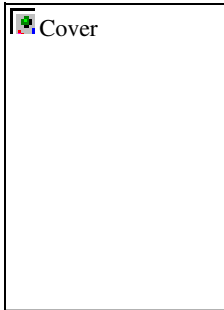


Searchlight July 2000



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Searchlight special - eight articles of analysis

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[13 days that shook London](#)

by *Carly Seabright*

It began with an explosion. Nails and shards of glass shot through a crowded Brixton market on 17 April 1999. But in just two weeks one bomb became three and the malicious motives behind the violence unravelled to reveal organised and malicious racist attacks directed at London's multicultural communities.

A frightening observation made by *Searchlight* revealed the possible launch of a new style of racist attacks; "previous attacks, even bombings and arsons, have been aimed at rival political groups or individuals but the indiscriminate nature of these attacks would herald a new, and possibly unprecedented, wave of domestic terrorism in Britain".

The new wave of racial violence began with the first blast on 17 April and ceased with the third on 30 April, injuring more than 100 altogether and leaving three dead.

Without warning, the first bomb sent 4kg of nails and resultant shards of glass into the crowded open market, injuring 39. While doctors worked through the night to treat the victims, Scotland Yard officers studied security film and the next morning's papers reported the horrific news of a lone attacker with a lethal capability.

In the early stages of the investigation, the police moved fast to extinguish any suspicion that the attack was linked to the IRA, but was reluctant to speculate further on the identity of the attacker although it was logged at Scotland Yard as a racial attack.

A telephone call to the police on the day after the bombing claimed responsibility on behalf of a nazi hate group called Combat 18. Although the police received this claim with caution, it did prompt them to launch an investigation into London's neo-nazi hate groups.

The investigation revealed startling new evidence that extremist groups had plans as far back as the mid-1990s to attack ethnic minorities in Britain as well as popular gay pubs with the aim of igniting a violent race war.

By the third day after the bombing, detectives were still without leads in their search for the person responsible and turned to Londoners for help in tracing the bomb's origins.

Politicians acted fast to denounce the violence, Home Secretary Jack Straw told the media that the bombing was an "outrageous and mindless act". The Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesman, Alan Beith, declared: "It is an act of supreme wickedness to plant a bomb in a busy shopping street".

Oona King, Labour MP for Bethnal Green and Bow, reminded us that racial hatred and violence are not unusual in Britain today: "I think people failed to realise it, but the black community is living every day in fear of racist violence".

A local resident in Brixton, Dunstan Gunasingha, 60, confirmed this as he explained to journalists, "we were expecting that something like this might happen. There were anonymous phone calls from Monday onwards to local shops saying there was going to be a bomb."

Threats that any ethnic minorities who remained in the UK after 1999 would be exterminated were sent to the office of an Asian newspaper and others from an extreme right-wing group calling itself the White Wolves, just days before the blast. An Asian newspaper and a mosque near Brick Lane both received phone calls saying, "Brixton got it last week, you'll be next" and "you know that bombing in Brixton? Well, you're next."

Exactly seven days after the explosion in Brixton, on 24 April, a second attack on London's ethnic communities took place in Brick Lane, the centre of London's Bangladeshi community.

This bomb brought more responses from politicians, who firmly condemned the violence. "I'm appalled by this second evil act of malicious violence," said Mr Straw to journalists after the explosion.

The leader of Tower Hamlets Council, Julie Mainwaring, also denounced the bombing. "Brick Lane is the heart of the East End's Asian community," she declared. "It appears that someone out there has chosen to attack our people again. It's almost certainly linked to the Brixton bombing."

As police forensic specialists sifted through rubble and debris seeking clues about the manufacture of the bomb, in an effort to identify the bomber, connections between the two attacks were becoming clear. One theory emerged that the reason for the attacks was the publication in February of the findings of the inquiry by Sir William Macpherson into the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

The areas targeted by the bomber indicated clearly that the attacks were motivated by race hatred. Police were "convinced that the bomber had a racist motive and deliberately planted the Brixton device". Ms King, whose constituency includes Brick Lane, and local community leaders told journalists that they blamed "a white backlash against the Stephen Lawrence report for the Brick lane blast".

Fears were growing that more attacks might follow. By 25 April the media had changed their tune from describing the bombings as random violence and began using phrases such as "race terrorism", "years of racial conflict", "Race bombers strike again", "Neo-nazi thugs who stir up the East End" and "New bomb raises fear of racist campaign".

Shaken by the apparent racist campaign, ethnic minorities across the capital were living in increasing trepidation of further attacks. The communities targeted were understandably left shaken. "Nobody feels safe around here any more," one eyewitness told journalists.

Meanwhile the investigations continued. On 26 April Scotland Yard began working with the French intelligence service to investigate similarities with the French nail bombings that were carried out by Islamic extremists. Detectives told the media that they suspected the group or individual behind the London bombs had received help from an international source.

After extremist groups claimed responsibility for the Brixton and Brick Lane bombs, confusion reigned, with the media and apparently the police unable to differentiate between a genuine mid-1990s White Wolves document seen as a blueprint for terror and the growing number of hoax telephone calls being made in that organisation's name.

That document explained how to make homemade bombs like the ones that had devastated Brixton and Brick Lane and revealed a racist campaign that clearly aimed to ignite a violent and hateful, race war.

It read, "Our main line of attack must be on the immigrant communities themselves, the black and Asian ghettos. If this is done regularly, effectively and brutally, the aliens will respond by attacking whites at random, forcing them off the fence and into self-defence. This will begin a spiral of violence which will force the Establishment's hand on the race issue."

As *Searchlight* reported in June last year, "The White Wolves document details possible attacks, bomb manuals and counter-surveillance tactics. It is classic leaderless resistance. 'We do not believe that we alone can win the race war, but we can start it', it concludes."

The most significant breakthrough in the search for the bomber came shortly before the third explosion. The Anti Terrorist Squad with the technical help of the US space agency, NASA, had produced a remarkably good image of the suspect by enhancing film from surveillance cameras in Brixton taken just before the first blast.

On 30 April, the media released an image of a suspect and asked for the public's help in identifying him. The head of the anti-terrorist branch, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Alan Fry, told the media, "We have someone who is clearly recognisable; someone knows him ... [and] he must be caught".

The same day the media reported that four neo-nazi groups had claimed responsibility for at least the first bomb to the police. Among them were the White Wolves and Combat 18, which claimed responsibility for both explosions.

Searchlight dismissed the claim from C18, because the attack did not match C18's previous pattern of operation. The White Wolves were a far more serious threat.

Amid mounting police and public anticipation that a third attack was planned for the approaching weekend, images of the as yet unidentified David Copeland circulated throughout London.

Police spokespersons told journalists that they suspected the possibility of a third bomb on that Saturday, 1 May. But Copeland broke the pattern of the previous attacks and detonated his bomb on the Friday evening. The explosion, at 6:37pm, devastated a crowded gay pub, the Admiral Duncan in Soho, killing three people and injuring 73, 13 of them seriously.

Copeland was arrested at his home in Cove, Farnborough, just hours after the Soho blast. A police search of his room revealed bomb-making equipment and nazi paraphernalia. Two days later, he was charged with detonating all three bombs.

Just hours after Copeland's arrest, the police were confidently asserting that Copeland was acting alone and had no connections with any nazi organisations. "It is understood he was acting alone for his own motives," David Veness, Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, told journalists.

But as *Searchlight* reported in June last year, "whether the police truly believed that Copeland had no links, or were saying it for political reasons, remains to be seen".

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[Killer ideas](#)

Kate Taylor and Nick Lowles on the making and motives of nazi bomber David Copeland

David Copeland was just 22 when he unleashed the bombs that killed three and injured more than a hundred. Motivated by a virulent hatred towards ethnic minorities, which was compounded by a vehement homophobia, the allure of nazi ideology was all too compelling for Copeland. Since childhood he had been consumed by inferiority complexes and crises of sexuality and masculinity. The ideas of the far right were to play on his anxieties and sense of powerlessness in a way that culminated in death, destruction and tragedy.

