

Living out our Ethnic Instincts: Ideological Beliefs among Right-Wing Activists in Norway

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Introduction

THE NORWEGIAN rightist underground consists of three layers characterized by rather different lifestyles and ideologies: paramilitarists, National Socialist skinheads, and ideologists. This essay compares the beliefs of activists from these different layers by sorting out some of the main ideological dimensions that divide the underground: nationalism versus Germanism, culture versus race, and Right versus Left. The essay concludes with detail on the beliefs held by the National Socialists of the underground, including the way they relate to ZOG (Zionist Occupation Government) theory.¹

Nationalist and *National Socialist* are the words used by right-wing activists in Norway to describe their views. A few years ago, it was

not important whether one was a nationalist or a National Socialist.² To avoid confusion, they all called themselves nationalists. After the emergence of paramilitary groups, which define themselves in contrast to the skinheads, tensions between nationalism and National Socialism increased. Nevertheless, the underground still acts together when arranging concerts and parties, because of the need to stand together in their fight against militant anti-fascists.³

The study is based on data gathered through my participant observations of the rightist underground in 1993 and 1994 and on in-depth interviews with right-wing activists in the period 1993–1996.

The Rightist Underground

The National Socialist skinheads adhere to the white-power version of the skinhead lifestyle. The white-power trend emerged during the late 1970s in England. National Socialist skinheads in Norway are extremely aware of the international history of the skinhead subculture.⁴ They typically enjoy white-power music and wear bomber jackets, Doc Martens boots, and jeans or fatigues. To call attention to their ideological identification, they wear jacket labels showing the Norwegian flag or a Viking ship, or they wear white-power T-shirts. Their lifestyle is based on pub culture, and many of them are fond of giving fascist salutes.

These activists are connected to groups with names like Bootboys, NUNS 88, and Norsk Arisk Ungdomsfront (NAUF).⁵ Bootboys is a distribution network for white-power oi music and a record company; both are controlled by one person.⁶ Previously, many of the participants of this layer lived in or near the house of this leading person. A few leading activists in this layer do not dress like skinheads and act rather autonomously within the underground. They are friendly to persons from different layers, and only through their lifestyle and ideology are they associated with the National Socialist skinheads. This layer contains at least four older activists (in their thirties), several of whom have committed serious political violence such as bombings and shootings. Groups such as NUNS 88 and NAUF, in contrast, consist solely of young people, mostly teenagers.

The paramilitarists are organized into local cells, each guided by a local leader. In Norway there are two such groups, Varg and Viking. Varg activists are skinheads, but they emphasize discipline and organizational hierarchies more than skinhead style and pub culture.

Moreover, they are nationalists, not National Socialists. Viking members take part in underground activities such as painting nationalist graffiti slogans, handing out leaflets, and violence aimed at fighting immigration and communism. They wear casual clothes because they want to remain anonymous, although during concerts or demonstrations they wear U.S. army caps, military shirts, black ties, and fatigues. They take part in weapons training, organizing camouflage courses, marching, and first-aid training.

A female group, Valkyria, also belongs to this layer. The Valkyria members join the paramilitary activity of Viking, dress in military clothes, and call themselves nationalists. Because there are so few of them, they do not organize their group as a hierarchy.⁷

The ideologists are young National Socialists who participate in Nazi marches or Nazi organizations such as Zorn 88 but eschew both the skinhead uniform and militant activities such as weapons training or violent actions. Their aim is to become schooled in National Socialist ideology.

Except among the ideologists, the emphasis is either on militant activities or on various youth subcultural elements. The somewhat loose ideology makes the younger activists different from the adult members of nationalist or National Socialist organizations.

The press often labels young activists "Nazis," contributing to the desire of parliamentary politicians who try to gain votes from broad segments of the population to stay aloof from them. For example, ten members of Viking who wanted to join the youth organization of the Progress Party were excluded after newspaper headlines announced "Nazi infiltration."⁸ These activists want to have an impact on politics regardless of which channel gives them this impact. In sharp contrast to the skinheads, they are open to joining the established parliamentary parties.

The few remaining National Socialists who were members of the Norwegian National Socialist Party *Nasjonal Samling* (National Unification, NS) in the 1930s and 1940s do not want to be associated with the young activists. In a written answer to my question, the head of the Institute of Occupation History (the history of German occupation) states that neither their magazine (*Folk og land*), their publishing firm (Historisk forlag, Historical Publisher Ltd.), nor their institute "have had or have any connection with, or interest in these groups of people." Rather, they "publicly stay aloof from them."⁹ In this regard the young activists stand in sharp contrast with the similar underground in Sweden, where the organization *Nordiska Rikspar-*

tiet (the Nordic Reich Party), which emerged in 1956, has functioned as a bridge between the prewar National Socialists and the young militant National Socialists of the 1990s.¹⁰ In Norway there is no such bridge between adult National Socialists and the militant activists. Some young activists, however, do say that they sometimes attend the lectures held at the Institute of Occupation History, and some of them talk of this institute with great respect. A few of the older members of the new generation of activists have contacts with individual “old” National Socialists.

Even though there is not much contact between young and old National Socialists, there are contacts between some young activists and the nationalist politicians organized in *Den norske forening* (The Norwegian Association). Some members of this organization have provided communications equipment to enable the young activists to gather quickly in case of left-wing attacks on nationalist politicians.¹¹

The usual practice of the right-wing activists is, instead of starting a political dialogue with other groups, to demand to have an impact on society through underground activities in the belief that although many share their views, their ideas are suppressed by the authorities and the press.¹²

The skinhead lifestyle until recently was a typical “investment” for entering the rightist underground. However, since the emphasis within Varg and Viking on paramilitary organization and discipline, many activists have adopted a more military look. The skinheads remain the largest component of the underground, however.

The Norwegian rightist underground is small in comparison with similar groups in other Western countries. In 1996 about forty males could be defined as part of the core, and there were about 200 peripheral activists.¹³ The Swedish underground is considerably larger. Heléne Lööw reported that in 1993 there were between 500 and 600 activists—members and sympathizers.¹⁴

The peripheral members also play an important role. Many of them are not visible participants, but they help the activists. For example, a person working in the telephone bureau may give out secret addresses and phone numbers of opponents. Many also assemble when confrontations are planned or expected. There is also a rather large number of sympathizers who have not entered the underground. They write letters and ask for pamphlets, T-shirts, and so on, or they express their sympathy with the rightist underground on the Internet.

