburbs of east Berlin.

In the attack two women were shot in the face with gas pistols and several cars destroyed. One guest said that the violence "reminded him of the Nazi period".

The Mahlsdorf attack is only the latest in a series of brutal raids on gay/lesbian pubs and events in Berlin. No arrests were made even though police were given the registration numbers of some of the cars in which the assailants fled.

On June 1st, 30 neo-nazi skinhead youths chanting "Heil Hitler" and "Foreigners Out" stoned a home for refugees in Pirna, near Dresden. They were driven off by the refugees most of whom are from Romania but again no arrests were made.

However, some of the skinhead perpetrators of racist violence are being brought to trial, rather belatedly and then being given light sentences.

Nine young men, aged between 18 and 21 years, were convicted in June by a court in Darmstadt for an attack on a refugee centre last August in which they caused more than seven thousand pounds worth of damage. The nine all skinheads who were said to have used sticks and stones in the attack, were sentenced to 75 hours community service and given an official reprimand.

And in Gottingen, long a scene of skinhead assaults, five nazi skinheads went on trial for inflicting grievous bodily harm on two men on New Year's Eve in Adelebsen. In the assault the two men, a 33-year-old driver and a 21-year-old factory worker, were kicked unconscious by the boneheads.

No provocation was involved and both men were hospitalised, the 21-year-old sustaining a broken jaw and losing several teeth. In his police statement, one of the skinheads boasted "we kicked them, even when they were on the floor". He added "we knew they were unconscious because if they hadn't been, they would have been crying".

Also in Gottingen, a 19-year-old skinhead is currently awaiting trial for the murder on New Year's Eve of a 21-year-old recruit to the German Army.

Following these and other cases in which 80 skinheads have appeared in court, the skinheads kept a low profile and several of the leaders claimed to have dropped out. Now, however, they have begun to congregate regularly in the village of Adelebsen.

There, villagers report, the skinheads gather every weekend to terrorise local people and foreigners. Following a new series of unprovoked attacks and ambushes, police and state prosecutors in Lower Saxony have renewed their investigations.

A police spokesman has said that "it is difficult to gather evidence because the skinheads intimidate witnesses and people are afraid to come forward to testify about the violence".

Scandinavia

The skinhead movement in Scandinavia, which first emerged in the late 1970s, was and remains centred on Sweden, with tiny off-shoots in Denmark and Norway. The first time they received press attention in Sweden dates back to 1979.

From a small group of far fewer than 100 in the first years of the 1980s, the skinheads went through a rapid growth period between 1984 and 1987. Observers of the scene, like Stieg Larsson and Anna-Lena Lodenius, authors of the authoritative book "The Extreme Right" published in June 1991, say that the figures then grew to between 250 and 300, centred mainly in Stockholm and Gothenburg. Today, they estimate, there are about 350 hard-core skinheads in Sweden.

It must be noted that the sub-culture has a characteristic in Sweden that does not exist elsewhere in Europe: a seasonal aspect based on the Swedish climate which has long and harshly cold winters, causing many skinheads to grow their hair in winter and shave their heads during summertime.

If these "hangers-on" are added to the overall picture, then the numbers - seasonally adjusted - could be as high as 500 to 600 people.

As to the rest of Scandinavia, Norway's skinhead movement is small, fewer than 50 people, organised in Dramman under the name "Boot Boys" and Oslo. Politically, they are on the far-right and have supported the People's Movement against Immigration, led until recently by convicted bomber Arne Myrdal, and the even more extreme neo-nazi "Zorn 88" group.

In neighbouring Denmark, the closest phenomenon to skinheads are the notoriously racist "Greenjackets" who, though numbering only between 75 and 100, have carried out some of Scandinavia's most brutal racist attacks in Copenhagen.

Redskins do not exist in any meaningful sense in Sweden and there are no known redskin bands. Because of this fact, the bonehead/skinhead distinction does not exist. Swedish skinheads are racist and far-right orientated in a political sense.

This has been evident since the 1980s when skinheads formed the activist core of the former "Keep Sweden Swedish" (BSS) group. Two magazines, "Streelfight" and "Nordic Fist", were produced between 1987 and 1989.

BSS recruited a majority of the skinheads in Stockholm but later the BSS leadership took its distance when it changed tactics and re-formed as a political party in the shape of the Sweden Democrats, founded in 1988.

Since then, the skinheads have organised independently and produced a new magazine, "White Rebel", which was prosecuted out of existence by the authorities for incitement to racial hatred, and later "Storm", around which they have built a political tendency.