Copeland is not alone in having an unhappy childhood or psychiatric problems. But few perpetrate the amount of violence that he did. The ideas he possessed and the hatred he felt towards others did not come only from within. The fuse that ignited and directed the anger within Copeland was his involvement in the far right.

Copeland was the second of three boys. He was born on the outskirts of west London, but when he was four his family moved to a semi-detached suburban house in Yatley, Hampshire. From his birth there had been concerns about his development, initially over the size of his testicles and later over his lack of height. These factors, coupled with an inferiority complex in relation to his two brothers, played heavily on his mind as he grew up.

An underachiever at school, he sought to make an impression. But, suffering from low self-esteem, he was always the loner. He could never quite fit in.

His insecurities were exactly those that the far right exploits through its caricatured version of masculinity. A web of violence, explicit heterosexuality and strong masculinity underlie far-right groups. The last two were lacking in Copeland's own life, and this was the image he desperately wanted. He yearned to belong.

In spring 1997 Copeland moved to London. His father had arranged a job for him with engineering contractors on the Jubilee Line extension. With racism already embedded in his mind, he found east London very different from the life he left behind. It was during the general election campaign that summer that Copeland made his first contact with the British National Party.

For six months he was an active member, attending meetings and participating in leafleting campaigns across the capital. Though a member of the Newham branch, he joined a BNP election team in Uxbridge and heard Nick Griffin, now party leader, speak in Redbridge. After an aborted anniversary rally in Stratford, scene of the now infamous photograph of himself and the BNP leader John Tyndall, Copeland joined three other members in attacking Politico's bookshop in Victoria – the target of their hatred being *Searchlight*.



Since his childhood, Copeland had harboured a strong revulsion towards gays. Because of his size, he had been paranoid throughout his youth that his family thought he was gay. The court heard of his fear of using public toilets and that he carried a knife in case gay men approached him.

The virulently homophobic BNP clearly perpetuated his hatred towards gays. Within the group, any roles that do not conform to a rigid version of masculinity, or to what is considered a normal and healthy sexuality, are strongly maligned. This can culminate not only in overt abuse but also in physical violence. Copeland took this to its logical conclusion in an effort to mask his own lack of self worth.

But while the BNP offered an introduction to the far right, Copeland wanted more. Frustrated at the lack of activity he drifted away. A year earlier he had watched the television scenes of the Centennial Park bombing at the Atlanta Olympics with unconcealed excitement. He imagined carrying out a similar strategy at the Notting Hill Carnival. His time in the BNP brought that dream a little closer to reality.

It was soon after leaving the BNP that Copeland attempted his first bombing campaign. Informed of the virtues of the Internet while in the BNP, he spent long hours in an Internet café in Victoria, searching the web for useful sites. He had downloaded *The Terrorists' Handbook* and set about trying to build an ammonium nitrate bomb, similar to the high explosive device used in Atlanta. It failed, and frustrated, he gave up.

However the lure of the far right was never far away and within a couple of months he was back in contact with the BNP, first with Tony Lecomber, himself a convicted bomber, and then with Barnaby Ore, a young east London activist whom Copeland had befriended during his time as a member. But by now the BNP was too tame for his views and, having read in the newspapers about high-profile NF marches in Dover, he decided to make contact with the NF. Ore was less than keen to hand him over to a rival organisation and suggested that if he wanted something more hardline he should contact the National Alliance, a US nazi group led by William Pierce.

Copeland was by now branching out politically. Browsing the Internet he came across Christian Identity (CI), a far-right theology that turned traditional Christian teaching on its head. CI claimed that the Anglo-Saxon and Nordic race of Northern Europe and the US was the lost tribe of Israel, while the Jews were the spawn of Satan and black people were sub-humans or mud people – a term Copeland would himself use later.

When he came across a National Socialist Movement sticker in central London he thought he had at last found his political home. Launched a year before as a splinter group from the nazi terror group Combat 18, the NSM was one of the few openly nazi groups in Britain. Although tiny in numbers, it has attracted some of the most ideologically driven nazis to its ranks.

By now he was a committed nazi. In a confession written after his arrest, Copeland said: "I bombed the blacks, Paki's, Degenerates. I would of bombed the Jews as well if I got a chance." In Broadmoor he ranted against the Zionist Occupation Government that was conspiring against him.

But the first NSM member he met was not one of these. Having recently moved back to Hampshire after suffering panic attacks in London, Copeland was put in touch with the local NSM organiser, Kirk Barker. Barker had an unenviable record for violence, having served a three-year sentence for his part in an unprovoked racist attack on Asian waiters in Buntingford, Hertfordshire in 1992.

Copeland was unimpressed with Barker and, although he soon replaced Barker as the local NSM organiser, he soon dismissed any thoughts he had of recruiting Barker to his terrorist campaign. For his part, Barker was equally dismissive, claiming Copeland was a religious nut.

Within weeks of joining the NSM he became its regional organiser, responsible for recruiting members and organising local activities. Within days of becoming organiser, Copeland began his preparations for his bombing campaign.

With little hope of attracting others to his plans, Copeland entered 1999 determined to go it alone. Having re-read his Internet bomb manuals, he decided on a more moderate, but deadly, device. Buying components at local shops and experimenting in a nearby wood, he put the finishing touches to his campaign.

Three months later, he calmly set off on his bicycle to Fleet station from where he caught a train to Clapham Junction in London. From there it was a short taxi ride to Brixton. Strapped across his back was a dark sports bag containing a primed bomb set to explode at 5.30pm.

The court heard how Copeland had hoped to start a race war. "I believe in a real master race," Copeland declared. His race and country came first and he wanted Aryan domination of the world.

While Copeland would like to be remembered as the nazi who tried to ignite a race war, one cannot separate his politics from his personal problems.

His inferiority complex was exploited by the likes of the BNP, who gave him a target and a scapegoat for his anger. It also provided a remedy for his crisis of masculinity through its continual outbursts against gays. Self-frustration was transformed into anger at others. Once he had political justification for his feelings, he had the impetus to kill.

It is therefore little surprise that Copeland was attracted to the far right. He was typical of a disaffected young male alienated from society. He

lacked an identity that assigned him any status of power. He was a loner who found refuge and status through racism and white supremacy. Through adherence to the politics espoused by fascist groups, a new identity emerged. It was an identity that empowered him by positively identifying with the status of the white male.

Within the BNP and far-right groups, race is absolute. His whiteness gave him that feeling of superiority that he lacked within mainstream society. Nothing else mattered. Because nazis prioritise race over any other factor, by virtue of his skin colour Copeland was able to feel special.

In Broadmoor, a psychiatric assessment of Copeland concluded: "He has developed delusional beliefs which are connected to his low self-esteem and concern about his sexuality and he took an interest in extreme right-wing and fundamentalist Christian ideology. His attitude to others and more recent offending behaviour shows evidence of arrogance and lack of empathy and there are significant sadist elements to his thoughts and behaviour."

He was suffering from a personality disorder that originated from an unhappy childhood, a low esteem and sexual insecurities. By switching his own unhappiness to a resentment of the society around him he sought to inflict misery on others. From a position of self-perceived powerlessness, Copeland could dictate the lives of others. This, more than a simple wish to kill, was his motivating force. He was, in more ways than one, playing God.

Copeland has claimed that it was his destiny to kill. He wanted to ignite a race war in order to facilitate a BNP government. He may have had the background and mental state that allowed him to commit such heinous crimes, but the ideas came from elsewhere.

The BNP and other far-right groups provided the lethal ingredient to a dangerous recipe. The mixture of personality disorder, sexual insecurities and crises of masculinity with virulent racism and white supremacy proved deadly in a man who was very much a loner. He wanted to be special, and was desperate to be remembered. Now, tragically, this may prove to be the case.

