

Confronting Right-Wing Extremism and Terrorism in the USA

George Michael

American Politics/Terrorism/Fascism

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group



**Also available as a printed book
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Confronting Right-wing Extremism and Terrorism in the USA

Is there a right-wing extremist threat in America? Are domestic terrorists gaining strength? How does America respond to the challenge of the extreme right?

Right-wing extremism in the United States has received considerable attention in recent years, yet few studies have simultaneously examined the response of government and non-governmental organizations to the threat these groups embody. The unique constitutional tradition of civil liberties in America means that the government is unable to disband a group simply because it has unpopular ideas; as a result private non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have stepped in to heavily influence this area of US public policy.

Confronting Right-wing Extremism and Terrorism in the USA provides a detailed portrait of the contemporary extreme right in the US, and includes interviews with several of the movement's leading figures from groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, the militias, American Renaissance and White Aryan Resistance. The author persuasively explains how the activities of these racist groups have been curbed due to the campaigning efforts of anti-racist and anti-fascist watchdogs. This study draws upon declassified government documents, NGO reports and extremist literature to provide a thought-provoking account of the extreme right challenge in America. It will provide an invaluable resource to students of terrorism, political violence and right-wing extremism, as well as appealing to the general reader with an interest in contemporary American politics.

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NEW YORK AND LONDON

First published 2003 by Routledge
11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
29 West 35th Street, New York, NY 10001

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group
This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005.

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Michael, George, 1961–

Right wing terrorism and extremism in the USA/by George Michael.
p. cm—(Routledge studies in extremism and democracy)
Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-415-31500-X

1. Radicalism—United States. 2. Right-wing extremists—United States.
3. Terrorism—United States. I. Title. II. Series.

HN90.R3.M42 2003
322.4`''22'0973—dc21
2002155138

ISBN 0-203-56321-2 Master e-book ISBN

ISBN 0-203-33839-1 (Adobe e-Reader Format)
ISBN 0-415-31500-X (Print Edition)

For Anna and Wolfie

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Series editors' preface

Roger Eatwell and Cas Mudde

I

For much of the “short twentieth century,” history was characterized by the clash of great ideologies, internal violence and major wars. Although most catastrophic events took place outside the Western world, Europe and the USA were not immune from the turmoil. Two world wars and a series of lesser conflicts led to countless horrors and losses. Moreover, for long periods Western democracy—especially in its European form—seemed in danger of eclipse by a series of radical forces, most notably communist and fascist.

Yet by the turn of the 1990s, liberal democracy appeared destined to become the universal governmental norm. Dictatorial Soviet communism had collapsed, to be replaced in most successor states by multi-party electoral politics. Chinese communism remained autocratic, but in the economic sphere it was moving rapidly towards greater freedoms and marketization. The main manifestations of fascism had gone down to catastrophic defeat in war. Neo-fascist parties were damned by omnipresent images of brutality and genocide, and exerted little appeal outside a fringe of ageing nostalgics and alienated youth.

In the Western world, political violence had disappeared, or was of minimal importance in terms of system stability. Where it lingered on as a regularly murderous phenomenon, for instance in Northern Ireland or Spain, it seemed a hangover from the past—a final flicker of the embers of old nationalist passions. It was easy to conclude that such tribal atavism was doomed in an increasingly interconnected “capitalist” world, characterized by growing forms of multi-level governance that were transcending the antagonism and parochialism of old borders.

However, as we move into the new millennium there are growing signs that extremism, even in the West, is far from dead—that we celebrated prematurely the universal victory of democracy. Perhaps the turn of the twenty-first century was an interregnum, rather than a turning point? In Western Europe there has been the rise of “extreme right” and “populist” parties such as Jean-Marie Le Pen’s Front National, which pose a radical challenge to existing elites—even to the liberal political system. In the USA, the 1995 Oklahoma mass-bombing has not been followed by another major extreme-right attack, but there is simmering resentment towards the allegedly over-powerful state among well armed militias and other groups. More generally across the West, new forms of green politics, often linked by a growing hostility to globalization-Americanization, are taking on more violent forms (the issue of animal rights is also growing in importance in this context).

In the former Soviet space, there are clear signs of the revival of “communist” parties

(which often masquerade as “socialists” or “social democrats”), whose allegiance to democracy is (in varying degrees) debatable. In Latin America, there remain notable extremist movements on the left, though these tend not to be communist. This trend may well grow both in response to globalization-Americanization and to the (partly linked) crises of many of these countries, such as Argentina. This in turn increases the threat to democracy from the extreme right, ranging in form from paramilitary groups to agro-military conspiracies.

The rise of Islamic fundamentalism has been an even more notable feature of recent years. This is not simply a facet of Middle Eastern politics. It has had an impact within some former Soviet republics, where the old nomenklatura have used the Islamic threat to maintain autocratic rule. In countries such as Indonesia and India, Muslims and other ethnic groups have literally cut each other to pieces. More Al-Qaeda bombings of the 2002 Bali-type, threaten economic ruin to Islamic countries which attract many Western tourists.

It is also important to note that growing Islamic fundamentalism has had an impact within some Western countries. The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and elsewhere in the USA on 11 September 2001 are perhaps the most graphic illustration of this impact. But in democracies generally, the rise of religious and other forms of extremism poses vital questions about the limits of freedom, multiculturalism and tolerance. This is especially the case in countries which have experienced notable Islamic immigration and/or which face the greatest threat of further terrorist attack.

Democracy may have become a near-universal shibboleth, but its exact connotations are being increasingly challenged and debated. As long as the “evil empire” of communism existed, Western democracy could in an important sense define itself by the “Other”—by what it was not. It did not have overt dictatorial rule, censorship, the gulags, and so on. But with the collapse of its great external foe, the spotlight has turned inward (although Islam is in some ways replacing communism as the “Other”). Is (liberal-Western) democracy truly democratic? Can it defend itself against terrorism and new threats without undermining the very nature of democracy?

These general opening comments provide the rationale for the *Routledge series on extremism and democracy*. In particular, there are three issues which we seek to probe in this series:

- Conceptions of democracy and extremism
- Forms of the new extremism in both the West and the wider world
- How democracies are responding to the new extremism.

II

George Michael’s book (the third to appear in this series) deals mainly with the second and especially the third of these issues. Like the first work in the series (Chris Hewitt’s *Understanding Terrorism in America: From the Klan to Al Qaeda*, which can be read fruitfully with this one), it is not another attempt to jump on the bandwagon of current interest in terrorism. It is based on extensive original research, begun well before 11 September 2001 (9/11). A particularly notable feature of Michael’s work is his emphasis

on the response of NGOs to the resurgence of the right in the USA—an area which has been largely neglected in the literature on extremism and terrorism.