The policy of "Storm" appears to be to cultivate friendly relations with various nazi groups inside and outside Sweden including :

The Nordic Reich Party (Hitlerite with 250 members)

The Free Union Party (a NRP splinter with 50 members)

The Swedish National League (openly Nazi)

The Sweden Party (anti-semitic, 100 members)

The Swedish Socialist Workers Party (fascist, works with Sweden Party)

The Sweden Democrats (fascist and racist with over 5,000 members)

Sweden's Future (neo-nazi, several hundred members)

Outside Sweden, they are linked with the US-based NSDAP-AO, the British National Front, the British "Blood and Honour" network and, according to a press report in the "Sunday Correspondent", the new 3,000-strong skinhead scene in Prague, Czechoslovakia.

The Swedish skinheads have their own emblems and insignia, using the Swedish flag as a shoulder patch, but they also sport variously the symbols of the National Front in Britain, the now-defunct Norsk Front in Norway and the Nationalistische Front in Germany.

The age structure of the Swedish skinhead movement corresponds closely with its counterparts elsewhere in Europe : mainly 16 to 25 years of age and as young as 14 to 15 years old. Again, it is mainly a male preserve although young women are also active.

In Sweden there has been no overall official policy on dealing with the violence-prone skinhead sub-culture. As regards dress, for example, the Swedish education authorities have long had a liberal approach, allowing school students to dress as they wish and to wear hairstyles of their own choosing. Resort to official sanctions only takes place in matters such as crime, truancy or falling behind with studies.

Similarly, far from being frowned upon, political activities are positively encouraged in Swedish schools and the educational authorities do not question - at an individual level - which party a student belongs to. However, the schools take a less "open" approach to racism and have taken action to combat it. Thus skinheads can dress like skinheads but the line is drawn in the schools when they begin to propagate their political ideas.

Other authorities have found the skinheads problematical. In 1988, a new organisation was launched, with some state funding, to create an alternative, open youth culture amongst those on the social margins : "The Non-Fighting Generation" (NFG). It had mixed results with major successes scored in Malmo and much less success elsewhere. By 1990, NFG had virtually faded away.

In Stockholm the city authority tried a different method by buying and donating two connected buildings in the city's harbour area to the skinheads for use as a "clubhouse". The step indicated a willingness to cater for young people and to recognise their demands for self-determination. However, it also suggested a real lack of knowledge about what this particular fragment of youth culture represented.

The result was almost inevitable : the "clubhouse" turned into a barracks and became the focal point for violent racist activity and propaganda, until it had a fire in 1990 and burned to the ground.

The Swedish skinhead scene is one of the most violent in Europe. Since 1986, at least three murders, a serious case of torture, a major arms theft and two attempted murders can be attributed to it.

Responsible observers in Sweden now believe that the skinhead movement could be preparing for future terrorist violence.

According to a Stockholm police officer, "a clandestine nazi underground could possibly be in the making", a suggestion that echoes repeated warnings by Swedish researchers over the past two years.

In summer 1991 the Swedish skinhead leader Klas Lund and two of his associates were on the run from the police. Lund, 23, was the chief suspect in a recent arms theft case. Lund escaped arrest during a swoop on an alleged "nazi safehouse" in a Stockholm suburb by police investigating a commando-style raid on a police station in the wealthy, low-crime area of Lidingo.

The sequence of events began shortly after 3.00a.m. on April 11th 1991 when four men, faces covered and dressed in black leather jackets, entered the police building, staffed at night by only one person, via an unlocked window, made their way to the station's radio room and overpowered, handcuffed and blindfolded the night duty officer. The intruders then moved to a different part of the building to break into the armoury and steal 36 brand-new Sig-Sauer automatic guns, several privately-owned weapons and four police hand radios.

The burglary, which lasted only minutes, was described by a senior police official as *"a precision-style job"* where the raiders clearly knew the layout of

the building and had an escape plan. Though the alarms went off and in spite of hastily-erected police roadblocks, the burglars disappeared without trace.

A month later, alarm bells were ringing again at a police station in north Stockholm, indicating that a burglary was underway at a nearby unguarded military depot. Since the depot was known to store military equipment including machine guns and shoulder rocket launchers, heavily-armed police were immediately dispatched to the scene where they detained skinheads. Because they had not actually entered the armoury, they were sent home after identification and questioning pending further investigation.

When police investigating the Lidingo break-in heard about the incident, they correctly related the two events and, acting on information, mounted a surveillance operation on several skinheads.

The trail led them to a flat on the Stockholm island of Drottningholm, next door to Sweden's royal family. At the flat, police noted, clearly visible through a window, a large banner with a Celtic Cross and observed the comings and goings of several individuals with far-right links. The investigation soon focussed on one of them : Klas Lund.