As David Copeland begins the first of many years of incarceration, he will have much time to ponder the rest of his life. Perhaps one day he will show remorse for what he did, which until now he has failed to do. When informed by police during his interrogation that a third person had died as a result of his bomb in Soho, he could only reply: "Does that make me a serial killer then?"

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London remembers

by *Ewa Burza*

Electric Avenue, at the mouth of Brixton market, is a bustle and tussle of heckling, shouting and laughter as I meander through the crowds of bargain hunters and fruit shoppers. Just over a year ago, David Copeland chose this market as the first target in his campaign of fascist violence. The bomb blast nearly killed a baby boy who needed surgery to remove a 10cm nail from his skull. It is hard to imagine the pandemonium that ensued here last April in the now characteristic organised shopper mayhem that has reclaimed the street.

Kelly, originally from Kashmir and the owner of a small electronic goods stall, points out deep scar-like marks scratched on the wall of Boots facing his stall. "See those dents, that's were the nails went", he tells me between mouthfuls of Caribbean mutton curry. He explains, pointedly, "I remember, it was about 5pm and I was packing up my stall, ready to go. Earlier on, we'd seen the bag. It had been put out by pitch number 37. We're pitch number 35. We'd been suspicious, me and my mate, so we picked it up it and put it by the wall over there, outside Iceland. I was lucky I was behind my stall when it went off, but my mate was badly injured, especially in his feet, he needed 35 stitches."

Shaking his head and munching away, he continues, "All of us suffered after the bomb. We were badly affected as business people. I lost £3,000 worth of stock. We got no compensation and the council didn't do anything to build business people's morale back up." Mandy, three stalls down, echoes Kelly's sentiments. Standing behind her table laden with Nigerian spices, dried fish, Ukazi and bitter leaf, she makes no attempts to hide her outrage. "I lost my whole stall! I lost £5,000 worth of stock and we got no compensation, none of us! The council threw away all my food, all my stock because they said it might have glass in it! The government, the council, they don't care, look, 'im down there", she goes on, pointing to a young black man joking with friends at his stereo and speaker stall, "He got no compensation and he got robbed as well. Most of us struggle to set up a stall, you know, an' then we lose it all."

Asked how the bomb affected her personal life, Mandy looks distressed and disgusted all at once, "E-ve-ry time I hear a little bang, even in my own house, you know, every little noise, I get a fright. I couldn't hear properly for two weeks after it. One of my staff had his thumb blown off. I found myself on the floor, it was shockin'." Customers picking through her produce twig at our discussion and look up, nodding in sympathy and agreement. Harbours no doubts about Copeland's state of mind, she goes on, vehemently, "Oh 'im that planted it, he's not crazy, he knew exactly what he was doing, he sat down and worked it all out, no, he's not crazy". And with that she returns to the brisk business of serving her

customers.

The bomb hasn't managed to taint Brixton's multicultural social fabric or its spirit of get-up-and-get-on-with-it in the least. The market still bustles with the dominant work ethic of business-as-usual but a streak of cynicism has remained. The anger is still fresh at the lack of compensation and respect afforded to stall-holders by what most regard to be a tokenistically sympathetic government and council.

The Brick Lane bomb confirmed suspicions of a growing, sinister pattern of fascist intent. Home to the biggest Bengali population outside Bangladesh, housed in some of the most derelict, impoverished estates in the country, and flanked by areas with a history of nazi activity, Brick Lane was a logical target. The bag containing the device was spotted by a concerned passer-by who bravely decided to put it in his car and drive it to a near-by police station. Thankfully he had not yet put the key in the ignition when the bomb exploded, blasting out the windows of the stylish Indian restaurant, Café Naz, with such force that the sound could be heard all over Whitechapel.

M R Chowdhry, a waiter still working at Café Naz, had chosen to open the door of the restaurant at the precise moment the bomb went off. He is lucky to be alive. Back at the refurbished restaurant, he leaves his table, a gaggle of professional-looking people merrily tasting each other's deserts, to recount to me his experience. "I went to go out and see what was the matter outside; people were all worried about this bag that had just been found. I remember, I open the door, just to see what was up, and then I just hear this big, big bang. All I see is black smoke and I am covered in blood, my hands and arms full of glass and blood." It is hard to imagine this jovial, smooth-skinned, happy-go-lucky waiter in front of me standing dumb-struck and traumatised in the middle of the bomb site. "I felt very bad. It was like a nightmare," he says, "but I still don't know why they want to blast bomb here. I still can't understand."

Another witness to the bomb is Sharique, the owner of the popular chicken and chips shop opposite Café Naz. He too remembers the stun of the bomb. "All my windows crashed in and everyone was everywhere. I've never seen anything like this before in my life, thick black smoke was everywhere, it was chaos." But Sharique is critical when he talks of race relations in the community. "Ties are stronger now and the Asian community is still really tight, the youth especially, feel stronger in themselves, but things haven't really changed in terms of racism; it's still at the same level. Policing tactics are the same as ever, not that much has changed really." Shrugging, he goes back to feeding his customers the huge piles of hot crispy chicken and chips that keep his shop thriving.

The worst hit site of Copeland's bombing campaign, however, was London's thriving "out" and proud gay community in Old Compton Street, which, like Brixton and Brick Lane, is enjoyed by all Londoners for its energy, diversity and vibrancy. Here people are particularly reluctant to speak of what the press described as "pure carnage". Understandably, people want to forget the war-zone scenes of dismembered bloodied bodies scattered over the pavement in what was arguably the worst bomb central London has ever witnessed. Katia, a shop assistant working in the fetish clothing store opposite, casts a despondent look onto the now merry, noisy street. "You know, you just don't want to talk about it. I saw people lying in the street with their legs blown off, their arms blown off. It was horrifying."

Enrico, also a shop assistant, is angry. "Look, the politician and the papers, they all come here and seize on the event afterwards, they just use the issue for their own end but now what? I don't think they care at all. Homophobic attacks keep happening, violence is still happening, but it is not reported, it is not discussed."

In a bar a few doors down, a woman who knows the fickle nature of the media only too well is Lucy, whose picture alongside her traumatised girlfriend was splashed across the front pages of every paper and television set in the country. "All these journalists kept calling me up and telling me they were gay and that they would represent the gay community. It was awful, we couldn't leave the house, the phone never stopped ringing, they tried every trick in the book."

Lucy had agreed to meet her girlfriend Veronica, a barmaid at The Admiral Duncan, inside after work. "At 6.30 I heard this almighty bang outside. I was frantic. I rushed out into the street thinking it was Minties [a gay bar two doors from the Admiral] at first. Everyone was running towards me and I was rushing the opposite way. Stepping into the burnt out pub, all I could see were people picking themselves up and stumbling out in shock and I was just shouting, 'Where's Veronica? Where's Veronica?' I could hear someone calling my name but looking around I couldn't see anyone I knew.

"Then I turned around and she was standing behind me. She had been blown across the road, her face was pouring with blood and her hair was all over the place. I couldn't believe it, she was unrecognisable. I had looked straight past her." The force of the blast had generated a fireball which raced through the chip shop opposite, bursting out of its back door and hurling people into its windows. Before the bomb, Lucy tells me, her girlfriend had been a sweet, open person. The trauma of the bomb had seen her become aggressive, violent and alcoholic. "You can see how it's ruined her life really, she's a different person now, I don't think she'll ever be the same again."

Lucy herself dropped out of college for eight months suffering from depression. Asking her how she feels about Copeland now, she is resigned. "At the time, I wanted to stick him in a room with a nail bomb. But now, it just makes me sick. I'm sick of homophobia, of the way Brian Souter [owner of the Stagecoach company and virulent Keep The Clause campaigner] and Baroness Young, [Souter's parliamentary ally] are spending

millions of pounds telling us and everyone else that we are abnormal. It's absurd. Most people in London aren't racist or homophobic."