As Michael notes in the Introduction, it is impossible to find an accurate term which covers the multi-faceted varieties of the contemporary American rightwing fringe. Some commentators chose terms like “extreme,” “far” and “radical” right as convenient shorthands (sometimes substituting them in a thesaurus-like way)—highlighting the way in which some of these groups advocate violence against opponents, even the state. Others prefer terms like “populism”—stressing the ways in which many groups have links with a more law-abiding American political tradition, for example a suspicion of big government and predilection for conspiracy theory. However, this book is not essentially concerned with typological refinement.

Rather, Michael’s main task in the opening part of the book is to survey the post-1990 resurgence of the American extreme right, setting it firmly in an historical context. Unlike in parts of Europe, the recent revival of the extreme right has not been manifested in election results in the US. Whilst some of the issues raised by these groups (such as the right to carry arms and hostility to abortion) have a relatively wide resonance, the extreme right has been perceived in general as beyond the pale. At the turn of the new millennium, there appear to have been around 25,000 hard core right-wing supporters, with perhaps 150,000–175,000 sympathizers. Most of these were to be found in the militias, which began to form in the early 1990s, or various wings of the Christian Identity movement. The radical and violent groups, such as the neo-Nazi National Alliance, White Aryan Resistance and the skinheads, tended to be much smaller. However, various “lone wolves,” often with only very loose affiliations to formal organizations, were responsible for the most significant acts of right-wing violence including the bombing of a government building in Oklahoma City in 1995, resulting in well over 100 dead (the greatest loss of life through a terrorist incident on US soil until 9/11).

The main part of this book concerns responses to these developments. Within hours of the Oklahoma explosion, President Clinton vowed that the country would not be intimidated by “evil cowards.” Even before this incident, there had been growing US government interest in terrorism, prompted by the growth of the fringe right, fears of single-issue groups (like anti-abortionists and ecowarriors) and the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center by international terrorists. After Oklahoma City, there was a flurry of new anti-terrorist laws and measures (although in general the focus before 9/11 remained on domestic terrorism rather than the threat from Al-Qaeda and foreign groups).

Crucial in the response to the extreme right was a set of NGOs. Among the best known of these are: the Anti-Defamation League; the American Jewish Committee; the Center for Democratic Renewal; Political Research Associates; the Simon Wiesenthal Center; and the Southern Poverty Law Center. Among their main activities in this field have been: encouraging the government to implement new legislation on issues such as hate crime; providing intelligence about extremist groups to both government and the media; themselves inaugurating lawsuits against extremist groups, often using the civil law; seeking to limit internet access; and direct confrontation.

Michael offers several reasons why these NGOs have played a notable role in this

field. One concerns the First Amendment and strong American predisposition to civil liberties, which before 9/11 made the government wary of taking too strong initiatives in this field. A second concerns the good access which these groups have to many politicians, policy makers and the media. Third, the policy demands of these groups in general appealed to politicians as popular law and order measures and (before 9/11) relatively costless. Last but not least, concerns the relative wealth of these NGOs compared to the fringe right: it has been estimated that in 2000 the top eight NGOs commanded collective assets of over \$300 million and had an annual income of half this.

One particular feature that stands out in Michael's study is the extensive field research that he conducted among the various actors involved on all sides of this issue. This study contains interviews with some of the most notorious figures in the American far right, as well as prominent former government officials and representatives from NGOs that seek to counter the far right. These interviews are often exciting and provocative, as they include comments on very controversial topics such as race, civil liberties and terrorism.

However, this book also points out that the role of these NGOs prompts various concerns. For example, the BATF's handling of the siege at Waco in 1993 appears to have been influenced by spurious evidence from a cult-watching group (and the deaths of Branch Davidian sect members at Waco directly influenced Timothy McVeigh to plant the 1995 Oklahoma bomb). More generally, prior to 9/11 these groups largely monitored law-abiding members of the right, and their activities raise a host of issues about undercover activities and agents-provocateurs.

Since 9/11 the focus of American anti-terrorist concern has become international, and government has enacted swingeing new laws which increase state power to monitor, and even to try suspects in special courts. Michael briefly reviews these developments, noting that many of the NGOs which had previously focused on the right now monitor domestic Arab and Muslim activities. Again, this in many ways provides an important additional safeguard—but it also raises concerns about the future of democracy in “the land of the free.”

Acknowledgements

Many people have helped in one way or another with this book, which began as my dissertation for a Ph.D. in public policy at George Mason University. I am indebted to those on my committee who reviewed my study and offered their advice and direction, including Francis Fukuyama, James Pfiffner, Chris Hewitt, Walter Laqueur and Seymour Martin Lipset. It was truly an honor to have such distinguished scholars serve on my committee.

I would like to thank several persons and Routledge for their help and guidance. Roger Eatwell and Cas Mudde provided useful feedback on my manuscript. Craig Fowlie and Zoë Boterill helped with administrative issues. Their courtesy and professionalism are much appreciated.

Many of the figures presented in this study were very helpful and offered their insights into this topic. I express my gratitude to the former deputy director of the FBI, Oliver “Buck” Revell and former US Attorney General Edwin Meese. Various representatives from the NGOs were helpful, including Chip Berlet from Political Research Associates, Chris Freeman from the Center for Democratic Renewal, Ken McVay from the Nizkor Project, Mark Potok from the Southern Poverty Law Center, Bill Wassmuth, formerly from the Northwest Coalition Against Malicious Harassment, Todd Ferguson from Anti-Racist Action, and Dr Mark Pitcavage from the Anti-Defamation League. Finally, numerous rightist activists and personalities offered me their insights, including the late Dr William Pierce, Sgt Steven Barry, Tom Metzger, Jared Taylor, Gordon Baum, Kirk Lyons, Harold Covington, Ernst Zündel, Dr Ingrid Rimland, Matthew Hale, Willis Carto, Mike Piper, Pövl Riis-Knudsen, Mark Coterill, John Trochmann, Norm Olson, Thom Robb, Milton John Kleim, Roy Armstrong, Richard Barrett, and Ron Doggett.

Laird Wilcox and the staff at the Wilcox Collection of Contemporary Political Movements in the Kenneth Spencer Research Library at the University of Kansas were most helpful in retrieving important materials used in this study. I strongly recommend that scholars interested in political extremism avail themselves of this valuable research center.

The staff at the FBI’s Freedom of Information Reading Room assisted me in retrieving declassified government files pertaining to this public policy issue.

My friend Reg Orem meticulously proofread my manuscripts several times. I greatly appreciate his efforts.

Finally, I thank my wife Anna and my son Wolfie for their patience and support throughout this project. It is they to whom this book is dedicated.