Except for a few leading figures in their middle thirties, most activists are teenagers. The identity of the underground as a youth subculture is perhaps somewhat altered as its oldest members approach age forty. However, many activists leave the underground when they reach their middle twenties. They want to concentrate on family and work instead of being full-time underground activists. Some leading activists are as young as twenty-two, whereas many sympathizers are as young as twelve or fourteen.

The core of the underground is located in eastern Norway. In addition, there are smaller cells of activists in other parts of the country; they have contact via letter and telephone with the core activists, and many move to live near them after a while. This underground has no strict central organization. Satellite groups may develop their own style and ideology, independent of the way central activists define their strategies. There is a widespread view that various groups and individuals can have different tasks and impacts, and that this pluralism is beneficial to the underground. For example, one local cell consists of youths, several of whom had criminal records prior to entering the rightist underground. Such backgrounds are useful because these youths know, for example, how to steal a car when one is needed in an emergency.¹⁵

The three layers differ in the degree to which they have guidelines for action or ideological convictions. The skinheads are loosely associated and have no written program. They define themselves as anti-authoritarian because they do not follow a leader. This "leaderless resistance" is an ideal in the white-power skinhead movement in other countries as well.¹⁶ The skinheads' historical project is to revive the ideals of the Viking era, to recover the homogeneous unicultural society, and to preserve the purity of the race.

The paramilitarists, unlike the skinheads, believe in leadership and discipline. They have a written program to be followed by their members. Their ideology is defined as nationalist. A leading Viking activist states that he looks upon himself as a (Joseph) McCarthyite. His aim is to inform people through various actions that Norwegians do not live in a democracy, because all positions of power are held by communist-inspired leftists.

The ideologists do not believe that they ever will experience a National Socialist society. However, some of them have formulated political programs designed to present their views in a way that makes them appear reasonable to persons outside the underground.

All the activists relate in some way to an international rightist underground. They send letters and exchange fanzines, opinions on racial war, and so on with actors in England, Germany, Poland, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, as well as the United States. The Norwegian Anti-Antifa collaborate with the neo-Nazi Combat 18 in England by printing traitor and "wanted dead" lists of Norwegian anti-racists in *Blood and Honour*.¹⁷ The Norwegian division of the international Blood and Honour movement was created in the autumn of 1995.¹⁸ Norwegian activists join soccer matches, concerts, or Nazi marches abroad. Also, some activists have joined paramilitary nationalist forces in Lebanon, South Africa, and Bosnia.

England is the skinheads' primary interest because the skinhead style had its origin there and because their favorite rock bands come from England. The leading figure in this skinhead layer looked upon himself as a personal friend of the Skrewdriver vocalist Ian Stuart Donaldson (who died in a car accident in 1993). Their favorite white-power rock bands are Skrewdriver, Skullhead, and No Remorse—all British bands—and Svastika, Division S, and several other bands from Sweden. They also have formed three bands themselves—Vidkuns Venner, Norhat, and Norske Legion.¹⁹ Musicians in white-power bands are conscious of their role to promote ideas of the white racial revolution, as Ian Stuart Donaldson once put it.²⁰ The incorporation of ideological beliefs into rock music and youth subculture is important because the political message reaches far more young people than it would if it merely was propagandized within an ideological organization. Concerts are the main arena for Norwegian activists to meet comrades from abroad. Here also fanzines, records, T-shirts, and symbolic material such as jacket labels and banners are sold.

To date, the Norwegian underground groups have had less influence on foreign groups than the other way around. Individual activists have some degree of impact internationally because of their previous terror actions or their organizational talents.²¹ However, the organization of separate girls' groups in the Norwegian underground has attracted the interest of the international subculture. The girls from Valkyria say that they have met Swedish girls at concerts who are highly impressed by the militant outlook of the Valkyria girls. According to one Valkyria girl, the group received the nickname "Death Squadron" from their Swedish sisters. The Norwegian Valkyria group has also had an impact in Denmark. A Danish girl who

wanted to start up a group for female activists contacted the Norwegian girls first to get advice about how to proceed.²² Historically, women in Norwegian far right movements have enjoyed exceptional equality with males in comparison with women in other countries. For example, Vera Oredsson, former leader of the Swedish National Socialist Nordic Reich Party, writes that the Norwegian National Socialist party during the war presented men and women as equals in their magazines, in contrast to typical practice in Sweden.²³ Even though the Valkyria members tend to act in accordance with premises set out by male activists, they also have an independent impact on the underground. They organize their own actions against prostitution and pornography, and they arrange study circles and meetings on their own. Leading females participate in strategic meetings with leading male activists, and they participate with the boys in weapons training. According to a leading Valkyria activist, about 50 percent of the girls want to fight in the front line, and the other half prefer taking care of other tasks. This activist maintains that in the clash with anti-racists during the short period when the rightist activists had their own house in Treschow's Street, it was the girls who exercised control in the house, demanding order from the males so that the situation did not turn into a raucous party. This rather self-conscious role of females is exceptional in an international setting.

Some paramilitarists and some ideologists dislike the skinhead lifestyle. They dislike the fact that the music and beer-drinking tend to overshadow the importance of ideological conviction, or that it is impossible to be taken seriously as long as people just see raucous drunken skinheads shouting "Sieg Heil."

Implicit Knowledge Among the Right-Wing Activists

There is a range of ideological beliefs among participants from the various layers, but all participants are "100 percent against immigration" and want to fight "the communists"—all groups and parties on the political Left. It is not necessary for a member to be able to comment in a thoughtful way on issues of race and nation. It is sufficient to commit oneself to being a "nationalist" or a "National Socialist" and to express angry feelings against colored immigrants.²⁴ The activists seldom discuss differences of belief. Instead, conflicting viewpoints are hidden behind some basic assumptions to which everyone agrees.

In addition, the conflicts between the rightist underground and its leftist opponents from the Blitz house tend to shape and strengthen the attitudes of the right-wing activists. Some leading activists state that the more their opponents fight them, the stronger and more hateful their own views tend to be.²⁵

There is no regular schooling of activists in this underground. Newcomers learn about the underground through their interactions with it. Some books are mentioned in the fanzines, but few read them. A large proportion of activists just read the fanzines; they almost never read books. All activists, however, read the self-produced and imported fanzines and pamphlets, making these the most important part of their documentary frame of reference. The most popular books are revisionist works about the Norwegian National Socialist party of the 1930s and 1940s,²⁶ saga literature,²⁷ and militant rightist novels such as *Hunter* and *The Turner Diaries* by William Pierce. To the degree that the rightist underground orients itself according to a documentary frame for its implicit knowledge, this literature is equivalent to such a frame. In this way, the syllabus is first of all presented and defined by those activists who edit their own fanzines. Among the Norwegian fanzines, *Einherjer* is considered by several activists as the most important reading on ideology. *Patrioten* also contains ideological material, whereas *Viking* is rather an internal paper with coded messages for the paramilitarists. The fanzines are the most important source of knowledge and serve to legitimize action, including violence.