Copeland's campaign did not stop anyone from being exactly what he had hoped, dementedly, to change. British people are still gay, lesbian, black and Asian and always will be. The absurdity and ideological pathology implicit in far-right "politics" reveals itself in the violence of these bombs, which continue to impact on people's memories and lives.

[▲TOP](#)



David Myatt - Theoretician of terror

David Myatt does not have the appearance of a Nazi ideologue. Now 49, and sporting a long ginger beard, Barbour jacket, cords and a tweed flat cap, he resembles an eccentric country gentleman out for a Sunday ramble. But Myatt is anything but the country squire, for beneath this seemingly innocuous exterior is a man of extreme and calculated hatred. Over the past ten years, Myatt has emerged as the most ideologically driven nazi in Britain, preaching race war and terrorism.

Active since the late 1960s, Myatt has been through the National Front, British Movement and National Democratic Freedom Movement and has even flirted with the British National Party. However, none gave him the racial war that he so desired. "For the Destiny of the Aryan to be fulfilled, there has to be a holy war against all those who oppose National Socialism", he once wrote.

He has long since turned his back on electoral politics, believing his "Aryan society" could only be brought about by force. "The primary duty of all National Socialists is to change the world. National Socialism means revolution: the overthrow of the existing System and its replacement with a National-Socialist society. Revolution means struggle: it means war. It means certain tactics have to be employed, and a great revolutionary movement organised which is primarily composed of those prepared to fight, prepared to get their hands dirty and perhaps spill some blood."

His influence on the British nazi scene was eventually to attract David Copeland.

After several years in the political wilderness, Myatt re-emerged in 1992 to become Combat 18's political guru. A close colleague of Charlie and Steve Sargent, he was to write much of the group's more intellectual and ideological material.

In C18, and later the National Socialist Movement (NSM), Myatt saw the raw material from which a revolutionary movement could be built. "These mostly young Aryans have the right instincts; they have the right feelings about life. Their often-rowdy behaviour, their tendency to like brawls, is natural and healthy because it is part of the warrior heritage." Myatt saw himself as the educator.

He was a prolific writer. During the period that he was closely aligned to C18 he produced over 30 issues of his newsletter, The National Socialist. Covering such topics as "Death Before Dishonour", "Building the Revolution, Armed Insurrection" and "Racial War!", these writings provided C18 with the intellectual and even spiritual justification for its street violence. Although few C18 activists routinely read Myatt's work, he exerted strong influence over Charlie and Steve Sargent, the Essex-based nazi brothers who produced most of the group's propaganda.

This influence was clearly demonstrated when in mid-1997 Steve Sargent led a breakaway from C18 and formed the NSM. With Steve Sargent's blessing, Myatt became the group's first leader.

Under his control, the NSM became Britain's only openly nazi organisation. "The flag of the NSM is the swastika, and the NSM proudly and unashamedly upholds the political creed of National Socialism", read its founding statement. Its one policy was, the document continued: "to build the foundations for a National Socialist revolution and thus create a National Socialist State".

For Copeland, who was later to become an NSM organiser, its message of Aryan revolution meant the violent overthrow of the present society.

But there was an even darker side to Myatt, hidden even from most of his close political friends. Myatt was a leading supporter of the Order of Nine Angles (ONA), a hardline Satanic church which he himself established in 1985. Espousing "traditional Satanism" and rituals involving human sacrifice, Myatt and the ONA are considered dangerous even by those within the Satanic fraternity. For Myatt, fascism and Satanism are inextricably linked. To join the ONA requires a ceremony worshipping Adolf Hitler and national socialist ideology, performed in front of a swastika and a framed picture of the Führer himself.

To this day, Myatt continues to deny any link with the ONA. In an interview in 1998 he claimed only to have dabbled with the occult in the early 1970s in an attempt to win converts to his national socialist views. When presented with evidence that showed he opened and ran three ONA post

office boxes, he claimed he was merely doing a favour for a man he had met over 25 years ago.

Despite his forceful denials of any Satanic link, Myatt was, at the time of that interview, living with Richard Moulton at a farm in Shropshire. Moulton also goes under the name Christos Beast and is the present leader of the ONA. He was also a keen supporter of the NSM, one of several Satanists whom Myatt brought into its milieu.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given his politics, Myatt was not afraid of violence. Not only had he been imprisoned for attacking political opponents in 1974, he also boasted of having killed a person during a duel.

His writings were littered with references to violence and death. One document circulated from one of his many ONA and National Socialist mail boxes, and written under the pseudonym Godric Redbeard, was entitled "System Breakdown: A Guide to Disrupting the System". Its introduction explained: "This work aims to provide a brief guide to the strategy and tactics National-Socialists need in order to create a revolution and create a National-Socialist State".

The document went on to detail how a revolutionary situation could be brought about by direct action and sabotage, including the disruption of every day services from water to sewage, sabotage to the National Grid and traffic chaos.

In 1994 Myatt is believed to have been behind a 15-page document which called for race war, under the imprint White Wolves. While groups such as C18 had regularly advocated race war, the authors of this article seemed far more serious.

Claiming that every nation had the absolute right to defend itself, it argued "our main line of attack must be on the immigrants themselves, the Black and Asian ghettos. If this is done regularly, effectively and brutally, the aliens will respond by attacking Whites at random, forcing them off the fence and into self-defence. This will begin the spiral of violence which will force the Establishment's hand on the race issue.

"The British people will fight, but not if we offer them only the soft voting option. WE must point them in the right direction by taking the necessary action to start the spiral of violence which will ultimately include even the reluctant, forcing them to fight. The victory will come from them once they have no other option, but the initiative must come from us. There are a dozen Belfast's and a hundred Londonderry's in Britain today, they're just waiting for a spark ..."

The document concluded: "We do not believe that we alone can win the Race War, but we can start it!"

Copeland's thinking followed the same lines. He told police that he intended to be the spark that ignited the race war. By the time he joined the NSM, Myatt was no longer its leader. A few months earlier, police investigating race hate material on the Internet had raided Myatt's Worcestershire home. The offending material related to a Charlemagne Hammer Skins website run by Hervé Guttuso, an NSM supporter and flatmate of Steve Sargent. The articles, which the police thought Myatt had written, included a strategy for Nazi terrorism.

Under the sub-heading of racial war, the document reconfirmed Myatt's desire violently to target minority communities: "This means creating tension and terror within ethnic communities, and damaging or destroying their property and their homes by fire-bombs and/or explosive devices. Part of this involves attacking individuals (and killing some of them).

"The two-fold aim is to get ethnics to attack Aryans (and so encourage an Aryan backlash – a racial awareness among ordinary Aryans) and to make ethnics go in fear of their lives, thus encouraging them to stay in their own ethnic areas, or want to leave our land."

Copeland was to employ similar logic to his own actions, telling police that he wanted to create a violent backlash from blacks and Asians which in turn would lead to whites physically defending themselves and ultimately race war.

The Internet site also contained links to *The Turner Diaries* and the *Terrorist Handbook*, the bomb manual Copeland downloaded and then followed to produce his devices.

Myatt was to be the political inspiration behind the NSM. It was from within the NSM, with its avowedly Nazi propaganda, that Copeland sought to recruit a cell to assist him with his bombing campaign. While there is no evidence that the two men ever met, Myatt's writings and the influence they exerted on groups such as the NSM and individuals such as Steve Sargent all played a part in creating the environment from which Copeland emerged.

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[William Pierce](#)

Long regarded as the man who has inspired a generation of Nazi terrorists, William Pierce appears to be backtracking. Searchlight argues that

his recent outburst against the concept of “leaderless resistance” only illustrates that for the National Alliance terrorism is a tactic in the war not the war itself.