1

Introduction

By most accounts, right-wing extremism appeared to make a comeback in the United States during the 1990s. Although, this did not manifest itself in electoral success due in large part to the nature of the American electoral system, the far right seemed to gain ground as a social movement. What is more, recent trends in technology, such as the internet, have enabled the far right to reach out to a potentially larger audience than it has in the past. Finally, some high profile confrontations with law enforcement authorities and horrific acts of political violence—most notably the 1995 bombing of Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City—have seared the issue of right-wing terrorism into the public's mind.

Previously, America was seen as relatively safe from a serious domestic terrorist threat. However, some high-profile terrorist incidents have done much to alter this image. And over the past few years there has been a flurry of new anti-terrorist laws and measures enacted. ¹ The Clinton administration placed a high priority on counter-terrorism.

The pattern of domestic terrorism is in a state of flux. Left-wing terrorism is in retreat and Puerto Rican separatist terrorism, though still sporadic, appears to be attenuating perhaps due to the recent referendum in which Puerto Ricans decided by a large majority to reject independence and remain a part of the United States. However, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of the US Department of Justice, has identified new actors that threaten to fill the void. First, are the so-called single-issue terrorists such as the eco-terrorists and extremist anti-abortion groups. Second, are the international terrorists who can take advantage of America's porous borders and liberal immigration laws and conduct activities inside American territory. Finally, there are domestic right-wing terrorists who have captured much attention after the bombing of the Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City. Although small in numbers, right-wing terrorists are among the most active of all terrorist categories in the United States. ² Moreover, the American far right is widely dispersed with adherents in all major regions of the country as Table 1.1 illustrates. ³ Finally, according to a 1996 Center for Democratic Renewal estimate there are roughly 25,000 "hard core" members and another 150,000 to 175,000 active sympathizers who buy literature, make contributions, and attend periodic meetings. ⁴

Compared to most of the other Western democracies, the situation as regards political extremism is unique in the United States. For instance, in the Federal Republic of Germany, there is an agency called the Office of the Protection of the Constitution, which can recommend to judiciary the dissolution of extremist groups that it deems a threat to Germany's constitutional democracy. ⁵ Likewise, the British government has invoked the 1965 Race Relations Act to justify raids on homes and offices of right-wing extremists including the National Front and the British National Party And even in Israel, where the

far right enjoys significant grassroots support, the government outlawed the late Meir Kahane's Kach movement because of its extremist platform.⁶ Other democracies would appear to have much more legal latitude in responding to political extremism and violence.

Table 1.1 Regional breakdown of far-right groups in the United States for 1999

<i>Region</i>	<i>KKK</i>	<i>Neo-Nazi</i>	<i>Skinhead</i>	<i>Christian Identity</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Patriot/ Militia</i>	<i>Total</i>
East	16	23	6	1	30	16	92
South	69	28	6	20	54	51	228
Midwest	39	39	10	9	58	54	209
Southwest	9	9	12	2	23	36	91
West	5	31	6	14	51	60	167
Total	138	130	40	46	216	217	787

By contrast, the United States has a strong civil liberties tradition. While it is axiomatic to say that terrorism is usually perpetrated by extremists, the vast majority of extremists are not terrorists. This presents somewhat of a conundrum in that because of First Amendment protections, the government does not officially have the authority to disband groups just because they espouse unpopular ideas. From a comparative legal perspective the US government appears to be more constrained in responding to political extremism. However, what is often ignored is that private non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have interjected themselves into this area of public policy and have done much to fill the void. Compared to other Western nations, the federal government's response to right-wing terrorism and extremism is unique insofar as it engenders much greater participation from NGOs. Moreover, these NGOs have persuaded the government to take a strong position *vis-à-vis* the far right. In essence, the response to right-wing extremism in America is a joint effort by both the government and private watchdog groups.

Thus the US response to right-wing terrorism and extremism is qualitatively different than the response to other variants of terrorism and political extremism insofar as it engenders much greater participation from NGOs. NGOs are much less likely to be involved in the response to other forms of political extremism and violence. Although historically some NGOs have been involved in countering other forms of political extremism, the number involved has been much fewer, and the scope of that involvement has been much more limited. To bring this issue into sharper focus, this study includes some comparative analysis between the responses to right-wing extremism and other variants of political extremism. NGOs have been instrumental in shaping the government's response to right-wing extremism in a number of ways including, *inter alia*, collaboration with law enforcement agencies and sponsoring legislation, which is primarily aimed at neutralizing the far right. Moreover, some of these NGOs often take it upon themselves to respond to the far right in more direct ways without the assistance of the state. Examples range from civil suits to physical confrontations in the streets. By and

large the government responds to other variants of political extremism relatively independently, unencumbered by the influence of private interest groups. Thus the response to right-wing extremism is unique.

What is the effect of NGOs on the formation of the US government's response to right-wing terrorism and extremism? Why have private groups been able to exert so much influence on this public policy agenda? Like many other areas of American public policy, NGOs have a significant influence on public policy and this area is one more, but unexplored, example. This study explores the US government and NGOs' responses in this area by examining public policies and other measures, which take aim largely at the far right. This study is grounded in NGO and interest group theory, and to put in its proper context, examines not only the NGOs and the government agencies involved, but also the far right, including its major groups, figures, ideologies and patterns of terrorism.

Before going any further a clarification of terms is in order. Specifically, what is meant by the term "far right"? Many observers and scholars have belabored this issue and there is no general consensus. What's more, in the context of American politics the term is even more difficult to define owing to the vast geographic size, large population, and heterogeneity of the country. There are several different permutations, not only in the more respectable mainstream American right wing but within the far right as well.

One should not confuse the far right as an extrapolation of the conservative right wing. The contemporary conservative right wing for the most part espouses principles such as limited government, fiscal restraint, and support for business and free enterprise. The far right by contrast often has a quasi-socialist populist element along with a suspicion of big business and global capitalism. In general, economic issues do not loom large in the far right's agenda; cultural issues figure more prominently. Indeed, the far right is a different entity.