A skinhead, Lund has a record in far-right circles going back to the early 1980s. By 1986, he belonged to the then active racist organisation "Keep Sweden Swedish" (BSS).

On Midsummer's eve the same year, Lund and a large group of skinheads went to the seaside resort of Nicksta and began harassing immigrant families and children. When a group of Swedish anti-racists intervened, the skinheads found new targets for attack. One of the anti-racists, 21-year-old Ronny Landin, was surrounded and kicked unconscious. One of the skinheads - it was never established exactly who - then finished off the defenceless victim by repeatedly hitting his skull with bottles.

Lund and three other skinheads who admitted taking part in the assault were sentenced to eight years' jail for the slaughter of Landin. Lund's sentence was reduced to four years on appeal, partly because of his age and partly because it could not be fully determined who administered the lethal blows.

While in prison, Lund protested his innocence and claimed the verdict on him had been the result of a media campaign against skinheads. He began to study philosophy, let his hair grow and started a beard to suit his new intellectual image. However, as soon as he got out he took up a paid position at the skinhead Headquarters in Stockholm and began forming links with an even more extreme group of skinheads.

When the police raided the Drottningholm apartment on May 23rd, they uncovered nazi propaganda pamphlets and racist and anti-semitic material from both Sweden and abroad. They also found evidence that proved beyond doubt that they were on the right track as far as the Lidingo thefts were concerned : four of the Sig-Sauer automatics stolen during the attack on the police station. None of the persons caught in the flat admitted knowing anything about the weapons and two men, one of them said to be Lund, had escaped capture by a matter of minutes.

For the past two years the Swedish racist scene has been dominated by the Sweden Democrats (SD), an offspring of the now-defunct BSS. Today the SD numbers well over 5,000 members, a huge figure for post-war Sweden where no racist group has ever reached more than at best 500-600 followers.

Due to its rapid growth, the SD's leaders have scented a possible electoral breakthrough in a few carefully selected communities where the party is strong. As a result of such visions, the party has adopted the style of the fascist Front National in France and the German Republikaner and has stressed the importance of a respectable "parliamentary" image.

The new image, however, has not entirely been met with approval and certain sacrifices have had to be made. The first ballast to be unloaded was the skinheads who had faithfully supported the old street-active BSS but who were now out in the cold. To the skins, many of whom had soaked up the ideas of the former "political soldier" wing of the British National Front, this meant they were adrift without political guidance and would have to find a new expression of their hatreds.

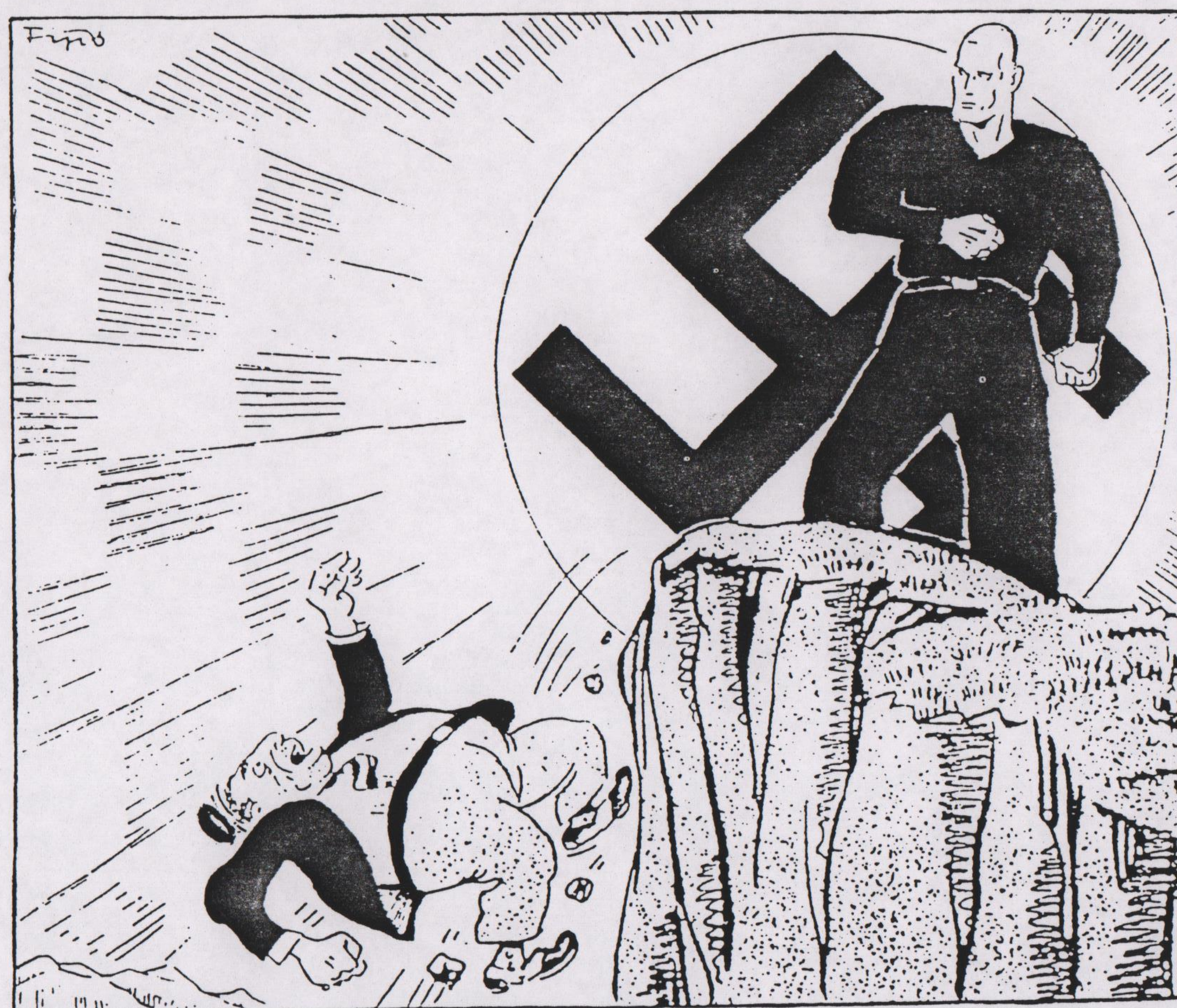
The first indication of this was the emergence of the White Rebel group, heavily influenced by the many times convicted Ian Stuart Donaldson and his London-based Blood and Honour organisation. White Rebel was the outcome of