Sam King looks at the influence and ideas of the leading US nazi.

By his own admission, David Copeland was never much of a reader. Whether it was due to his short attention span or simply that he had not been encouraged as a child, he preferred videos and tabloid papers to books. Yet one book to which he referred during his confession to the police left an enduring impression on him. It was a book about race war, the terrorist struggle of a group of white Americans fighting to overthrow the Jewish-controlled system that supposedly ran the country. *The Turner Diaries* was a work of fiction but had inspired many in real life. Copeland was no exception.

The Turner Diaries was written by Andrew Macdonald, the pen name of William Pierce, leader of the National Alliance (NA) and arguably America's most dangerous nazi. The NA's membership is counted in the thousands and the organisation now operates in over a dozen US states. Perhaps more significantly its followers have influence in several other right-wing organisations.

Adding to a monthly magazine, a book club with over 400 titles and even a short-wave radio station, Pierce has recently acquired Resistance Records, a white power music operation through which he hopes to sell 70,000 CDs a year. However, his influence goes further.

In April 1995, at about the same time that Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nicholls were delivering the deadly truck bomb that was to destroy the front of a federal building in Oklahoma City, an NA organiser rented a billboard just outside the main entrance of the huge Fort Bragg army base in North Carolina. “Enough! Let's start taking back America! National Alliance”, ran the slogan. A few months later, three soldiers from that base killed a black couple as they walked down a quiet street in nearby Fayetteville. All three were nazis and among racist literature police found numerous NA publications.

Much of Pierce's reputation emanates from his two novels. *The Turner Diaries* is a story of a white underground army battling to take the US back from Jewish control, while in *Hunter* a lone racist goes on a killing spree.

Pierce's books were part of his strategy to advance his theory of race war: a strategy that seems to have succeeded. Not only have more than 200,000 copies of *The Turner Diaries* been sold since it was written in 1978, but the book has inspired a generation of racists across the world.

In 1983, the book prompted the formation of a real underground organisation known as The Order, the name of the secret leadership that controlled the “Organization” in the book. Led by Robert (Bob) J. Mathews, The Order carried out armoured car robberies to the tune of \$6 million (£3.9 million), murdered a Jewish radio host and a policeman, and killed one of its own members who they believed was informing on them. The group was finally brought to book in December 1984, when its leader died in a fire resulting from a shootout with the FBI. At the time of its demise, The Order was planning to poison the water supply of three US cities.

Pierce and *The Turner Diaries* guided Mathews. According to the authors of *The Silent Brotherhood*, an account of The Order, “Bob accorded Pierce a reverence approaching outright worship that he deigned to give no other man. When William Pierce spoke, Mathews became reticent, almost as if he was afraid to interrupt with thoughts of his own. It was decidedly unlike Bob Mathews.” Mathews had also been the NA's Northwest representative.

Several years later, *The Turner Diaries* was again widely suspected of inspiring domestic terrorism. The Oklahoma City bomb almost exactly mirrored a scene from the book.

The impact of *The Turner Diaries* was also felt in Europe. In the early 1990s a Swedish nazi group called White Aryan Resistance (VAM) carried out murders and robberies, including the theft of 36 automatic guns from a police station. VAM was a proto-terrorist group inspired by the notion of race war depicted in the book, which has since been translated into Swedish, French and German.

Even in Britain, *The Turner Diaries* has influenced the far right. Although articles about Mathews and The Order appeared occasionally in British far-right publications during the 1980s, it was not until 1992, with the formation of Combat 18, that the US theory of race war really took hold. C18 was a joint US-British product. It relied heavily on the street thugs, largely drawn from the football hooligan world, that had characterised the British far right for 20 years, but now incorporating US ideology. Terms such as ZOG (Zionist Occupation Government) and race war became common in its literature. C18 even called one of its magazines *The Order*.

Pierce has never been shy of acknowledging the impact of his work. Attending a British National Party rally a few months after the Oklahoma bombing, he took great delight in reciting the FBI's claim that *The Turner Diaries* was a “blueprint for terrorism”.

While Pierce is clever enough not to implicate himself in any bombing campaign, he is certainly not averse to the use of violence as a political tool. Writing in 1990, he said: “It is clear that if white males would respond to their rage in a direct, physical way, as skinheads do, then we would have no race problem, no Jewish problem, no homosexual problem and no problem with White race traitors in America. Our cities would be clean,

decent, safe and White again after a relatively brief period of bloodletting.

“Ultimately, we will win the war only by killing our enemies.”

Given Pierce’s willingness to contemplate violence for political ends, it initially appears odd that *Resistance* magazine, of which he is the publisher, carried an article by Eric Hollyoak that launched a blistering attack on the concept of leaderless resistance, the theory of individuals and small cells of activists operating autonomously but following a shared political direction.

“By its very nature LR [leaderless resistance] amounts to little more than anarchy and, as demonstrated by some of the most recent examples, very rapidly degenerates into simple banditry,” wrote Hollyoak.

“Although some small measure of disjointed disruption may be achieved by LR, and although LR may exert some paltry degree of temporary coercion, its lack of far ranging planning, organizational discipline, coordination with other elements, or a support net designed to sustain operations will find them littering the streets with their corpses.”

Hollyoak’s article has caused uproar among some sections of the US right, including several surviving members of The Order, who have written sharp rebuttals.

Slightly embarrassed by the political fallout from the attack on Mathews and The Order, Pierce himself has entered the fray. While acknowledging that it was a mistake to attack Mathews he has nevertheless supported the general thrust of the article in a recent NA members’ bulletin.

Attacking the advocates of leaderless resistance who have been most critical of Hollyoak’s article, in particular Alex Curtis of *The National Observer* and Tom Metzger, whom Pierce refers to as “phone-booth Führers” and “incurable hobbyists”, he asserts: “All of this theorizing takes place in the make-believe world of revolutionary hobbyism. In the real world, ‘leaderless resistance’ is simply an excuse for losers, cowards, and shirkers to do nothing except talk to each other. Building an effective organization of any sort is difficult work, and those who don’t like work or who have tried to build an organization and failed often are resentful of any effort that shows signs of success.”

Pierce goes on to argue that in the current political climate, terrorism will not only fail to bring the desired race war, with little or no public support, but will prove counter-productive, as it gives their enemies an excuse to crack down on right-wing organisations.

To Hollyoak, terrorism is simply one tactic at the nazis’ disposal. “Armed resistance is only one subset of what is properly defined as Political Warfare.” This wider battle includes the building of political support among the general population, developing coherent and secure support structures and an intelligence wing. All this, Hollyoak concludes, requires planning and organisation.

“There must be a policy making body who turn their deliberated decisions over to another organizational element which plans the implementation of those policies, in turn delegating responsibility for executing the plan to further subordinate elements. This requires not only a centralized command element that makes decisions, but also a staff who turn those decisions into mission taskings to the staffs of subordinate resistance.”

Even in *Hunter*, Pierce’s second book, which is often held up as an example of the “lone wolf” theory (individuals acting totally alone), the true meaning is quite the reverse. While the book focuses on a man who carries out a series of assassinations in a bid to increase the political temperature, he needs an organisation to take advantage of his work.

While terrorist incidents will undoubtedly continue, in the long run the threat of the National Alliance is far more significant. With the organisation eager to expand its operations in Europe, Copeland will not be the last person to come under Pierce’s influence.

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[Policing terror](#)

Could Copeland have been discovered before his bombing campaign? What can be done to identify future bombers? Nick Lowles looks at British practice and asks whether a US-style New Offender Model would work for Britain

Police initially took comfort in the fact that Copeland was acting alone. It helped explain why they seemed to have no trace on him and the length of time it took to make the arrest. He had, after all, been identified from surveillance camera footage released by the police rather than from intelligence gleaned from inside Britain’s far right.