The National Socialist skinheads maintain that to understand how the conspiracy works one has to read a certain amount of heavy literature. The more of this one reads, the more one is able to see through "the falseness of the system," and one thus becomes skilled in reading between the lines of the news. Some of the activists, seeing the need to attain a more systematic ideological knowledge, have in recent years organized small study groups to discuss the Viking era, research reports concerning the underground, and other topics of interest.²⁸

There are differences in the ways the different groups express political and ideological beliefs. The National Socialist skinheads' discourse on race and nation is expressed through rumors, jokes, or comments. Their group identity is defined in terms of "race" and "nation." For them, "race" and "nation" are parts of their shared mythology. Many also call themselves Odinists. The former National Socialist pamphlet *Ragnarok* went farthest in presenting race-hygienic

thoughts. It contained pictures of the skulls of black people and satirical paintings of Jews meant to illustrate, respectively, the supposedly lower intelligence of blacks and Jews' supposedly typical malice and stupidity.

The activists of the paramilitary groups have a political orientation more in line with segments of the population who accept common nationalist arguments. Among these activists, beliefs such as certainty that Muslims will take over more of Norway if they are allowed to stay are simply taken for granted. Paramilitary groups are convinced that eventually Muslims will force their culture on Norwegian citizens, so that, as one female activist said, "In twenty years all women must wear veils." Another prevailing view among the paramilitarists is that all Norwegian power-holders uncritically support multiculturalism.

The National Socialist ideologists believe that there is a need for the strongest to rule. They seldom discuss the criteria that determine who is strong and who is weak, or whose interests will be served by the strong power-holders. However, since the emergence of the electronic database *Motstand!* (Resistance!) such discussions have in fact occurred.²⁹ The ideologists are not interested in questions about the details of how National Socialism should be practiced. Rather, they are interested in revisionism, and they like to think of a National Socialist society as orderly and good for all people.³⁰ The ideologists' views contrast with the more revolutionary views of the National Socialist skinheads, who do not believe in leadership because power corrupts.

When I interviewed some younger activists about their views, they answered in short sentences that served only to underline the a priori quality of their positions. They seemed to take it for granted that I already knew their ideas. They gave far more detailed reports of their political orientations when confronted by persons whom they to some degree respected but who were not participants in the underground.

One such incident occurred when I was visiting two activists at their home. During the interview, the girlfriend of one boy telephoned. Her boyfriend wanted his friend to convince her that immigration was bad. The friend took this task seriously by giving the girl a half-hour lesson about his view of immigration. The girl distanced herself by laughing all the time; she probably found that to be a better strategy than giving counterarguments. Convincing her

about the necessity of anti-immigration was important because it would be difficult to continue her relationship with the boy if she didn't change her mind in this regard.

Leading activists often acted quite differently. They could sit for hours telling me how the world really should be understood, trying to explain their views by citing ever newer proofs. Older activists are more schooled in ideology than are young ones and are better able to talk about it because of all they have read. Convinced National Socialists of the underground are often better read than less ideologically oriented activists and are thus able to verbalize their views.

Activists who do not believe in National Socialism find it problematic that the surrounding world views them all as Nazis. In their view, only 10 percent of the entire underground are National Socialists. The rest are nationalists. The reason why they all have received the label "Nazis" is that the most visible activists are those who give fascist salutes or who wear Viking symbols, which have been associated with Nazism since their adoption by the Norwegian NS party in the 1930s. Several activists have urged me not to write about them as though they all were "Nazis." However, the worldview of most skinheads is largely influenced by the white-power movement, which combines ideological beliefs from contemporary and historical sources, including German National Socialism.³¹

Some activists reject the Nazis. In practice, however, activists often make friends for reasons other than ideological orientation. Because they seldom discuss the subject, ideology does not play a primary role in establishing friendships. A leading Viking activist explains that it is not possible for him to know the details of every single activist's beliefs.³² There might be some National Socialists among Viking's members, but that's their choice. Thus in reality there is no real division between nationalists and the National Socialists.

I once asked one of the older activists why there is no discussion of differences in ideology and politics. He replied: "This is not a sewing club, you know." Discussion is not for militants. Even so, it is inaccurate to say that they are all anti-intellectual. Many express great respect for intellectual activities. They seem to most respect nationalist politicians who are able to represent their views in an articulate manner, rather than the "vulgar racists" whose views are more extreme than those of some of the activists.

An obvious reason why activists of the different layers do not split the underground into factions is that no single segment would have

the power to organize actions to counter the anti-racists or to organize events such as concerts or to fight the anti-fascists. To minimize differences, it is best not to discuss them openly. However, activists tend to make fun of, or spread rumors about, their counterparts from other layers. This is a way to dramatize their differences in a manner less dangerous than a real confrontation. The catch-all function of the label "nationalism" is also a way to encapsulate all the underground's disparate beliefs. The label "nationalist" diminishes conflicts and brings together those whose hatred of Jews is sufficient to motivate them to collaborate with Muslim Palestinians living in Norway and those who hate the Muslims most of all.³³ The nationalist label is also used by the activists to avoid more severe, complex, extreme, or stigmatized labels, such as "Nazi" or "racist."

Ideological Distinctions

Because of the relatively incompatible ideological and political standpoints of the activists, their arguments lack ideological consistency.³⁴ But consistency is not a goal of the activists. Instead, their purpose is to gather in a community that can encompass a variety of orientations, even ones that might seem incompatible. In the following sections, I describe some of these disparate ideological views.

NATIONALISM OR GERMANISM

Jens: The label everyone applies to himself is Nationalist. Some have a touch of Nazism and some are more socialist, but all of us are nationalists and racists.³⁵

In 1993 and 1994, almost all activists in the Norwegian rightist underground called themselves nationalists. During 1995 and 1996, more and more activists came to call themselves National Socialists. But even these refer to "the Nationalist milieu" and the nationalist skinheads. "Nationalism" is the only label to which all of them feel some attachment. As these activists define it, a nationalist is one who loves his or her country and who is strictly against immigration.