STORM

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Storm issue 2

meetings between Donaldson and nazi skins in Sodertalje in 1987. Its magazine of the same name was written and edited in Sweden but printed and distributed from Britain.

The group, led by Peter Rindell and Goran Gustavsson, the latter an ex-member of a Hitlerite Nordic Reich Party "Action Group", is in turn intimately connected to an even more extreme quasi-religious cult : the US "Christian Identity" offshoot, "The Church of the Creator" (COTC) led by the anti-semitic US millionaire Ben Klassen.

The Swedish branch of COTC is led by the "reverend" Tommy Ryden, a 25-year-old self-styled priest previously connected to the BSS who now claims a small "congregation". In 1989, Ryden was given a free hand to propagate his brand of "theology" in the pages of White Rebel, a move which led to the prosecution of the magazine and its publishers for inciting racial hatred. Ryden was also prosecuted on similar charges and was sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

The court case, however, left one vital stone of White Rebel's politics unturned : the fantasies of armed struggle and violent white revolution. White Rebel had even proclaimed formation of a "Sturm Abteilung" of skinhead stormtroopers with no time for the parliamentarianism now promoted by the SD.

As one White Rebel article put it : *"We cannot win by luck, anonymity, half measures, prayers, nice speeches, leaflets or scattered violence. What we need to do is to build an efficient Sturm Abteilung, which will be prepared to carry through the white revolution in the Nordic countries."*

Nurtured on ideas of political soldiering, where survivalist literature and terror manuals such as the notorious "Turner Diaries" - recommended by mentors like Donaldson - have been far-right bestsellers, it is entirely consistent that the skinheads then turn to terrorism in real life.

White Rebel has been replaced with something even more strident : "Storm". Like its predecessor, Storm calls for the formation of a racist underground and has on its editorial board both Rindell and Gustavsson. But a new name has been added, that of Klas Lund.

It is clear that Storm is far more than just a magazine. It is also a semi-secret network linking militant skinheads to nazi groups in Sweden and beyond : it has become the single most important gathering point for Sweden's skinheads and violent nazis.

Local branches of the Storm network exist in several Swedish cities. The network argues for an unsectarian attitude, enabling it to co-operate with a variety of competing groups. Thus, it has been quick to form ties with the Nordic Reich Party (NRP).

Storm has also linked up with the Swedish National League (SNF), the country's oldest fascist organisation. Following a decade of internal strife, the SNF now has three independent factions. On December 1st last year, Storm representatives were invited guests at the SNF majority faction's annual gathering in Stockholm.

Top of the agenda was information about historical revisionism and an introduction to the Leuchter Report which denies the nazi gassing of Jews in Auschwitz.

At an international level Storm is staying in touch with a number of organisations. Among them are the Norwegian Nazi Zorn 88 group, led by Erik Rune Hansen, COTC with its journal "Racial Loyalty" and the Odinist Fellowship in Florida. Recently added to the list is the NSDAP-AO, run by Gary Rex Lauck from Nebraska in the USA.