That said, most observers seem to be able to instinctively recognize the phenomenon of right-wing extremism. As the esteemed historian Walter Laqueur once remarked, it resembles pornography "in that it is difficult—perhaps impossible to define—in an operational, legally valid way, but those with experience know it when they see it."⁷

Examining right wing and reactionary movements in American history, Chip Berlet and Matthew N. Lyons use the term "right-wing populist" to designate those movements that have sought to mobilize against "liberation movements, social reform, or revolution." In their view, right-wing populist movements in America have historically reflected the interests of two types of social groups: (a) middle-level groups in the social hierarchy (usually White) that have a stake in the traditional arrangement of social privilege, but resent the power that upper-class elites hold over them; and (b) "outsider" factions of the elites that occasionally use forms of anti-elitism to further their own interests and bid for power. Furthermore, Berlet and Lyons coined the term "producerism" to denote a doctrine that "champions the so-called producers in society against both 'unproductive' elites and subordinate groups defined as lazy or immoral." They argue that this cognitive model leads to scapegoating, "conspiracism," and apocalypticism—elements that have traditionally figured prominently in right-wing extremism. They cite various examples of such movements, including the Jacksonian populism of the early nineteenth century, which represented an alliance between lower-class Whites and certain factions of elites and the Reconstruction Era Ku Klux Klan, which represented an alliance between

Southern lower- and middle-class Whites and wealthy Southern planters who sought to regain the power and privileges they had lost as a result of the Civil War.⁸ Berlet and Lyon's thesis offers interesting insights into the nature and style of populist movements, but still does not really constitute a definition of the core characteristics that compose right-wing extremism. As noted by observers, populism is primarily a style of political organizing rather than a separate political ideology. Indeed, styles of populism can be harnessed by various political ideologies all across the political spectrum.

Although somewhat vague, Roger Griffin, borrowing from the terminology of biology, succinctly captured the essence of one variant of right-wing extremism—fascism—by defining it as an ideology, which has at its core an ultra-nationalist palingenetic myth (i.e. process of death and rebirth). This definition has a great deal of merit insofar as many variants of fascism and right-wing extremism espouse the creation of a “new order” built upon the ruins of a perceived decadent and decrepit “old order.”⁹ Thus he sees a strong revolutionary element in right-wing extremism, which certainly would adequately describe much of the contemporary American far right. Other important characteristics that observers have cited as principal to the fascist variant of right-wing extremism are exaltations of “the people” or nation and some form of anti-elitism.¹⁰

Griffin's definition however, fails to adequately describe some of the other variants of the American far right, such as the Christian Patriot movement, which does not really view itself as revolutionary, but rather as preserver of the true heritage and principles of the American republic. Such a movement would more aptly be labeled “preservatist”¹¹ than revolutionary. Perhaps one could argue that the Christian Patriot movement should therefore not be included in the designation of the far right and should be examined separately. This has been Jeffrey Kaplan's approach, as he has focused exclusively on the racist segment of the far right in his excellent studies of this topic. For Kaplan, the primacy of race, religiosity, and a revolutionary ethos are what characterizes the “racist radical right.”¹²

However, in the history of the American far right, there has been a considerable degree of overlap, migration, cross-fertilization of ideas, and cross-membership between the Patriot and racist segments. Moreover, the response by the government and watchdog community has usually targeted both segments contemporaneously. Measures they employ, such as anti-paramilitary training statutes and intelligence sharing, are often employed against both segments of the far right.

In surveying the twenty-six different definitions of right-wing extremism in the literature, Cas Mudde found no fewer than fifty-eight features that are mentioned at least once. Of those features, only five are mentioned in one form or another by at least half of the authors: nationalism, racism, xenophobia, antidemocracy and the strong state.¹³ Mudde focused on five extreme right parties in Europe (the Republikaner Party and the Deutsche Volksunion in Germany, the Vlams Blok in Belgium, and the Centrumdemocraten and Centrumpartij '86 in the Netherlands) and found evidence to suggest the existence of an extreme right “party family” with a shared core ideology. This core is built around the nucleus of nationalism, in particular internal homogenization, i.e. that the state should endeavor to create a monocultural society. Other core features include xenophobia, welfare chauvinism—the belief that the state should only serve the economic interests of its “own people,”—and law and order.¹⁴ Arguably, these

characteristics would apply to many segments of the American far right as well.

However, Mudde's focus is primarily on the European far right. What is more, he focused on programmatic political parties that regularly contest elections in Europe. In America by contrast, rarely do even a few far-right organizations run candidates for political office. At the present time, the American far right resembles more a loose social movement than a collection of like-minded political parties or organizations. There are, moreover, some subtle differences between the American and European variants of right-wing extremism, most notably the esteem in which the state is held; whereas the former tends to be anti-statist, the latter is more likely to view the state as an organic outgrowth of the nation. The term "nationalism" also is much more ambiguous in the American context. Whereas in Europe it often coincides with ethnicity, in America, which contains no majority ethnic group as such, it can be viewed as perhaps a more chauvinistic style of patriotism.

This therefore presents a definitional problem for researchers and scholars. With the preceding discussion, I have tried to make clear that is very difficult to rigidly define the term "far right." Thus I have endeavored to develop a list of characteristics which, although it does not rigidly define the far right, I believe adequately *describes* and captures the essence of the far right:

Particularism Unlike other political ideologies and orientations, the far right usually takes a more parochial outlook, as it is more concerned with a smaller locus of identity such as the nation, republic, race or ethnic group. It tends not to have ambitions to proselytize the whole world to its belief system. This is in contrast to other ideologies such as liberal democracy, communism, and some variants of socialism, which are seen as suitable, indeed desirable, for export, and the whole world is encouraged to adopt them as its model.

Low regard for democracy Although far-right political organizations and individuals by and large tend to play by the democratic rules of the game, they seem to be less enthusiastic for democracy than mainstream political orientations. For example, even members of the ultra-patriotic militia movement like to point out that technically the American political system was designed as a republic and not a democracy.

Anti-statism Right-wing extremism often evinces a severe disaffection with the government or at least the scope of government. Although certain segments of the racist right—most notably those which draw inspiration from National Socialism—may in principle approve of the idea of a strong state, they regard the current US government as hopelessly under the control of outsiders who use their power in such away that is inimical to the national community.

A conspiracy view of history Denizens of the far right have a tendency to look beneath the surface of American politics and find elite cabals at work subverting society.

A racial or ethnic component which includes usually at least one of the following:

- racism
- anti-Semitism
- xenophobia
- ethnic chauvinism

Although *all* of the preceding characteristics may not pertain to each and every far-right

group and figure examined in this study, I believe that at least *enough* of these characteristics apply to each of them so that they could reasonably be classified as “far right” and “right-wing extremist.” This admittedly represents some arbitrariness on my part. However, I believe that these descriptive characteristics are adequate enough to guide readers and describe the far-right subjects in this study. What’s more, it allows both members of the racist right and the Patriot movement to be examined in one study. Essentially, the final descriptive characteristic—the racial or ethnic component—is what separates the racist right and Patriot movements. It is integral to the former and usually much less prominent in the latter.