In fact, few of the activists are interested in Norwegian folkloric traditions, and few of them are satisfied with contemporary society. The activists are in opposition to contemporary Norwegian society because it lacks nationalism; and when they talk about being proud of their country, they are primarily referring to their sense of how Norway once was, especially during the Viking era. They are

proud of the Viking era because, as a twenty-seven-year-old activist said, “then Norway was an empire.”³⁶ From other periods of Norwegian history, he mentions with approval the Constitution of 1814, when people who were suppressed rebelled and “started doing something for ourselves.” One should not let others trample one down, he says.

These two aspects—to be proud and not to let one’s own people be suppressed—are frequently mentioned by the skinheads when they describe their own nationalist attitude. They admire the Vikings because they based their action on honor and loyalty to their own people. One leading activist, age thirty-one, talks about the need to have a community, and he idealizes “the good old days” when (he believes) neighborhoods constituted homogeneous working-class communities.³⁷

In this regard, it is more accurate to call these activists localists rather than nationalists. This kind of neighborhood nationalism is similar to the one described by Phil Cohen: “[They] create imagined communities to replace real ones which have disintegrated; they offer a magical retrieval of lost inheritances, re-animating rituals of territoriality and public propriety, investing them with a renewed sense of omnipotence linked to real powers of social combination.”³⁸ When the skinheads dominate the street through threatening behavior, they seem to be living out what they consider to be their natural territorial instincts. The thirty-one-year-old activist mentioned above explicitly refers to this lifestyle as “living out our ethnic instincts.”³⁹

But their “instincts” do not manifest themselves only on the local level. When attending white-power concerts in Sweden, Norwegian activists join a community of white nationalists from all over Europe. The belief that there is a slumbering racial instinct inside every human being is prevalent in the international white-power culture.⁴⁰ Referring to such beliefs as expressions of natural instincts is also a way to describe their violence as being reasonable and natural and thus, as Ehud Sprinzak points out, not needing to be justified or apologized for.⁴¹

Some of the Norwegian activists sympathize with Irish nationalists, especially the IRA. At the same time, the skinhead activists’ favorite songs are those by the English white-power rock band Skrewdriver, one of whose songs is called “Smash the IRA.” This contradiction in nationalist sympathies does not bother the activists. They often responded with a self-deprecating laugh when I pointed

out such obvious contradictions. Their own way of ideological reasoning seems to function on a common-sense level—that is, on a level based not on logical reasoning but rather on loose rumors and fragments.⁴² Thus, although their beliefs are not meant to be taken literally, these beliefs are considered so serious that the activists are willing to die for them.

The paramilitarists are those who best fit the nationalist label. They frequently use the slogan “Norway for Norwegians,” and they refer to the so-called “boys in the woods” as their historical ideals. The latter is a reference to the Norwegian resistance movement during the war—that is, volunteers who fought the Nazis. Today, the paramilitarists say, it is not Germans but rather immigrants who are the intruders, and they must protect their country against them.⁴³

A few of the skinheads, as well as the ideologists, use words that make it more accurate to call them “Germanists.” They talk about the need to unite all Germanic people. In this they are similar to one faction of Norway’s NS party of the 1930s and 40s, which historian Øystein Sørensen has labeled pan-Germanist (in contrast to the nationalists who were against the German occupation of Norway).⁴⁴

In addition, there are some skinheads who would rather have “fought under the Nordic banner.”⁴⁵ They believe that it would be good if Charles the Twelfth (the Swedish imperialist king) were alive today, because he was a king who “fought together with his soldiers, in the front line.”⁴⁶ To many skinheads, the common heritage with the Swedes is very important, and they have nothing against paying homage to Swedish war heroes. Some of them even hold that people who live “up north” compose a distinct tribe, defined by their white identity.

CULTURE OR RACE

Egil: We are a little tribe far up north. We are a front against alienation, and the mixing of cultures. We step out and breathe life into our white identity. We are faithful to our roots, and we are in opposition to the lie which the welfare society is based upon, the lie about the “colorful community.”⁴⁷

Even though many of the activists do not wish to be labeled racists, it is obvious that racist ideas lie at the heart of their movement. They

listen to music with aggressive white-power texts, and they express satirical comments when they see colored people on the street. Many of them insist that they do not want any kind of immigrants, either blacks or whites, but their antipathy is mainly directed to the colored or black immigrants.

Many of the activists adhere to cultural or economic arguments against "foreign cultural immigration." They have adopted the more legitimate racism that often is called new racism⁴⁸ but to a large degree is identical to what must be defined as nationalism.⁴⁹ According to such thinking, the idea of race is supplemented by the idea of culture as an argument against immigration. The main argument is that the national culture is threatened by the invasion of foreign cultures. Further, it is argued that conflicts will emerge between the national culture and the culture of other peoples. The activists share the assumption that confrontations between different cultures are bad and that foreign cultures will threaten the preservation of the Norwegian national culture. They adhere to an ideology that wants to avoid conflict by eliminating what is different. They all share the belief that there is a good reason for opposing the so-called multicultural society.

Another of their basic assumptions is that Norwegian authorities support the ideal of the "multicolored community" and can in many ways be seen as part of a conspiracy against the real interests of the Norwegian people. They often use the expression "persecuted minority" to describe themselves; the entities that persecute them are said to be the Special Branch, the mass media, and the parliamentary politicians.⁵⁰

The activists also adopt economic arguments against immigration, stating that "we" should take care of "our own" people before giving something to others. They use all of the typical "new racist" arguments. Many of these arguments are quite common outside this underground. However, these activists have a more aggressive view and, in sharp contrast to the rest of the population, are willing to use violence and to build up a private army to fight immigration and multiculturalism.

Only a minority of activists are racists in the narrow sense of the word. Most maintain that they accept people from other countries as long as they are nationalists and "stay where they belong." Some say that it is cowardly to leave one's country when there is a war and that many of the people who are refugees are those best equipped

to fight in the wars being fought in their own countries. "To be a nationalist means staying with your country," a leading female activist stated.⁵¹ Some activists also express sympathetic views of black people who are against integration. One activist said he would have been able to collaborate with Haile Selassie and parts of the Rasta movement because they were against the integration of black and white.⁵² The activists often use the former Yugoslavia and South Africa as examples of the consequences of different ethnic groups living within the same territory. For them, the solution in such places is to constitute a national state for each ethnic group.