For Lauck, long keen to form ties with Swedish nazis, this has marked a big success. Following his illegal visit to Germany in 1990, Lauck moved on to Sweden to hold secret talks about international nazi co-operation. In Sweden he got in touch with, among others, Lars-Goran Hedengard, a prominent leader of the SNF. As a result of this meeting, the SNF and NSDAP-AO have launched a joint paper based on the resources of Lauck's "New Order", a fact perceived by Lauck as a major breakthrough.

The exact nature of Lauck's contact with Storm is not known yet. However, for the past year Storm magazine has included NSDAP-AO material as well as Ku Klux Klan cards in its mailings and such material was found in abundance in the Drottningholm flat following the police raid.

Thirty-two of the highly dangerous Sig-Sauer automatic weapons have still not been recovered.

by Graeme Atkinson, European editor of Searchlight

North America Section

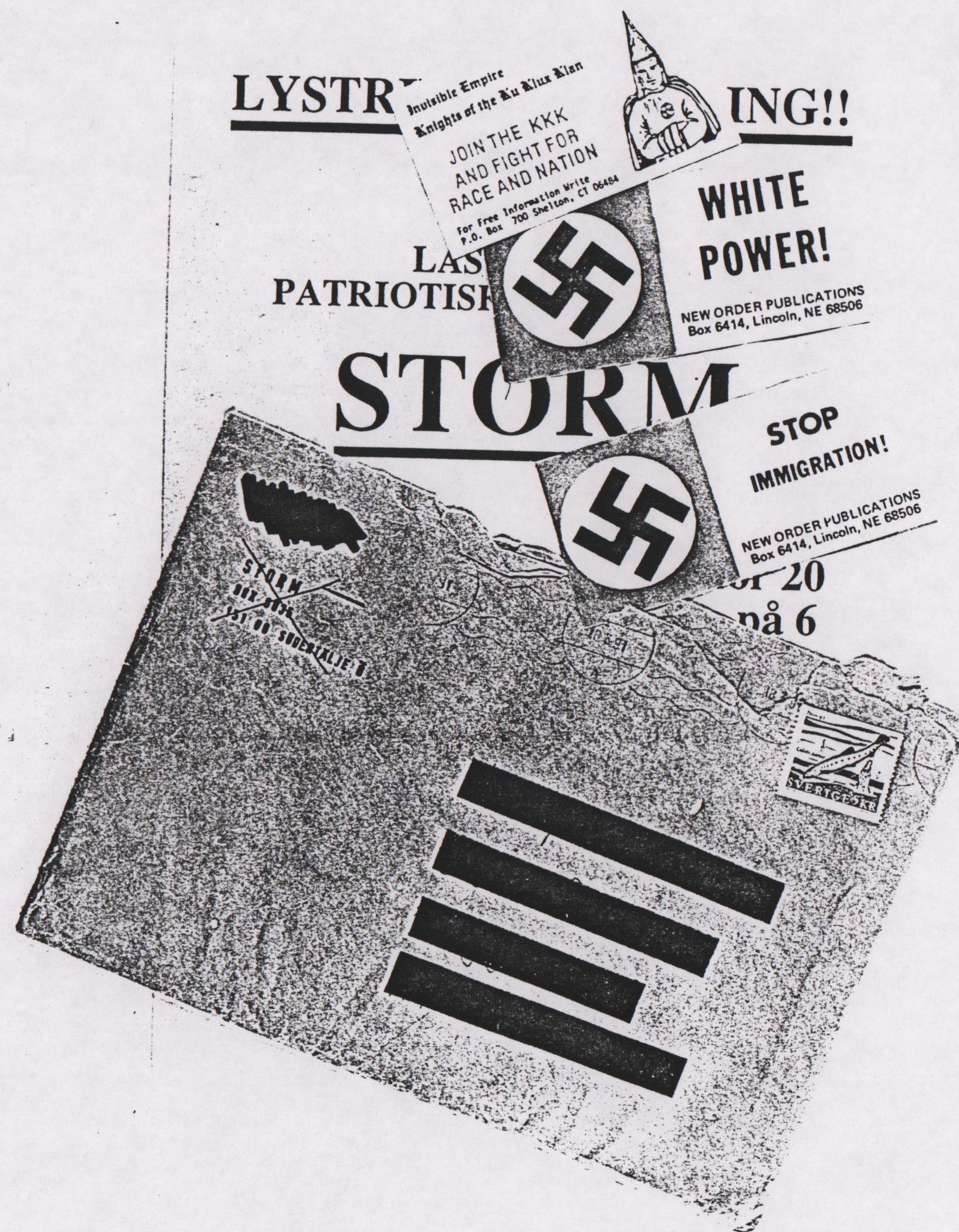
An Introduction to Skinhead Neo-Nazis in North America.