A definition of the term “terrorism” is also in order. Scholars have long struggled with this term as well. There are many variants of political violence, which are sometimes designated under the rubric of terrorism, including guerilla warfare, sabotage, assassination, and, according to some recent observers, hate crimes. Moreover, the study of terrorism is not without its normative squabbles, as the cliché “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” demonstrates. It follows that scholars, depending on their perspective, will often classify and interpret political violence through their own national or ideological lens. For example, during their guerilla struggle against the Soviets during the 1980s, the Afghan *Mujihadeen* were looked upon as valiant freedom fighters by many observers in the West. However, their image today is that of the terrorist network *par excellence*, giving aid and comfort to the likes of Osama Bin Laden, the chief conductor of contemporary international terrorism against the West. And leftwing sympathizing scholars occasionally sympathized with left-wing terrorists and characterized them as desperate idealists who were driven by conditions such as poverty and oppression into terrorism. However, the rise of right-wing terrorism in the 1980s and 1990s has removed much of the idealistic veneer of terrorism in the academic community.¹⁵

The FBI—the chief government agency responsible for investigating and preventing domestic terrorism—offers one of the most succinct and practical definitions of terrorism, and it will be used for this study:

the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.¹⁶

Further, the FBI defines *domestic* terrorism as

the unlawful use, or threatened use, of force of violence by a group or individual based and operating entirely within the United States or Puerto Rico without foreign direction committed against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof in furtherance of political or social objectives.¹⁷

One further word is in order. Much of the response to the far right is predicated on the notion that it presents a high potential for violence. Moreover, as I shall demonstrate, the government and the watchdog community respond to both the violent as well as the non-violent extreme right. I believe that the response to both segments ought to be examined

in the same study. However, it is important to keep in mind that terrorists compose only a small number of right-wing extremists. During the course of my fieldwork some far rightists took some exception to being included in a study that dealt in part with terrorism. For the sake of clarity and propriety, I make efforts to distinguish between the two.

A number of studies have examined counter-terrorism. However, there is a dearth of literature on the response to domestic right-wing terrorism in the United States. Previous studies have been confined to specific terrorist incidents or groups. Moreover, the role of NGOs in this area of public policy has been given short shrift. It is hoped that this study will make several contributions:

- Provide a diachronic overview of right-wing terrorism in the United States; previous literature lacks a broad longitudinal perspective.
- Examine the role of NGOs in this area of public policy. This is important because without addressing the role that NGOs play, one is left with an incomplete understanding of this area of domestic counter-terrorism. Furthermore, inasmuch as this study would be grounded in NGO theory, it would make a contribution to the knowledge of how interest groups interact with several other actors, including the media, law enforcement agencies, and the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government.
- Explain how the US government responds to a specific variant of terrorism and political extremism. Previous studies in counter-terrorism have tended to focus on the domestic far left or the international arena. Today many government entities are involved in domestic counter-terrorism, and their participation warrants closer examination.
- Describe the far right, including its major groups, ideologies, and patterns of terrorism. The literature on right-wing extremism could benefit greatly from an examination of the various ideologies that motivate the various individuals and groups in the movement. Inasmuch as there are several variants of terrorism and political extremism, public policy makers should be cognizant of their differences. Different brands of terrorism warrant different public policy approaches. The fiascos at Ruby Ridge and Waco illustrate the tragedies that can take place when authorities ignore the nuances of extremist groups and individuals.

The following is a preview of what lies ahead.

Chapter 2 introduces the major NGOs, which figure prominently in the area of domestic counter-terrorism policy, including the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the American Jewish Committee, the Simon Wiesenthal Center, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), the Center for Democratic Renewal, Political Research Associates, The Northwest Coalition Against Malicious Harassment, the Center for New Community, Hatewatch, the Nizkor Project, the Militia Watchdog, and Anti-Racist Action. There has been very little research into these groups and thus the secondary literature in this area is somewhat sparse; however, the watchdogs have produced quite a bit of material from which researchers can draw to gain an understanding of who the so-called watchdogs are.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the contemporary American far right. The major groups and individuals that populate these movements are classified and explained. I draw upon a robust secondary literature, extremist publications, and first-person

interviews to give the reader a better understanding of this subterranean world.

Chapter 4 looks closely at the relationship between the far right and domestic terrorism. It endeavors to find patterns of right wing terrorism that have punctuated American history. Also, the major episodes of right-wing terrorism over the past couple of decades are reviewed. Finally, this chapter explores the considerable amount of theorizing on the strategic, tactical and normative implications of terrorism that has gone on within the far right.

Chapter 5 looks at the US government's response to right-wing terrorism and extremism. It identifies the chief government agencies which deal with the issue, and explains how they are organized to do so. There are several studies in the secondary literature on the US government's efforts to counter terrorism and political extremism. Also, there are documents from government agencies that have been involved in these efforts, including the FBI, Department of Defense, and General Accounting Office.

Chapter 6 examines the methods by which NGOs have attempted to counteract the far right. This often involves interfacing with the government. For example, NGOs have drafted and lobbied for various hate crime, anti-paramilitary training, and anti-common law court statutes. More recently, some of these NGOs have encouraged the government and internet service providers to curtail the operations of right-wing extremists on the internet. On occasion, NGOs share intelligence with law enforcement agencies, and thus help to keep surveillance on various far-right organizations. Finally, there are the less formal efforts by watchdogs to isolate their far-right adversaries from the population at large, which are worth closer examination. This chapter draws upon several sources, including material published by the various NGOs and interviews with representatives from this sector. Also, there are declassified government documents that reveal past cooperation between government agencies and NGOs.

Chapter 7 concludes with a summary along with a few final observations. First, it lists what I believe to be the reasons for the success of the NGOs in this field of public policy. Second, it addresses some of the civil liberties implications of the collaboration between the government and NGOs. Third, it provides some public policy recommendations. Fourth, a speculative threat assessment of the far right is given and its significance for the future is discussed. Finally, I explore how the events of September 11, 2001 have impinged on this public policy issue.

It is now time to take a closer look at the chief NGOs which figure prominently in the area of countering domestic right-wing terrorism and extremism.

2

Who are the watchdogs?

Introduction

This chapter introduces the reader to some of the prominent organizations that compose the watchdog community. The number of so-called watchdog groups, which monitor the activities of the extreme right, has grown considerably over the past two decades. In fact, a recent study estimates that there are now approximately 300 such groups nationwide.¹ Consistent with the disturbance theory of interest group formation, many of these organizations were created in response to some crisis or disturbance.² Once a threatening environment or conflict emerges, individuals are more willing to join groups. Often there is some precipitating event or condition, which serves as a catalyst for group formation.