Activists who are racist in the narrow sense of the word argue that it is a natural instinct to defend one's territory.⁵³ They maintain that different peoples have their own natural territories and that it is therefore unnatural for black immigrants to stay in Norway. In their view, the multicultural society is against the "Law of Nature." It creates chaos and destruction instead of community and tradition, they argue. One leading activist states that it is good that white people took power in parts of Africa and South America because only tribal wars and cannibalism existed there before the white people came.⁵⁴ This activist does not argue that all peoples should have their own national state, but rather that white people are needed in order to maintain order.

Several activists agree that they are racist—that white people are culturally and mentally superior to other peoples. But even they seemed to modify their beliefs when I asked them in detail about their views on specific issues. One activist, who in his fanzine often presents drawings of skulls of black people as a proof of their inferiority, acknowledged that many black persons definitely were more intelligent than many white people. When I asked whether he thought slavery to be good, he answered quietly that no people should be suppressed. But after a while he added that black people were in a better condition under slavery than they are now, because now there are only tribal wars among them and this is proof that they are unable to maintain order themselves. This practice of making applicable to all black people generalizations that are based on the situation in some specific place (in this case Rwanda) is typical of the activists' rhetorical style.

There is a distinction to be made between those underground activists who are regarded as extreme because they explicitly rank different peoples and those who are not regarded as extreme because they offer only cultural or economic arguments against immigration.

RIGHT OR LEFT

Most activists define themselves as right-wing. A leading activist from the Viking group considers strengthening right-wing politics more important than fighting immigration. Nevertheless, some skinheads define themselves as left-wing nationalists and regret that the existing nationalist parties in Norway are so closely tied to right-wing politics. Some say they belong to the Left because of their revolutionary attitude:

Rein: Technically we belong to the left wing in politics, because that's the revolutionary side. The right wing is reactionary and conservative, and we are not reactionary and conservative! Many people say we are extremely reactionary, and therefore we are called right-wing extremists. But we are radical and revolutionary—the true left! [The] ugly communists have stolen the left wing, and claim themselves to be the only left wing, while we then are seemingly those on the right.⁵⁵

One activist who defines himself as right-wing argues that he sympathizes with the socialists in Norwegian politics because they at least are idealists. Some activists call themselves moderate or liberal. To them, *liberal* means “tolerant toward other people’s attitudes” and nonviolent. Other activists apply the term *moderate* to themselves but define it as being apolitical, being a democrat, and having no sympathy for Nazism. Several activists call themselves liberals because they are open to talk with the Blitz youths, whereas the Blitz youths are not tolerant because they refuse to talk with the right-wing activists. About ten activists of the rightist underground were previously connected to the Blitz house. Other activists had once been associated with other leftist youth subcultures. Nonactivists drift the other way, from the nationalists to the Blitz youths. The path into Blitz seems to be closed for youths who have been associated with the “Nazis.” Activists who previously were Blitz youths report that they went over to the nationalists because of their political views. One says that he considered himself to be a nihilist then, but now he has more discipline and considers himself a National Socialist. Some other activists joined Blitz because they became skinheads, then found out after a period of time that their nationalist views were not popular inside the Blitz house.

Nevertheless, several activists have said that they see similarities

between themselves and the Blitz youth because both sides are oppositional and radical. The main difference between the Blitz youth and the right-wing activists is that the Blitz youth call themselves anti-racists and anti-fascists. In reaction, some of the rightist activists have started to use the slogan "Rasist, javisst," which means "Racist, yes, indeed." After several years of claiming to be nationalists, not racists, some now seem to accept the definition of Blitz youths as anti-racists and themselves as racists, although they do this in a somewhat ironic way.⁵⁶

Some activists call themselves revolutionaries. Their eventual revolution will be directed against a conspiracy that they perceive in Norwegian politics. Their conception of revolution is something other than the traditional Marxist understanding of class revolution. Revolutionaries in this subculture have a conservative attitude: they talk about preserving traditions, defending strict state borders, and having a well-equipped military.

Activists from all of the layers talk of the need to fight communism. Some even define the Labor Party as communist, despite the fact that the Labor Party led a comprehensive campaign, including the use of the Special Branch, against communists in the 1970s.

In many ways the activists from the various layers do not fit into a left/right political dichotomy. Nevertheless, largely because of the Nazi elements in some of their beliefs, they are often considered to be located on the far right.

NEO-NAZISM

In Norway, the term *National Socialist* is strongly associated with the term *traitor* because of the German occupation of Norway during the Second World War. *Quisling*, the name of the leader of the Norwegian NS party, is a postwar synonym for *traitor*. Some nationalists in Norway call all persons who are liberal toward immigration traitors.⁵⁷ After the postwar treason trials, *patriot* and *Nazi* became, as Tore Bjørge points out, incompatible terms.⁵⁸

Most Norwegian rightists do not identify themselves as National Socialists. In contrast, in Sweden many activists in various groups of the far right call themselves Nazis. In the song "Säggra eller dö" (Win or die), by the white-power rock band Division S, the chorus goes: "We are Nazis, and that is good, a beautiful day, we will win."⁵⁹ The reason why among rightist activists in Sweden there are fewer constraints on using the term *Nazism* is probably that during the Second

World War Sweden was formally neutral and thus neither tried Nazis nor banned Nazi organizations after the war.⁶⁰ The first European Fascist International after the Second World War was initiated in Malmö in 1950.⁶¹ Many of the young Nazis in Sweden have both parents and grandparents who were members of the National Socialist Party during the war,⁶² whereas among the Norwegian rightist activists there have been only a few persons with Nazis among their closest relatives. Another difference between the Norwegian and the Swedish undergrounds is that in Sweden some National Socialists who were active from the 1950s to the 1980s actually joined the new generation of race ideologists.⁶³

Norwegian activists' resistance to being labeled "Nazis" may be due to a wish to gain broader acceptance. Norway's postwar rejection of Nazism explains why these activists, without considering themselves to be Nazis, can take part in an international underground where Nazism is highly prevalent.

Some of the young people who do call themselves National Socialists stress that they sympathize with the policy of Norway's former National Socialist party from the period before the German takeover of the Norwegian government in 1940. Others are openly sympathetic toward Nazi Germany. There also are some young activists who claim that they use Nazi symbols only because of their wish to shock and to show their disgust for contemporary authorities.

There are also variations in the viewpoints given by those who call themselves National Socialists. Some use anti-Semitic arguments, whereas others are not at all concerned with what they call "the Jewish question." Some say they like National Socialist morality with its emphasis on family and discipline. Others are most sympathetic to the authoritarian state associated with National Socialism.