Since their first emergence in the United States in 1984, neo-nazis skinhead numbers have grown to 3,500 hard-core activists, with approximately 15,000 hangers on, sympathizers and "wannabees". They have left a trail of bigoted violence, including over 12 murders and hundreds of incidents of assault, arson and vandalism since 1986.

Despite a significant number of arrests, convictions and jail terms, neo-nazi skinhead violence has yet to abate. The U.S. Department of Justice launched special investigations that lead to federal trials in Dallas, Nashville and Tulsa, but skinhead activity has continued in those areas. In Portland the Southern Poverty Law Centre brought a highly publicised successful civil rights case against skinheads and their adult leaders but efforts to treat the skinhead phenomenon strictly as a criminal justice matter have failed. It is primarily a social and political phenomenon that requires social and political solutions.

Neo-nazi skinheads first emerged from among youth subcultures in the United States, particularly the punk "scene". Growing spontaneously, skinheads became emblematic of a new wave of racism among white youth who came to social consciousness during the 1980s. As the skinhead movement has matured, adult Klansmen and neo-nazis have attempted to influence the young racists and recruit them into established organisations. As a result, skinheads now occupy a middle ground: maintaining distinct organisations whose leadership and culture are youth derived and joining established Klan and neo-nazi groups and subsequently influencing the direction of the adult racists.

Although the violent crimes they now commit are sufficient cause for concern, the significance of today's young racists will increase rather than decline during the opening decades of the 21st century



Sample mailing from Storm

Youth Subculture In the United States

Skinheads in the United States developed out of the punk subculture starting around 1983-4, consciously imitating their British counterparts. Initially skinheads were not clearly identified as neo-nazis and skinheads remain divided into two camps: racist and anti-racist. As in Great Britain skinheads are a subcultural phenomenon identified by their music, style of dress and gang type mores. In most cases it is difficult to distinguish between racist and anti-racist skinheads.

Many anti-racist skinheads have joined SHARP (Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice) and there have been several efforts to organisationally consolidate anti-racist skins - particularly in the Midwest. These efforts have failed and anti-racist skins sometimes exhibit other forms of bigotry, such as homophobia.

The skinhead youth subculture has grown geometrically in the past four years. Today's new skinheads are likely to be in their early teens, rather than their late teens as they were just a few years ago. They have watched skinheads become a hot topic on television talkshows and grown up with local headlines featuring skins in their hometown. Neo-nazism has been adopted by many white youngsters as a form of rebellion. It expresses a sense of alienation and frustration which had been captured by progressive youth movements in previous times.

In some cases skinheads have attempted to shape their own youth rebellion after that of the sixties. For example, a widely publicised 1989 "Aryan Fest" in Napa Valley, California, modelled on the 1970 Woodstock musical festival, was halted after opposition demonstrations took place. By then the neo-nazi skinhead movement had produced its own bands to rival the popularity of the British band, Skrewdriver: Bound for Glory in Philadelphia, Haken Kreuz in Detroit and the Tulsa Boot Boys among others.

Although initially centred primarily on the West coast, neo-nazi skinheads groups are entrenched in every region of the United States. The Confederate Hammerskins, headquartered in Dallas, have been an important influence, spawning other groups of Hammerskins in the Southeast and Midwest, including Minnesota, Missouri and Tennessee. The American Front skinheads, originally headquartered in central Florida and San Francisco, are now the most powerful

of several skin groups in Portland, Oregon. At the present time of writing active neo-nazi skinhead groups exist in over 35 states.

Canada

Canadian neo-nazi skins have been concentrated in Toronto and Montreal but in recent years other Francophone skin groups have emerged across Quebec. They promote a mixture of Quebec nationalism, anti-immigrant violence and international solidarity with skins in the United States and Europe. There are also significant skin groups in British Columbia.

Quebec and other Canadian skinheads work with U.S. based Klan and neo-nazi organisations such as the Invisible Empire Klan, the White Aryan Resistance and the Aryan Nations.

International Connections

From the very beginning skinheads in the U.S. and Canada have been influenced by their counterparts in the United Kingdom. In the mid 1980s for example, neo-nazi skinheads distributed racist cartoons and leaflets that had been originally published by the National Front in Britain. U.S. skinheads began to articulate some of the "Third Position" politics popular in the British National Front at the time.