While publicly the police were content with their investigation, privately there was a huge sigh of relief at the outcome. Copeland had been caught largely because of his inability to disguise himself and survey the targets beforehand. From his statement to the police, it was quite clear that he had been intending to continue his bombing campaign, with Southall as his next target.

Copeland's case once again highlighted the confused nature of intelligence gathering and monitoring of the far right. Departmental jealousy, territorial disputes and backbiting characterised the investigation. The case was given to the Anti-Terrorist Branch, and Special Branch, MI5 and the newly established Racial and Violent Crimes Task Force, CO24, were kept in the background.

The infighting continued long after Copeland's arrest, with Anti-Terrorist Branch officers complaining of an intelligence void, a clear criticism of MI5 and Special Branch monitoring of the far right, while Special Branch responded by calling the Anti-Terrorist Branch "a glorified forensic team", a reference to their lack of knowledge of the political right.

Only days after the arrest, the Metropolitan Police basically admitted to failings in the policing of the far right when it announced the formation of the Task Group to coordinate the monitoring of extremists and violent crime. "It will focus on those who seek to intimidate innocent victims by criminal threats", a largely unnoticed press release read. "It will be available on request to support forces throughout England and Wales."

However, this seems to have been more spin than substance. A senior officer at the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS), one of the police bodies supposed to be contributing to this new group, only heard of its formation through the national press.

While the Task Group was supposed to pool information from a number of different bodies monitoring the far right, few believe it will make a difference. "In reality nothing has really changed and I very much doubt if anything will," admitted one security service source. "We had to say these things at the time of the bombing but life has returned to normal again."

While emerging threats will inevitably necessitate shifting priorities for the police, there has been one shortcoming that goes some way to explain why the police were caught so unprepared for this bombing campaign. The police and intelligence services in Britain seem to have been unprepared for a lone bomber. While few could have ascertained who would carry out the bombings, it was always a question of when.

Cause and effect

Since the early 1990s the US theory of "race war" has played an increasingly prominent role in the minds of the British right. It was not only Combat 18 that drew inspiration from the US; the British Movement and even the British National Party did so too. Nazi book-clubs flourished with the sale of US material, much of it advocating race war, and the "14 words", a phrase coined by David Lane, an imprisoned member of the US terrorist group The Order, has even been adopted by the leadership of the BNP as a signature alongside "88 – Heil Hitler".

When *Searchlight* gave evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee's enquiry into racial harassment and attacks it highlighted the growing impact of US ideas on the British and European extreme right. The police dismissed the submission, claiming that any links that did exist were between individuals rather than organisations. Even if that were so, which *Searchlight* also disputed, the police failed to comprehend the ideas that were permeating into Britain. With Copeland so obviously taking his cue from the US one hopes a change in approach is accepted.



Copeland caught on CCTV moments before planting a bomb in Brixton

Alongside the increasing prominence of nazi theories of race war has been the effect of more mundane racist literature. Time and time again the police have failed to appreciate the impact that this material has on people, particularly those with personality disorders such as Copeland. It is what *Searchlight* has repeatedly termed "cause and effect". Quite simply it means racist literature inspires racist violence, perhaps not in those who produce the material, but certainly among those who read it. While racial violence will occur even in the absence of racist material, this is no excuse not to attempt to stop the flow of incitative literature.

Unfortunately, the police have failed to grasp this. Despite repeated calls to act against Anthony Hancock, the nazi printer who produced nearly all C18's illegal material, including a meeting between *Searchlight* and Home Office Minister Mike O'Brien shortly after Labour came to power, Hancock has never been prosecuted for his work. More poignantly, the police failed to follow through the raids on three National Socialist Movement (NSM) activists – David Myatt, Steve Sargent and Hervé Guttuso – for racist material on the Internet, only months before Copeland joined the group. *Searchlight* has learnt that the officer handling the Myatt case was later transferred onto another job and the case was left dormant until it was decided to drop it altogether.

Even when police do act against racist material, all too often the action is limited. In 1988 Leighton Jones was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for producing the highly illegal Barbecue in Rostock CD by the C18 band No Remorse. Yet if the police had used the law to its full effect, at least eight other people, including the band members and distributors, could have been imprisoned. In one swoop, the entire leadership of C18 could have been removed.

filing the lone bomber

With law enforcement agencies on both sides of the Atlantic seeking ways to identify future bombers, traditional approaches of gathering intelligence are being scrapped. "Current FBI thinking concludes it is not possible nor effective to attempt to identify the new breed of offender by

targeting extremist organisations and their followers,” wrote Gregory A Walker in the *International Police Review* last year.

“A disturbing new offender profile is emerging with every successful terrorist attack within the United States. This profile is unlike the European offender model with its step-by-step progression involving the making and identification of a terrorist. The US model ... takes the form of violent actions being perpetrated independently by individuals with little or no ties to one particular group.”

According to the New Offender Model, drawn up by anti-terrorist experts in the US, the perpetrator is likely to be between 18 and 35; white; has military experience though having left the army on bad terms; received extremist indoctrination from an early age; sees himself as a target of negative government interest long before the government becomes aware of him; and possesses self-destructive tendencies but transforms these into an acceptable vision of martyrdom.

If the New Offender Model is accepted, the police would seem to have little chance of stopping Copeland-style bombings in the future. Acting alone and often for the most personal of reasons, the highly armed and motivated terrorist can act virtually anonymously.

However, this is too simplistic a view of what is occurring and the situation is not quite so bleak. While nazis have been willing to use increasing violence in recent years, it would be inaccurate to state that the perpetrators were acting totally alone, “with little or no ties to one particular group”, as Walker asserts. True, they might not have been acting under the guidance of a larger political organisation, but a common feature of nearly all those carrying out these atrocities has been contact with the far right. Whether it be Copeland (regional organiser of the NSM); Benjamin Smith (close associate of Church of the Creator leader Matt Hale); Burford Furrow Jnr (Aryan Nations); or even the Sussex fire-bomber Stuart Kerr (C18 supporter and West Ham hooligan); all have links with the right that go beyond merely obtaining literature.

So while the New Offender Model contends that the terrorist “fuels his ideation by viewing, listening to, and reading that information which does not, by its very nature, create a paper trail to his doorstep for the authorities to follow”, the exact opposite has been true about extreme-right terrorists. All have had contact with recognised groups and there is no reason to believe that these people could not have come to the authorities’ attention if these organisations had been monitored effectively. It is in conjunction with such monitoring that offender profiles become useful in identifying people likely to take a more violent strategy.

In the case of Copeland it seems surprising that the police did not identify him earlier given his two years on the nazi scene. Even during his time in the BNP he began expressing his frustration at the lack of activity. That he could become a regional organiser of the NSM and still remain virtually unnoticed by the police seems remarkable.

Months after his arrest the police asserted that Copeland was on a list of 500 possible right-wing suspects, though they admit he was not near the top. While they claim that through a process of elimination they would eventually have caught him, doubts remain.

The truth is that for a number of years those units monitoring the far right have not considered it a viable threat. With the exception of Combat 18, which has been monitored closely in recent years, the right has largely been ignored. This is not simply a failure in monitoring and surveillance techniques, but a poor political grasp of these groups. When a local Community Safety Unit in west London asked London Special Branch recently for information on the BNP, the reply came that the BNP was no longer a threat as it had turned to constitutional politics. The lessons of Copeland and “cause and effect” are yet to be learnt.

In addition to proper monitoring and understanding of the impact of racist literature, more should be done to curtail the groups and ideology that encourage people to commit violence. Although Britain does not have the websites and magazines dedicated to promoting leaderless resistance and lone wolf terrorism that exist in the US, there are a number of magazines and book clubs that reproduce articles along the same lines. That Myatt and Sargent could repeatedly write of “race war” and distribute bomb manuals and guides for “Aryan warfare” and remain unpunished is incredible. *Searchlight* does not advocate banning far-right groups out of existence, as this would be counter-productive and set a dangerous precedent, but these groups should be held responsible for the actions of their supporters. Proving a link may be difficult, but the threat of such a law would certainly concentrate the minds of the leaders and those writing the propaganda.