Still, none of these activists like the term *Nazi*. Their reason is that persons outside their groups define *Nazi* negatively to mean someone who is "contemptuous of humanity, glorifies violence, is evil, or supports gas chambers and dictatorship."⁶⁴ According to the editor of the militant magazine *Einherjer*, this is not how they themselves understand National Socialism:

We support national solidarity, comradeship and justice; the right of nations to independence and to be free from the race chaos of today! . . . We believe in the good, the noble and the pure blood; this means love of our own people, and respect for other people's rights.⁶⁵

These sentiments are typical of the arguments given by National Socialists from both the skinhead and the ideological layers.⁶⁶

One feature of Nazism that does not characterize the skinheads is the leadership principle. These activists define themselves as anti-authoritarian, meaning that they do not want to follow a leader. Their understanding of being a skinhead is that one does not follow an ultimate leader. Rather, skinheads follow the principle of comradeship, in conscious knowledge of the masculine bonding this word denotes. The paramilitarists, in contrast, hold discipline and defined hierarchies in high regard. But, as they themselves rightly note, the fact that they worship militarism does not mean they are Nazis. National Socialist ideology is based on military organization and the principle of blind obedience. Therefore, National Socialist skinheads in many ways are a paradox because of their obviously undisciplined lifestyle.⁶⁷

Another component from which some activists distance themselves is the principle of "the right of the strongest." Many of the activists seem to dislike such an attitude because they do not view themselves as "strong." The skinheads in particular are proud of their working-class backgrounds and refer to the skinhead subculture as offering a way to consciously live a proletarian lifestyle.⁶⁸ They say that they prefer a real Labor Party, which supports small farmers and companies, and a welfare state, which takes care of "weak groups," such as people with handicaps, older people, and the unemployed. They also give this argument as evidence that they do not support the ideal of the will of the strongest and also are opposed to market liberalism. However, in their view the state should spend money solely on people from their own nation, not on people from other nations and cultures. They are not willing to view immigrants as "weak" groups who need assistance from the state. According to one activist, the correct attitude is to be "strong to the strongest, and considerate/mild to the weakest, that is, the opposite of the principle of the right of the strongest."⁶⁹

Nevertheless, the skinheads' attempts to exert control in pubs and on the streets can be understood as an exercise of the principle of the right of the strongest. The strongest ones, then, are those who are physically strong or those best able to form a group. According to that criterion, however, the anarchists (the Blitz youth) until recently were the strongest. But in 1995, this seems to have changed after a large influx of new recruits and improved organization and discipline inside the rightist underground. Within the past few years the skin-

heads also seem to have become far more willing to use weapons, so the need for new recruits is less pressing. By undergoing weapons training, they prepare themselves for a war that in fact is possible only if the Blitz/Antifa (Anti-Facist Action) youths are willing to fight them. Until now, the Blitz/Antifa group has not used shootings or bombings, so the cells within the rightist underground that carry out such actions are in some sense the strongest. The skinheads themselves argue that their only possible way to fight back against pressure from Blitz/Antifa is with weapons in hand. Some of the rightist activists actually seem to enjoy being attacked by the leftist youths because they then are able to live out their ideal of men at war, which they could not do without an opponent.

To avoid being labeled Nazis, the rightist activists agreed in 1993 and 1994 not to use the swastika. By 1995, this rule had been abandoned because some of the younger activists were using swastikas on clothes and on banners. Many activists also use the fascist salute.⁷⁰ Some of them maintain that this salute dates from the Viking era and signifies loyalty to one's own.

Some of the activists give fascist salutes only when they have drunk a lot. Then the gesture seems to be an expression of frustration with life in general and is likely to be followed by belches and grimaces. At other times, especially during concerts or marches, activists salute as an expression of great pleasure. On both occasions, it is implicit that the person is well aware of the salute's history and knows that it will provoke or horrify outsiders. It thus is a source of power.

Moderate activists apologized to me after performing "Sieg Heil" salutes. They were afraid that I would perceive them as Nazis. They explained the gesture as being a mark of their community and a sign of their hatred of society. If others consider the salute provocative, the activists have achieved what they wanted. Other activists see the salute as more than a provocation and say, "We all know history, and some of this we also agree with."

Many of the activists are impressed by mass gatherings such as rock concerts and marches with drums and banners. These gatherings have effects similar to those of the Nazi gatherings of the 1930s. An important difference, however, is that these youngsters do not pay homage to an ultimate leader, and they do not blindly obey anyone's orders. They are more like a mob than a well-organized group of Nazi soldiers.

Concerts and other occasions where everyone gives fascist salutes

seem to lower some activists' barriers against Nazism. This attitude change is intensified by media descriptions of them as Nazis. They gradually start reading revisionist books about the war and start to reconsider: "the victorious side always writes the history books"; "not everything was that bad under Nazism." Slowly their doubts fade away. They say that only bad things are written about Germany, whereas much of what England and the United States did was equally wrong—for example, the bombing of Dresden at the end of the war. They say that under Nazism everyone had work, for Hitler solved the problem of unemployment. They start to play down the fact that many groups of people were not regarded as worthy of benefiting from the welfare system and were instead killed in the camps.

There are not many Holocaust deniers in the Norwegian rightist underground. But there are a lot of activists who are ambivalent about the Holocaust, saying that they are not able to judge how many people were killed and that they will not take a stand about whether "about six million Jews" were murdered.⁷¹ Those who call themselves National Socialists have to take a stand on the Holocaust, because being a National Socialist after the Second World War means that one must either say that the Holocaust was necessary or say, as some German neo-Nazis I interviewed in 1990 did, that "such things always happen when there is a war, however, the Communists kill masses of people also in peacetime."⁷² The only other alternative is to deny the Holocaust.

The point for the Holocaust deniers is that, to follow Jeffrey Kaplan's excellent summation, "if respectable academicians could be convinced that claims of Nazi genocide directed at Jews were exaggerated, then the seamless garment of Jewish claims would unravel and the public would at last see the Jew as does the revisionist: a master conspirator engaged in an age-old Manichaeian battle with the beleaguered forces of righteousness."⁷³ The Holocaust deniers in the Norwegian underground hand out pamphlets written by American revisionists. They also frequently refer to an American "engineer" who has "proved" that it is impossible to kill people in the German concentration camp gas chambers.

Only a few activists explicitly state that they are against democracy, as the Nazis were. Many maintain that democracy is "definite[ly] [the] most justifiable system," because when people themselves get power, the system becomes less corrupt. Others say that they want a state that is more authoritarian than the one we have

today, and they express approval of systems such as apartheid. One activist (age twenty-seven) argues that conditions under apartheid were better than conditions now, because now there is "just anarchy and chaos at all levels." In other words, authoritarian systems secure order.