As a footnote, it could be argued that by becoming the first constituency for "Third Position" politics among U.S. white supremacists, they changed the shape of a significant sector of Klansmen and neo-nazis. This further "revolutionised" the movement beyond the almost classical Hitlerism of the older neo-nazi sects. Although "Third Position" politics are no longer popular in the U.S. as such, a significant stratum of Klansmen and neo-nazis from a variety of organisations have adopted several significant "Third Position" strategies: 1) An emphasis on first attacking "white elites", as opposed to people of colour and Jews; 2) Opposition to U.S. intervention overseas, such as the Gulf war and military intervention in Central America; 3) International solidarity of white workers across national and even political borders.

A seminal group of skinheads marched in the national Klan rallies in Tennessee and Georgia in 1986. They wore T-shirts with emblems from Ian Stuart Donaldson's Skrewdriver band and the British National Front. Although there were several racist skinhead bands playing music in their homes and at small halls around the punk scene, the only commercially viable skinhead recordings at the time were imports from Britain. They sold well at punk scene record stores on both coasts.

One of the most illustrative examples of the effect of international contacts by skinheads in the U.S. is the case of Sean Slater and "Skrewdriver Services" in Denver, Colorado. Skrewdriver Services is a major purveyor of British skinhead paraphernalia in the U.S. and has contributed significantly to the increase in racist activity among young whites.

Slater was active in the small racist skinhead subculture in Denver in the mid 1980s. He managed to go to England for 18 months as part of a training programme for chefs. While in England he participated in National Front activities and became part of the circle of Blood & Honour admirers, turning from an amateur racist in a small skin subculture into a "professional".

When he returned to Denver he established Skrewdriver Services and now sells several thousand dollars worth of T-shirts, jacket badges, music and literature.

In 1990 Slater became an area organiser for the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, headquartered in Arkansas. In April 1991 he staged a highly publicised Hitler birthday anniversary in Denver, for the first time since the late 1970s. In September 1991 he was honoured by being a featured speaker at the annual Klan crossburning in Stone Mountain, Georgia. He told the 500 assembled racists that skinheads had found a home in the Klan.

The Battle Among Adult Racists for Influence Over Skins

Most skinheads are not likely to associate with those sections of the white supremacist movement hoping to find new followers by appeals to the electoral mainstream. There are some notable exceptions, however.

Michael Palasch of the National Renaissance skins in New Orleans actively campaigned for former Klan leader David Duke when he ran as a Republican for the U.S. Senate in 1990. Palasch did help establish support for Duke among white student union groups in Louisiana. (Duke received 605,000 votes in that election, 60% of the white vote. He raised about \$2 million during the campaign.) SS of America skins from Charlotte, North Carolina have served as bodyguards at Populist Party meetings in that state. The Populist Party is an amalgam of former Klansmen, neo-nazis and far rightists seeking to run for public office.

By contrast, the future of the violent wing of the white supremacist movement will be decided, in large part, by the direction that skinheads take as they become older and more directly connected to established Klan and neo-nazi organisations.

There are currently four organisational forms competing for the allegiance of skinheads: the Klan (primarily the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and the rival Confederate Knights of America); the Aryan Nations; Tom Metzger's White Aryan Resistance and the Church of the Creator. Each has developed a layer of support among skinheads.

Metzger and the White Aryan Resistance (WAR), based in southern California, were the first adult neo-nazis to develop a skinhead following. WAR started the Aryan Youth Movement as a funnel from the smaller local skinhead groups to a national organisation. The Aryan Youth Movement, unlike the Klan Youth Corps that operated a decade previously, respected the autonomy of the local groups. Rather than seeking to directly subsume the groups within WAR and integrate them in a vertical command structure, WAR helped to shape their politics via written propaganda, videotaped programmes and telephone hotlines.

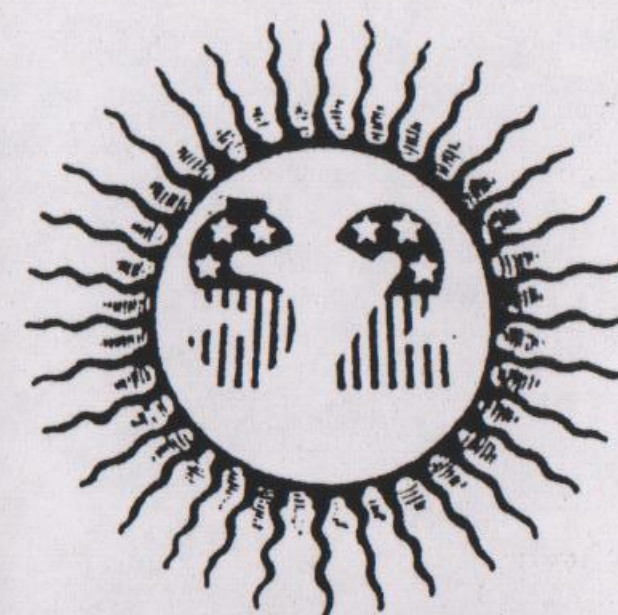
As Metzger's importance within the skinhead movement grew, however, he sought to take direct control of some of the groups. For example, in 1988 Metzger established his own skin group - the WAR skins. In 1990 he was found guilty in civil court of being responsible for the 1988 murder of Mulegeta Seraw, an Ethiopian immigrant beaten to death by skinheads in Portland, Oregon.