It is impossible to prevent every outburst of nazi terrorism, but the police could at least make it harder for those who seek to carry out such crimes. With a proper appreciation of the effects of nazi literature, better surveillance and profiling of likely suspects and the implementation of existing laws to the full, the chances of prevention and detection rise considerably.

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Mad or bad?

The outcome of David Copeland’s trial rested largely on conflicting medical opinion as to his state of mind at the time he carried out the bombings. In pleading not guilty to murder but guilty to manslaughter by reason of diminished responsibility, Copeland’s lawyers argued that

he was suffering from paranoid schizophrenia that compelled him to carry out the bombings. A succession of eminent doctors told the court how Copeland was suffering from “grandiose religious delusions” that made him believe he was acting on God’s orders and would be rewarded for his work by being lifted up into “Rapture” at the time of “Armageddon”. But, as Nick Lowles and Kate Taylor report, this need not indicate madness but simply an adherence to the US-dominated theory of Christian Identity. There, “God’s soldiers” have been responsible for many of the worst atrocities carried out by the far right.

Dr Gilluley found Copeland a troubled, complex young man. Called in to assess him shortly after his move to Broadmoor last autumn, the doctor found Copeland to be suffering from “religious, grandiose and persecutory components”. Copeland had described how he was “a prophet” acting out “his Mission”, claiming that his bombings were to be first of many and would result in the Apocalypse. Believing that he was special, Copeland quoted scriptures to justify and explain his actions. He even went on to claim that divine intervention at his trial would sweep him from the courtroom up to heaven.

“It is my opinion he is likely to be suffering from a schizophrenic illness,” Dr Gilluley concluded. This view was supported by Dr Sarah Isherwood, a consultant psychiatrist at Belmarsh prison, who told the court that Copeland claimed he had been carrying out God’s work and that he had acted righteously. Professor John Gunn CBE, one of Britain’s foremost psychiatrists, drew the same conclusion. In a statement read out to the court, he said Copeland claimed to be acting “under instruction, carrying out God’s will in cleansing the world”.

One voice stood out against this otherwise consensual medical opinion. Dr Philip Joseph, a consultant psychiatrist at St Mary’s Hospital, west London, argued that Copeland was suffering from a personality disorder rather than any form of paranoid schizophrenia. His religious beliefs were simply an articulation, albeit in a rather crude form, of Christian Identity, a right-wing theology that turned traditional religious teaching on its head. Having read through much of the political and religious material found in the defendant’s possession, Dr Joseph concluded that he was simply repeating what he had read. He contended that the other doctors had formed their opinions because “they were not aware of the literature he had”. Had they been, he argued, they could well have altered their views.

Dr Joseph was right. Although he accepted that Copeland could well have developed mental illness while in prison, his religious rantings owed more to his politics than his state of mind.

Christian Identity (CI) has its roots in British-Israelism, which emerged in the mid 19th century with the work of Edward Hide, an Englishman, who in 1871 claimed that the Anglo-Saxons were the lost tribe of Israel. Reinterpreting the biblical book of Genesis, Hide developed a “two-seed theory” of man’s evolution, in which the descendants of Adam were the children of God while those of Cain were the Jews, the seed of Satan. Identification was primarily on racial lines, at around the same time that the likes of Francis Galton were developing theories that attempted to prove that inequality was grounded in biology and nature.

These ideas were translated into the American version of CI to proclaim warfare against all “non-white” peoples. CI is a millennial theology – its aim being to bring about the second coming, God’s “Will” must be established through battle. The justification for racism, antisemitism and terrorism is seen to be the direct word of God and is thus indiscriminate and beyond question. Quite simply it is the truth.

According to Leonard Zeskind, an expert on the American far right, “Identity sharply delineates a white Christian nation, appealing to those opposed to this New World Order. It opposes both multiculturalism from ‘below’ and universalism from above. And the Bible provides a mythology of the nation’s origins, particularly when wedded to more conventional stories about George Washington at Valley Forge. Believers assert dominion over a distinct territory, separate from that of non-Christians and non-whites. Their Biblical Law would govern, establishing God’s Kingdom on Earth.” In such a society men and women would be divided along gender roles, races would not mix and homosexuality would be outlawed. In addition, laws would be derived from the Bible, not the political preferences of the politicians of the day. “It provides religious unity for differing racist political groups, and it brings religious people into contact with the racist movement,” asserts Zeskind.

Christian Identity exists as the religious underpinning to hundreds of small groups that are survivalist and white supremacist in nature. It does not stand as a monolithic ideology or single group. Its adherents include Aryan Nations, Posse Comitatus, The Order, the White Patriot Party, and the Phineas Priesthood. These groups are scattered across the US, often adopting the role of leaderless resistance cells that operate entirely independently from one another. These small survivalist compounds are united by an adherence to CI, which brings together what would otherwise be a disparate set of groups, both geographically, and ideologically.

Christian Identity is more the theological justification for these groups’ actions than a single movement. It gives the racist right a religious unity, while bringing religion into the world of white supremacy.

Copeland first came across Christian Identity in summer 1998, obtaining material from both Aryan Nations and Kingdom Identity, another CI church, based in Harrison, Arkansas. As he became involved in the National Socialist Movement, Christian Identity was firmly implanted in his mind. In statements read out in the court NSM activists Tony Williams and Kirk Barker both made reference to Copeland’s obsession with fundamentalist Christianity. Barker even claimed he avoided further contact with Copeland as a result.

Kingdom Identity teaching would have been politically in tune with Copeland's own thinking, none more so than on the issue of race, as its Mission Statement so clearly sets out. "We believe that as a chosen race, elected by God, we are not to be partakers of the wickedness of this world system, but are called to come out and be a separated people. This includes segregation from all non-white races, who are prohibited in God's natural divine order from ruling over Israel. Race-mixing is an abomination in the sight of Almighty God, a satanic attempt meant to destroy the chosen seedline, and is strictly forbidden by HIS commandments." Kingdom Identity was no less strident in its views on homosexuality, another issue close to Copeland's heart. "Homosexuality is an abomination before God and should be punished by death," the Statement added.

Copeland was never much of a reader, but he certainly took in much of the Kingdom Identity material he obtained. During his confession, he would make several references to the Bible and this particular interpretation of it. Proclaiming that race-mixing is wrong, he told his interviewers: "I think it's wrong, all the mongrelisation with these races. You know what I mean if you read the Bible. I'm not really that religious. I do believe in God but I'm not a religious person. It pronounces, you know, it's anti-race-mixing, it's anti-black. He proscribes them as soulless."

Violence has never been far away from the followers of Christian Identity, with God often cited as the justification. In 1996 three members of the Phineas Priesthood, a CI group that took its name from Phineas, a character in the Bible who slew a mixed-race couple, were convicted for bombing an abortion clinic and robbing banks and a newspaper office. In court they described how God had directed their actions.

Another terrorist group linked to Aryan Nations was the Aryan Republican Army, whose members were responsible for 22 bank robberies. And in the late 1990s four members of the New Order pleaded guilty to a plot to blow up the headquarters of the Southern Poverty Law Center and poison the water supplies and bomb state buildings in several US cities. Both groups were followers of Christian Identity.

Even Eric Rudolph, the man whose Centennial Park bombing in Atlanta in 1996 first inspired Copeland to carry out his own atrocities, had been brought up with Christian Identity. He is also believed to have bombed several abortion clinics and a gay bar. Letters claiming responsibility in the name of the "Army of God" were received after the first two attacks.

Although Copeland seems to have become even more preoccupied with Christian Identity since being arrested, he had been a follower for some time before. It is doubtful whether he truly understood the biblical teachings of what he was reading, and often incorporated conflicting views into his own beliefs. His tendency was to cherry-pick those passages and ideas that not only corroborated his existing views but also gave a spiritual justification to them.