Many of the activists maintain that Norway today is not a democracy but a "demoncracy." By this they mean that Norway is part of an international conspiracy that propagandizes the ideology of the "colorful community."

THE ZOG THEORY

The most explicitly anti-Semitic views are those held by the National Socialist skinheads who believe in the so-called ZOG theory. According to this theory, the ruling power elite of the world is ZOG (the Zionist Occupation Government), consisting of Zionists and their lackeys, who control most of the levers of power in the world. The alleged goal of this elite is to spread perversion, cruelty, and destruction. The National Socialist skinheads in Norway have adopted the ZOG theory from the former Swedish Vitt Ariskt Motstånd (VAM), who themselves adopted it from the American White Aryan Resistance.⁷⁴ In Sweden this discourse seems to be held with much greater seriousness than it is among rightist activists in Norway.

Norwegian activists often use ZOG and *Jews* as metaphors or internal codes for corruption and the misuse of power. Consequently, it is not necessarily the case that all power is exercised by the Jews and their lackeys. One twenty-four-year-old National Socialist described ZOG in this way: "We call it ZOG, and the Blitz activists call it 'the system.' (But do you mean that it is the Jews and their lackeys?) Jews and Jews. Simply said, there are some ass holes who rule society, and they do not rule to our advantage, therefore they must disappear."⁷⁵ As used here, ZOG is a synonym for "system of power," and *Jews* is an arbitrary synonym for corrupt power-holders. It is understood that the speaker does not really mean that various politicians, regardless of their actual religious affiliation, are Zionists. Rather, *Jew* and *Zionist* in the internal discourse of this activist function as synonyms for everything he does not like. When watching American films on TV, this boy shouts "Jew, Jew" every time a black man appears on the screen!

Many of the National Socialist activists use ZOG to blame "the system" and in addition to glorify heroes with the magic of a mar-

tyr's death. For example, a leading skinhead activist said that Ian Stuart Donaldson was killed by ZOG, not in an ordinary car accident. He used a similar explanation to describe the death of Rudolf Hess, who in his view did not commit suicide but was murdered by ZOG.

When talking to outsiders, some activists seem to take an ironic view of their own belief in ZOG. One activist answered my question about ZOG by laughing, as if to excuse himself, and saying, "I know it sounds crazy, but it is actually true!" Others reacted with withdrawal and grave silence when asked about ZOG. They did not want me to focus too much on this. It is difficult to say how many activists believe in this theory, because so many describe it in a joking way and so many have a pragmatic view of it.

Some older activists emphasize that ZOG theory is true but say that it is difficult to comprehend and not everyone is able to understand it. It is, in other words, an esoteric theory. Only after long and intensive study does it become clear. Everything that some of these activists read in newspapers or learn from other sources can be understood in light of this theory. These ideological activists have collected a range of examples as evidence for ZOG theory. They order books to which they have found references in international National Socialist pamphlets. One of them makes a point of saying that he reads books written by Jews, in which they themselves describe the vast scope of Jewish power. One book, for example, described the contribution of Jews to the building of the modern banking system. This activist also reads the Talmud and finds quotations there that, according to him, show how perverse Jews are.

These activists accept parts of the race ideology of Nazism. They use the expressions "Aryan race" and "Jewish race" and believe the distinctions between these groups are rooted in both psychology and biology. They talk about the need to conserve the purity of the Aryan race. Some of them also believe Jews to be responsible for everything "evil" and relate this belief to political ideologies such as communism, capitalism, and liberalism, and to the Mafia. Others have a more diffuse hatred of Jews.

By adopting ZOG theory, new activists show their determination to persevere. When newcomers after some time begin referring to ZOG, they show their determination to sacrifice much for the movement.⁷⁶ They take the "step out" and "live out their ethnic instincts," in the words of one leading activist.

ZOG theory seems to be attractive to activists mostly because it

offers relatively sophisticated explanations for their feelings of political persecution. They are watched, excluded, and attacked not because of the falseness of their views but because the evil conspirators know that they are right and are determined to fight them and their correct view of the world by all means possible. They regard themselves as brave fighters who want to defend the community and preserve morals, whereas the enemy attempts to lead us all into destruction by internationalism and sexual perversions.

ZOG theory simplifies the world and also legitimates and motivates action. For those activists who believe in it, ZOG becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. In many ways, ZOG is equivalent to what Norwegian criminologist Nils Christie has called "a good enemy."⁷⁷ A good enemy is so diffusely defined that you never know exactly who or where he is. ZOG has the same function as what Max Weber described as *Hinterwelt*, a world with its own logic, acting behind the real world.⁷⁸ ZOG acts like a magical netherworld; it is the factor behind everything.

The rightist activists produce an abstractly defined collective identity that is highly international, based as it is on ideas that are prevalent in the rightist undergrounds of many Western countries. Common to all participants in this discourse is the reference to broad, collective categories such as nation and race. This is a countertrend to various postmodern movements that emphasize the inner self as a road to a better life.⁷⁹ The rightist activists search instead for an ideology that subordinates the self to more vital collective entities such as the group, the nation, and the race.

NOTES

1. I want to thank the following persons for their advice in relation to this article: Jeffrey Kaplan, Heléne Lööw, Tian Sørhaug, Willy Pedersen, Arvid Fennefoss, Tore Bjørgo, and the participants at the workshop "Brotherhoods of Nation and Race," New Orleans, December 1995.

2. I will refer to the subculture as "the rightist underground" because this concept is broad enough to include all of the disparate participants in the far right. When using *underground*, I refer solely to the young generation of participants. Many older exponents of the same views are not "underground" in the same sense, for they take part in parliamentary politics. The term *right-wing* is somewhat inaccurate, because some of the participants adhere to leftist views. However, because the majority consider themselves to be right-wing, I find *right-wing* to be the best term available. This is es-

pecially so as these youngsters are in constant conflict with explicitly left-wing youths, such as the anarchist Blitz youths and the communist Rød Ungdom (Red Youth). For a discussion of the main components of right-wing extremism see Tore Bjørgo (ed.), *Terror from the Extreme Right* (London: Frank Cass, 1995), pp. 2–3.

3. Militant youths from leftist movements and their opponents from the rightist underground have fought each other constantly since the late 1980s. The conflict escalated after the so-called Brumunddal clash in 1991. This event is analyzed by Frøydis Eidheim, "Hva har skjedd i Brumunddal" (What happened in Brumunddal), *NIBR-Report 20* (1996).