Metzger had sought to have the skins establish more formal organisations and defined politics. He had led them away from identification with other adult

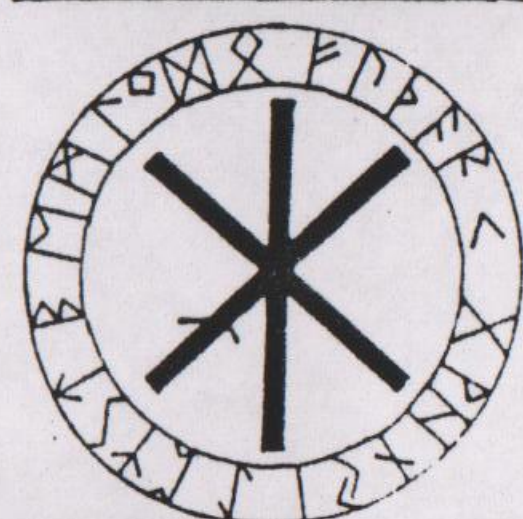
WAR

White Aryan Resistance

P.O. BOX 65 FALLBROOK, CA 92028



Vol 8 N.2



88 YEAR OLD VIKING WARRIOR BILL HERRELL STANDS UP AGAINST HOMOSEXUAL COWARDS IN NAPA COUNTY

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A Third Way Beyond Capitalism and Communism

White Aryan Resistance newspaper complains of anti-fascist opposition to nazi skinhead "Aryan Woodstock"

groups, particularly the Klan and Christian Identity. Metzger's influence ebbed, however, after his conviction in Portland.

Joe Greco, the 35-year-old skinhead leader of the Oklahoma White Man's Association and a close comrade of Metzger's, has continued to organise midstates skinheads via an annual "Aryan Fest" cultural gathering near Tulsa. Each July over 300 skinheads from Minnesota to Texas gather to listen to bands, hold sporting events such as the hammer throw, make speeches and even hold wedding ceremonies.

A similar event was held for skinheads in the Northeast in 1991 on the Pennsylvania farm of long-time neo-nazi Alfred Lentz.

Richard Butler's Aryan Nations, headquartered in the backwoods of northern Idaho, attempted to step in where Metzger had left off. Butler is an advocate of Christian Identity, a racist theology that contends that Jesus Christ was an Aryan; Jews are children of the devil and people of colour are pre-human. This theology lays claim to the mantle of Christianity and claims white people of Northern Europe are the lost tribes of Israel.

Butler has sought to recruit the skinheads away from paganism and the Nordic mythologies that were initially imported from Britain and promoted by Metzger. In October 1989 the Aryan Nations held a special skinhead march and rally in Pulaski, Tennessee. The march and rally were complete cultural events with several skinhead marriages performed and skinhead rock bands playing late into the night. In addition, the Aryan Nations has held three youth/skinhead conferences at its Idaho compound, over the Hitler birthday weekend.

Closely allied with the Aryan Nations has been Thom Robb's Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Robb's Klan has always been the most nazi of the two dozen Klan factions operating in the United States. At the same time, Robb is a Christian Identity preacher like Butler. Robb's Chicago lieutenant, Ed Novak, was the first Klan leader to recruit skins.

James Farrands' Invisible Empire Knights of the Ku Klux Klan has not recruited among skinheads in the United States, owing primarily to the older more conservative nature of his membership. However, his group has been

particularly effective in recruiting skins in Canada, even using French language literature produced in New England.

As a result of these and other activities, increasing numbers of skinheads now profess to be "Christian" like Butler, a clear difference between themselves and their European cousins.

On the opposite side, the Church of the Creator has been recruiting skinheads into its White Rangers organisation. The Church of the Creator regards all forms of Christianity, including the racist Identity movement, as a Jewish invention. Although small, this Hitler-worshipping sect has had a growing influence within skinhead circles. The COTC monthly newspaper, Racial Loyalty, has now become a staple propaganda piece for some skin groups.

by Leonard Zeskind, research director Center for Democratic Renewal,
Atlanta, USA