Like its far-right opponents, the watchdog community is a variegated combination of groups. It is far from monolithic, as there is a great degree of nuance among the various organizations. There seems to be a good deal of variation in the staff compositions and orientations of the various watchdog groups. For example, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) is concerned mostly with Jewish issues including countering anti-Semitism and building support for the state of Israel. The members of ADL's uppermanagement are primarily Jewish in ethnic background and their political orientations appear to be for the most part generally liberal. By contrast, groups such as the Center for Democratic Renewal and Political Research Associates are concerned with a much broader range of so-called progressive issues such as environmentalism, women's rights, affirmative action and economic rights, in addition to countering the far right. This is understandable insofar as many of the staff members of these groups had sojourned in left-wing and progressive organizations prior to their involvement in the watchdog movement. Despite these differences, however, there remains a good deal of cooperation between these groups.

Although the various organizations which compose the watchdog community may generally agree on certain issues, such as opposition to the far right, white racism, anti-Semitism and homophobia, there is a considerable difference of opinion on other issues. The most salient disagreement is on the tactics employed to counter the far right. The more established watchdog groups such as the Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) often work closely with government agencies including those of law enforcement. Other groups, primarily those with a left-wing or progressive orientation, are much less likely to do so.

There is also considerable variation in how the general public views the different watchdog groups. For the most part, the more established groups are seen as the pillars of the community. Morris Dees, the founder of the SPLC, is often feted by admiring audiences on the lecture circuit, and has been the subject of laudatory television movies and documentaries. The ADL has a great deal of clout in politics as politicians regard it

as a powerful lobby. ADL banquets in which prominent individuals are awarded honors for their contributions to civil rights and Jewish causes serve as venues to build credibility and respectability for the organization and its goals.

In stark contrast, other groups, most notably Anti-Racist Action (ARA), do not receive the near-unanimous approbation from the public as the more established watchdog groups do. Their more direct confrontational approach to the far right, including street demonstrations, at times puts off authorities and the local population in the communities in which they are active. Moreover, such groups often take a more oppositional position *vis-à-vis* the society at large, which they view as inherently racist and sexist. However, a process of moderation appears to occur in some of these organizations, which start off with a left-wing orientation. Through the course of time, several factors, including the quest for lucrative grants, public recognition and respectability, tends to moderate their radicalism to a certain degree.

The purpose of this chapter is to give the reader a better understanding of the various groups in the watchdog community. Although the list of organizations covered is far from comprehensive, they are among the most important players in the watchdog movement for a number of reasons including, *inter alia*, their resources, level of support, access to the media and opinion makers, notoriety and staff expertise. I have created a typology of watchdog groups, which includes the following categories: Jewish defense, civil litigation, progressive-oriented, regional, internet-based, and miscellaneous. There is considerable overlap among the various organizations in these various categories, but the typology is offered to give the reader a better conceptual understanding of how the various groups are organized and the differences between them. What follows is a thumbnail sketch for the rest of this chapter.

First, the American interest group structure is examined. As I explain, the “exceptional” character of American civil society has been amenable to the development of a robust interest group constellation in the United States.

Second, the major Jewish watchdog groups are examined. Inasmuch as anti-Semitism looms so large in many segments of the far right, it is not surprising that Jewish interest groups would concern themselves in countering this movement. The most prominent group in this category—and indeed the watchdog community as a whole—is the Anti-Defamation League. Other groups in this category include the American Jewish Committee and the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

Third, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) is examined. The SPLC is unique and in a category of its own. Although it began with a progressive orientation—and still concerns itself with such issues as poverty, homelessness, voting rights, etc.—it is best known as a civil litigation watchdog group. It is arguably second only to the ADL, the most influential watchdog group. It has pioneered the use of civil suits to hold far right groups responsible for the actions of their individual members. Some of these civil suits have resulted in very large judgments and in doing so, bankrupted several far-right groups. Thus the Southern Poverty Law Center is among the most feared of the watchdog groups by the far-right. The major Jewish defense groups together with the SPLC constitute, in my opinion, the first level of watchdog organizations. Those that follow are essentially second-level organizations.

Watchdog groups with a progressive orientation are reviewed next. Prominent in this

category are the Center for Democratic Renewal and Political Research Associates. Inasmuch as the groups in this category are politically left-leaning, it is understandable that they would organize against the political right. Unlike the more established watchdog groups they tend to concern themselves with a broader range of social justice issues.

The next section takes a closer look at some of the more prominent regional watchdog groups. Typically, they are created in response to local right-wing extremism in their area. The Northwest Coalition Against Malicious Harassment and The Center for New Community are among the most notable in this category.

In recent years right-wing extremists have taken to the internet with great enthusiasm. Consequently, their opponents have created websites to counter their online propaganda. Some important examples in this category are the Nizkor Project, which focuses primarily on countering the claims of Holocaust revisionists; Hatewatch, which seeks to warn web surfers of the threat of online extremists; and the Militia Watchdog, which tracks the activities of those in the Christian Patriot/militia movement.

I have included a miscellaneous category to review an organization known as Anti-Racist Action, which appears to be rather anarchist in character. Although it does not command the resources and influence of its more respected counterparts in the watchdog community, it has established many chapters in North America and offers an interesting contrast in approaches to countering the far right.

Finally, I conclude this chapter by making some generalizations about the watchdog community. It is hoped that certain common characteristics of these groups will be more evident after reading this chapter.

The American interest group structure

Interest groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have a long tradition in American politics and civil society, and often strongly influence public policy. There is a general consensus among observers that over the last thirty years an explosion of interest groups has occurred in America, as more Americans have sought to involve themselves in organized interest groups.³ Essentially an interest group is “any group that is based on one or more shared attitudes and makes certain claims upon other groups or organizations in the society.”⁴ Interest group formation is actually nothing new in America; as the famous French observer of the early republic, Alexis de Tocqueville, noted, Americans have a proclivity for creating associations.⁵

American political culture differs markedly from other countries with similar levels of economic and political development. Several observers have commented on the nature of “American exceptionalism,” including Seymour Martin Lipset. He identifies five components of what he calls the “American Creed,” which in his estimation shape the ethos of the American nation: liberty, egalitarianism, individualism, populism and laissez-faire. Lipset identifies sectarian Protestantism as determinative in the development of the American creed. To put it succinctly, in the American version of Protestantism, individual believers could appeal to God directly for salvation, unmediated by ecclesiastic authorities. Furthermore, America never established a state church. Thus a sectarian religious culture enabled the “free coinage of religion.” This unique

denominational structure and religious freedom helped foster a civil society marked by a volunteerism. This greatly influenced the character of the American group structure, as many associations are religious in origin.⁶ A comparison with eleven other countries in a 1982 study, demonstrated that Americans are more likely to be members of voluntary associations of a non-economic variety.⁷ Specifically, two types that stand out are church-related and civic-political groups.⁸ Furthermore, the proportion of citizens belonging to economic groups—not only labor unions but professional associations as well—is actually substantially higher in many other countries than it is in the United States.⁹