Understanding Christian Identity and the effect it has had on thousands of racists goes some way to explaining Copeland's often bizarre rantings to the doctors. He, like many other adherents of CI in the US before him, was able to convince himself that he was a young man on a mission from God.

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[Sharing the blame](#)

The London bombing is unhelpful to the British National Party's struggle for political respectability. The BNP considers any link with violence to be damaging to its public image. It is no surprise that the BNP has distanced itself from David Copeland, even calling for the death penalty. Blaming the BNP for Copeland's actions may at first sight seem unfair. He was not acting under the direction of the BNP leadership and had left the party 15 months earlier. The BNP claims no prior knowledge of the bombings, but its leaders must share responsibility for making Copeland the man he is.

David Copeland with former BNP leader John Tyndall at a party rally in East London in September 1997



When news of Copeland's arrest broke in May 1999, the BNP immediately seized on police comments that he was a loner, acting on motives unknown. What the police had actually said was that Copeland was not aligned to the groups that had claimed responsibility for the bombings – Combat 18 and White Wolves – but the statement was presented in such a way that much of the media reported that Copeland was unconnected to the far right. Grasping the opportunity, the BNP issued a report claiming the party had been vindicated of any responsibility and referred to media articles linking the party to the bombing campaign as "an avalanche of media smears and innuendo".

Even after *The Mirror* carried the *Searchlight* revelations that Copeland had been involved in the BNP, the party failed to come clean. Though

stung by the publication of a photograph of Copeland with John Tyndall, then party leader, the BNP initially claimed that Copeland had attended a couple of meetings but was not a member. With further evidence expected to emerge, this position was untenable. Eventually Tyndall admitted to the BBC that after checking a "supplementary file of lapsed members" he had indeed come across Copeland's name. He went on to claim that Copeland had written a letter explaining his decision to leave the party a short time later and asked to be removed from BNP files. However, Tyndall proved unable to produce this letter.

Nick Griffin, the organisation's present leader, was slightly more helpful. He conceded that Copeland might have attended three meetings and promised to find out more. When pressed for more information, Griffin recommended that journalists contact Larry O'Hara, a writer, and duly gave out his address and number.

The *Mirror* story brought unwelcome attention from dozens of journalists. Addressing internal party meetings across the country, the BNP's national organiser, Richard Edmonds, waving a copy of the paper as a prop, admitted: "This is the gravest issue ever facing our party, it will come back to haunt us".

The BNP decided to deflect media attention from itself by informing everyone that Copeland was linked to the openly nazi National Socialist Movement. Griffin circulated this revelation widely in the form of a press release and a free copy of *Spearhead* containing a long article written by himself.

Not content with this, Griffin then wrote that the bombing campaign was a plot by the state to discredit the BNP. The result, he concluded in a display of illusions of grandeur and self-importance, would have led to a "further tightening of the screws against legal and wholly innocent organisations such as the BNP, found 'guilty' by false media association".

However, despite its best attempts to divert media interest, the BNP does share some of the blame for Copeland. The BNP gave Copeland his introduction into racist politics, infused him with an ideology of the racial superiority of white people over others, and introduced him to other groups who espouse race war.

As one BNP member, who knew Copeland, told *Searchlight*: "I am almost certain that if Copeland hadn't joined the BNP and NSM he would be an ordinary bloke working on the Jubilee Line. I think to start with there must have been something about him that made him do what he did, but I think that without that political education he would not have done it."

Much of the BNP's defence rests on the fact that it is a legal political party, opposed to the use of violence. However, all attempts to distance itself from violence are made to look ridiculous by the activities of its leaders. Tony Lecomber, a leading party official in London, himself has a conviction for bombing; Tyndall, its founder, has a string of convictions for violence and paramilitary activity; and Griffin helped safehouse several wanted Italian terrorists in the early 1980s.

Likewise, its links to the National Alliance (NA) prove it is quite happy to associate with people who promote terrorism. In 1995 NA leader William Pierce was the guest speaker at the BNP annual rally, where he openly boasted, to cheers from the audience, that the FBI considered his book, *The Turner Diaries*, a blueprint for terrorism. Throughout the 1990s BNP publications have routinely carried advertisements for Life Rune Books, run by the NA UK organiser, John Cato. Alongside NA material, the Life Rune Books catalogue describes *The Turner Diaries* and *Silent Brotherhood*, an account of a US nazi terror group, as "essential reading". More recently, the American Friends of the BNP has established a close working relationship with the NA.

In the summer of 1998 Copeland contacted Barnaby Ore, a leading BNP activist from east London and a close confidant of Lecomber, and asked him for the address of the National Front. Deciding against passing a potential member to a rival organisation, Ore pointed Copeland in the direction of the NA. From the evidence that emerged during the trial, it seems that Copeland had not heard of the NA or *The Turner Diaries* until that time.

It is not only NA literature that is advertised through the BNP. Over the past few years *Spearhead* has consistently carried advertisements for 14 Words Press, a UK branch of a US book club by the same name. This outlet is dedicated to remembering the US terrorist Robert J Matthews and includes videos, T-shirts and books on him. Operating from Coventry, 14 Words Press is run by Mark Payne, who doubles up as the local BNP organiser. So infatuated is Payne with this nazi terrorist organisation he has even changed his name to Mark Matthews.

More importantly, the BNP message regularly incites an element of its supporters to commit racial violence, perhaps with not quite the devastating effects of Copeland, but violence nevertheless. In the three months following the BNP's local election victory on the Isle of Dogs, east London, in 1993, racist attacks rose by 300%. And for all its claims to be the party of law and order, no member has ever been disciplined for their violence.

Copeland himself recognised the importance of the BNP as a motivating force. Although he was no longer a member, having decided to seek a more violent group, he still politically associated himself, and racial violence, with the party. Asked by police during his interrogation what he had

hoped to achieve, Copeland replied race war. "I'd just be the spark, that's all I plan to be. The spark that would set fire to this country.

"My aim was political. It was to cause a racial war in this country. There'd be a backlash from ethnic communities, then all the white people would go out and vote BNP."

Despite its denials, the BNP played a substantial role in educating and motivating Copeland to commit his crimes. Griffin concluded his article in *Spearhead* with the words: "Mixed-up young loners who flirt around the fringes of nationalist organisations are cannon-fodder, often needing only a push in the wrong direction by a skilled provocateur to send them over the edge into illegality and craziness."

Unfortunately for Griffin, the BNP proved to be one of those provocateurs that made Copeland. In the same article Griffin seemed to excuse the bombing of the gay pub in Soho. Claiming to be opposed to the attack, he went on: "The TV footage of dozens of 'gay' demonstrators flaunting their perversion in front of the world's journalists showed just why so many ordinary people find these creatures so repulsive". Quite apart from the hypocrisy, as Griffin himself has had gay relationships in the past, it is this sort of inflammatory language that encourages the likes of Copeland.

To this day, the BNP still denies any responsibility for Copeland's actions. Writing at the trial began, Griffin wrote, "Several of our people met him (he attended two meetings and joined, before calling in to say that he was leaving because the BNP wasn't paramilitary) and all just thought he was a bit quiet".

Griffin continues, "in letting C18 run, the state also allowed it to put out insanely inflammatory and violent propaganda for literally years ... I think he was 'wound up' by this material, which also showed him how to make bombs. Assuming he's guilty, this makes him a useful idiot, or a crazed loner, depending on your taste, but no more.

"My belief is that he was a government agent, and that the intention was to create public anti-racist hysteria (and justify MI5 empire building) without doing serious damage."

Despite all these bizarre conspiracy theories, Griffin and the BNP cannot escape from its responsibility in creating Copeland the terrorist. It was the logical, albeit extreme, outcome of its racist message.

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