Other factors have shaped America's unique interest group structure as well. Unlike Europe, America has no feudal past. Consequently, America does not have a rigid class system as Europe formerly had. Although there are great inequalities of income, wealth and status, America has an egalitarian ethos and a class system that allows for social mobility. This encourages individual initiative and volunteerism in its interest group structure. Moreover, America has a revolutionary tradition. It was the first colony to wrest itself free from the mother country and establish independence. In that sense it was the "first new nation," and developed a political culture that was suspicious of governmental authority and an intrusive state. Consequently, America has a relatively smaller government sector *vis-à-vis* other Western democracies with similar levels of economic and social development.¹⁰ This is in marked contrast to the more statist orientations of interest group formation found in Canada and continental Europe, namely corporatism, in which interest groups are accorded official recognition and are considered an organic part of society. In fact interest groups often have a negative connotation in American political discourse, conjuring up images of backroom deals that subvert the national interest.

Despite this image, America has not been uncongenial to organized interest groups. First, the American experiment, with its limited government coupled with a strong civil society, has encouraged private initiative on the part of self-help associations and interest groups. This fostered the creation of voluntary association, for in areas in which there is a dearth of state involvement, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) often tend to fill the void.¹¹ One theory posits that when the scope of government intervention is limited in an aspect of public policy, NGOs tend to be pick up the slack and take measures on their own to deal with the problem.¹² Moreover, the American interest group system is more fluid, decentralized, and entrepreneurial compared to other democracies. Finally, the American system contains many entrance points. If interests are defeated in one branch of government area such as the legislature, they can attempt to press their claims in another branch such as the executive. Taken together, these characteristics and traditions discussed above fostered an interest group system in which organizational initiative was left to private interests and state interference was discouraged. Consequently these conditions provide a "highly felicitous context for interest group politics."¹³

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the response to domestic right-wing terrorism is qualitatively different than the response to other forms of terrorism, insofar as NGOs tend to be more active and influence much of the policy agenda. However, it is not uncommon for NGOs to impinge upon public policy. For example, organizations such as the

American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Farmers' Union and the National Farmers Organization have been very effective in representing the interests of farmers in the field of agriculture. In the realm of education, the National Education Association (NEA) has been effective in shaping policy not only at state and local levels, but at the national level as well. It achieved a major lobbying coup in 1979 when then President Jimmy Carter established the Department of Education as a cabinet level department. Moreover, the NEA was able to defeat President Reagan's attempts to dismantle the department. Until recently the American Medical Association was virtually an unchallenged authority in the field of health care policy. The involvement of ethnic associations in American foreign policy is yet another case where NGOs impinge greatly on public policy. Eastern European émigrés, Cuban-Americans and Greek-Americans have been very successful in this regard, even when their lobbying goals may have been against the long-term interests of America's foreign policy. The American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee's lobbying on behalf of the state of Israel is legendary in the Congress and the State Department.¹⁴ Thus the involvement of NGOs in the policy arena is not unique.

The Jewish defense organizations

The Anti-Defamation League

The most important watchdog group involved in countering right-wing extremism is undoubtedly the Anti-Defamation League. The ADL was founded in 1913 in Chicago, Illinois when an attorney, Sigmund Livingston, persuaded the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith to establish a defense agency for Jews in America.¹⁵ Although mild strains of anti-Semitism had hitherto occurred throughout American history, it began to emerge for the first time in significant fashion as large numbers of Eastern European Jews arrived in America. As with virtually all newcomers, the native host population met the Jewish immigrants with some degree of hostility. Furthermore, unlike previous Jewish immigrants from the nineteenth century who were primarily German in national origin and well established in their communities, many of the new Jewish immigrants were from Eastern Europe and tended to be economically and socially marginalized in background. They brought with them their own unique dress and customs, which were viewed as peculiar and with suspicion by many Americans. Jews quickly became the butt of jokes in vaudeville routines and in the fledgling motion picture industry.¹⁶ Thus a chief aim of the ADL was to counter negative stereotypes and caricatures of Jews in the media. These developments coincided with a period of renascent nativism in America. The Ku Klux Klan was resurrected at Stone Mountain, Georgia in 1915 and a wave of white Anglo-Saxon Protestant nationalism swept virtually all regions of the country. Finally, the Leo Frank affair of 1913–15 shocked the Jewish community and added a sense of urgency for the creation of new Jewish defense agencies.¹⁷ In this newly charged and potentially hostile atmosphere, the ADL set out to protect Jewish interests. This pattern of organizational development fits the previously mentioned disturbance theory of interest group formation as described by Truman and Wilson. In this instance the emergence of

widespread anti-Semitism for the first time in America impelled the formation of Jewish defense organizations.¹⁸

The ADL quickly expanded its operations and soon attained a great deal of respectability and political clout. The ADL devoted much of this influence to one of its highest priorities: exposing and countering right-wing extremists. In 1931, then ADL national director Richard Gutstadt founded the fact-finding department, which gathered intelligence on extremist organizations.¹⁹ By the inter-war years, the ADL had gained access to various law enforcement agencies, including the US Department of Justice, with which it developed a good working relationship, and by its own admission, supplied information on native fascists and right-wing extremists.²⁰ The ADL sought to conceal this cooperation it had with law enforcement authorities from the press so that it would not fuel hostility from some quarters of the public.²¹

As an ADL publication once explained, the ADL has not depended on rigid formulae to pursue its interests and goals. Rather it has adapted its tactics to meet the changing threat to Jews and other minority groups.²² However, one technique that it frequently has applied is public exposure of its extremist opponents. The purpose of this is to isolate and marginalize the extremist from the society at large.

The ADL's effectiveness in countering right-wing extremism stems in large part from its ability to control much of the information about this subject. Towards this end, the ADL moved its national headquarters from Chicago to New York in 1947 in an effort to take better advantage of the mass media of communications.²³ It publishes numerous reports on right-wing groups and their leaders, and this has greatly influenced the perception of the far right in the eyes of policy makers and academic researchers.²⁴

Over the years, the ADL has gained considerable strength as it has accumulated substantial resources. In the postwar era there has been an increasing professionalization of its staff as qualified individuals perform specialized tasks.²⁵ Concomitant with this development has been the compartmentalization of its functions. Several departments concentrate on specific issues and areas including fact-finding, civil rights, research, international affairs, government affairs, legal affairs and education. Moreover, the ADL is very well financed; for the year 2000, the ADL recorded assets of \$17,737,259 and received an annual income of \$48,693,379.²⁶ It employs over 400 people, including an extensive legal staff.²⁷ Finally, it maintains thirty-three regional offices in various American cities, as well as foreign countries including Austria, Canada and Israel.

Much of the ADL's strength and continuity can be explained by the fact that many American Jews—their material and social success notwithstanding—still feel a strong sense of insecurity and believe that anti-Semitism remains a serious problem in the United States.²⁸ Despite the relative weakness of the contemporary American far right, many American Jews believe that under certain conditions, an anti-Semitic movement could become stronger.²⁹ Consequently, many Jewish-Americans are willing to make generous donations not only to the ADL and other Jewish defense organizations, but to other watchdog groups as well.

Over the years, the ADL has identified several different organizations as a serious threat not only to the American Jewish community, but to the democratic structure of America as well. Judging by the ADL's literature, the John Birch Society was regarded as the most serious threat during the 1960s. The ADL released several publications warning

of the undemocratic tendencies of the Birch Society. Some of these were even published as books that were carried by major publishing houses.³⁰ At first it may seem odd that the ADL felt threatened by the Birch Society; there were vociferous anti-Semites active during this time, such as George Lincoln Rockwell of the American Nazi Party and Gerald L.K. Smith of the Christian National Party. However, neither commanded the resources nor the followers of the Birch Society during that era, which was estimated at its peak to have 50,000–60,000 members.³¹ Thus the Birch Society demonstrated the potential of becoming a formidable mass movement. Furthermore, earlier research suggested that the seemingly innocuous conspiracy theories propounded by the Birch Society could potentially be transformed into anti-Semitic conspiracy theories.³²

By the 1970s, the Birch Society began to run out of steam. Moreover, to the relief of the ADL, it never transformed itself into an anti-Semitic vehicle. In fact, as mentioned earlier, it expelled those members who outspokenly expressed anti-Semitism. But the ADL identified a new threat in the Liberty Lobby. In 1964 the Lobby began publication of *The Liberty Letter*, which was a very small publication. However, in 1975 this evolved into its weekly newspaper, *The Spotlight*, which attained a circulation estimated at its peak to be approximately 315,000.³³ Moreover, the Liberty Lobby dabbled in other media such as radio, with a program called *This is the Liberty Lobby*, which was aired on radio stations around the country. Finally, Willis Carto, the Liberty Lobby's leader, was the main figure who gave Holocaust revisionism an institutional basis. For these reasons, Willis Carto and the Liberty Lobby were identified as the leading antiSemite and leading anti-Semitic organization respectively throughout the 1970s to the 1990s.

By the late 1990s, though, the ADL identified Dr William Pierce's National Alliance as "the single most dangerous organized hate group in the United States today."³⁴ By far-right standards, Pierce has built an impressive multi-media propaganda apparatus with his Resistance Records, National Vanguard Books, and *American Dissident Voices* radio program. What's more, through his authorship of the *Turner Diaries* and his long experience in extremist politics, he is regarded as a well respected elder statesman in the far-right milieu. For these reasons, the ADL has expressed consternation over the increasing influence of the National Alliance. However, Dr Mark Pitcavage, the current chief fact-finder for the ADL, was vague in identifying the threat from the far right:

Well, you know, you can measure the threat in all sorts of different ways. The movement that tends to be the most violent is the white supremacist movement. On the other hand, the movement that has given authorities the most problem is the sovereign citizen freemen movement. I really hate to sort of come up with enemy number one.³⁵

(Parenthetically, it is important to keep in mind that Pitcavage had held that position for only a few days at the time of our interview and thus may have not really had a chance to formulate a more specific opinion while he settles into his new position. Prior to his arrival at the ADL, he ran the Militia Watchdog project and thus focused primarily on the Christian Patriot/militia segment of the far right.)

In recent years the ADL has taken the lead in countering the far right through various measures including, *inter alia*, the promotion of legislation (e.g. anti-paramilitary training

statutes and hate crime legislation), cooperation with law enforcement agencies, training programs that alert the public to the threat of right extremism, and the promotion of software that blocks access to extremist websites. Its current national director, Abraham Foxman, is considered an important public figure with substantial political clout.³⁶ Despite occasional setbacks, overall, today the organization appears to be in good shape and is a formidable opponent to the far right.³⁷

The American Jewish Committee

Like the ADL, the American Jewish Committee (AJC) was also founded in response to a crisis, in this case an international one. In the early part of the twentieth century pogroms convulsed Jewish populations in Russia and parts of Eastern Europe. In order to address this crisis several prominent American Jews, including the financier Jacob Schiff, the jurist Oscar Straus and the philanthropist Cyrus L. Sulzberger, met in New York City in 1906 to create an organization to aid their co-religionists overseas.³⁸ Hence was born the American Jewish Committee. During the early part of its history, the AJC proved to be quite adept in lobbying in the field of foreign policy. In fact it saw itself as instrumental in persuading the United States government's decision in 1911 to abrogate its 1832 commercial treaty with Russia.³⁹

Up until the 1930s, the AJC focused primarily on issues facing Jews overseas. However, as World War II approached the AJC began to concern itself more with defense issues affecting Jews residing in the United States. The impetus for this repositioning was a renascent far right in America and the rise of Hitler's Nazi movement in Germany. Many far-right groups sprouted all over the country, drawing inspiration from European fascists in continental Europe. During this period, the focus of this movement's hostility shifted away from anti-Catholicism to anti-Semitism and anti-communism. This understandably was a worrisome development for the Jewish community. To meet this threat, the AJC took various measures. First, it created a Legal and Investigative Department to obtain information on its far-right opponents. Dossiers were made on them and much of this information was provided to government authorities. Inasmuch as the ADL had been ahead of the game in this area, the AJC agreed to coordinate its efforts with the former.⁴⁰ Both the ADL and the AJC worked closely with and provided information to government authorities including congressional committees, Army and Navy Intelligence, and the FBI.⁴¹ The results of these investigations were often funneled to sympathetic journalists who wrote stories and editorials against the threat of native fascism and fifth column subversion.⁴² At the close of World War II the AJC retreated from the area of investigating domestic right-wing extremism. That mission, for the most part, returned solely to the ADL. However, the AJC would occasionally issue a report on the topic.⁴³

One major strategic contribution that the AJC has made to the strategy of combating right-wing extremism is the notion of "quarantine" or "dynamic silence." Dr Solomon Andhil Fineberg of the AJC is given credit for the creation of this tactic. It was first devised in the late 1940s to meet the challenge of one Gerald L.K. Smith,⁴⁴ one of the most notable anti-Semitic far-rightists of the last century. This approach was also refined to counter the antics of George Lincoln Rockwell and his American Nazi Party in the