4. I have described the content and history of the skinhead subculture in Katrine Fangen, "Tysklands nye ungdom. DDR-ungdom i overgangen til det kapitalistiske samfunn" (The new youths of Germany: DDR-youth in the transition to capitalist society), *UNGforsk Report* (Oslo), no. 5 (1992), and Fangen, "Skinheads i rødt, hvitt og blått. En Sosiologisk studie fra 'innsiden'" (Skinheads in red, white and blue: A sociological study from the "inside"), *UNGforsk Report*, no. 4 (1995).

5. NUNS 88 stands for Norske unge nasjonalsosialister heil Hitler (Young Norwegian National Socialists, Heil Hitler); Norsk Arisk Ungdomsfront is the Norwegian Aryan Youth Front. Group names change rapidly within this underground, and persons drift from one group to another. Thus what I describe is connected more to different trends within the underground than to specific group names.

6. This person is Ole Krogstad, whose control of the record company is a key source of his influence. In keeping with the movement's anti-authoritarian ethos, he does not lead any particular group.

7. I analyze the position and impact of girls in the underground in the article "Separate or Equal—The Emergence of an All-Female Group in the Norwegian Rightist Underground," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 9:3 (1997).

8. The National Socialist skinheads in fact dislike the market liberalism of the Progress Party. They would rather vote for Fedrelandspartiet (Fatherland Party) or for Stopp Innvandringen (Stop Immigration). Some say what they really want is a Labor Party that is against immigration.

9. Letter dated 25 March 1996.

10. Heléne Lööw, "The Cult of Violence: The Swedish Racist Counter-culture," in Tore Bjørgo and Rob Witte (eds.), *Racist Violence in Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).

11. I learned of this agreement at a meeting organized by a local division of Den norske forening in March 1994.

12. Several activists expressed this view in interviews. Some even said that their main political aim was to make people see how much they were persecuted for their rightist views, and that this issue, to show that there is no democracy in Norway, was more important than fighting immigration.

13. Interview with leading Viking activist, 24 April 1996.

14. Lööw, "The Cult of Violence," p. 62.

15. Interview with leading Viking activist, 24 April 1996.

16. The leaderless-resistance concept originated with the American Ku Klux Klan figure Louis Beam and was popularized in William Pierce's novel *Hunter*. See Jeffrey Kaplan, "Leaderless Resistance," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 9:3 (1997).

17. See Combat 18's *International Redwatch* issue no. 1. The leftist underground has also printed "wanted dead" lists of rightist activists. See *Smørstyr* 4 (1992).

18. *Fritt Forum*, no. 2-3 (1996).

19. The Friends of Vidkun (Quisling), Northern Hatred, and Norwegian Legion.

20. Interview in *Stomping Ground* 2 (1993). *Stomping Ground* was a Norwegian skinhead fanzine. It was mostly apolitical, but when political views were present, they represented nationalist or racial discourses.

21. See also Jeffrey Kaplan, "Religiosity and the Radical Right," selection 5 in this volume, regarding the impact of the Zorn 88 leader Erik Rune Hansen internationally.

22. Interview with leading Valkyria activist, 9 March 1996.

23. Vera Oredsson, "Jämställdhet—en nationell produkt?" (Equality [between the sexes]—A national product?), *Nordisk Kamp*, no. 3-4 (1994), pp. 4-5.

24. The fact that ideological proficiency is not a necessary condition for being accepted in the underground was also characteristic of militant left-wing groups such as the Italian Red Brigades of the 1970s, as described by Allison Jamieson in "Entry, Discipline and Exit in the Italian Red Brigades," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 2:1 (Fall 1990), p. 3.

25. See, for example, Ole Krogstad in *Ikke Vold* (Nonviolence, the magazine of the Norwegian section of the War Resisters International) 1 (1996), p. 11. (The Blitz house is a house offered by the municipality to squatters who call themselves anarchists. Various rock groups and cultural organizations are based there.)

26. Nasjonal Samling (National Unification, NS). The Norwegian National Socialist party constituted in 1933 by Vidkun Quisling was the only legal party during the German occupation of Norway. Membership after 4 September 1945 was illegal. I use the term *revisionist* here to point to Norwegian historians who have rewritten the history of the Norwegian NS party. One book that many of the activists have read is Øystein Sørensen, *Hitler eller Quisling. Ideologiske brytninger i Nasjonal Samling 1940-1945* (Hitler or Quisling: Ideological conflicts in national unification, 1940-1945) (Oslo: Cappelen, 1989); another is Hans Fredrik Dahl, *Vidkun Quisling* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1991).

27. From the Viking era, they read mostly primary literature, such as Snorre Sturluson, *Kongesagaer* (The king's sagas) (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1970), and the Eddas. See, for example, Snorre Sturluson, *The Prose Edda* (New York: American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1914). They also read various books from the international white-power underground, which specifically include Holocaust revisionist material.

28. Some study circles have also been organized for the rightist activists

by the philosophy student Andreas Winsnes, who was employed by the Norwegian branch of the War Resistance International.

29. For an example of such a discussion between two activists see *Patrioten* 5 (1996), p. 16.

30. My description of the belief of these young people is based on my conversations with a few Zorn 88 members and on a meeting with some other National Socialist youths, of whom some were members of Zorn 88, in April 1996, in a study circle arranged by A. Winsnes.

31. Tore Bjørgo, "Militant Neo-Nazism in Sweden," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 5 (Autumn 1993), p. 36.

32. Interview, 23 April 1996.

33. Bjørgo points to a contrast between those activists who believe in a Muslim conspiracy and those who believe in a Jewish conspiracy. According to Bjørgo, there is a difference in the degree of radicalization between these two layers of activists, but the main lines of argumentation and the practical conclusions drawn from them are similar. Tore Bjørgo, "Extreme Nationalism and Violent Discourses in Scandinavia: 'The Resistance,' 'Traitors,' and 'Foreign Invaders,'" *Terrorism and Political Violence* 7:1 (Spring 1995), pp. 205–206.

34. Ibid.

35. Interview, 22 January 1994.

36. Interview, 26 October 1993.

37. Interview, 27 August 1993.

38. Phil Cohen, "Monstrous Images, Perverse Reasons: Cultural Studies in Anti-Racist Education," *Working Paper*, no. 11 (London: Centre for Multicultural Education, Institute of Education, University of London, 1991), p. 14.

39. Interview, 27 August 1993.

40. Heléne Lööw, "Racist Violence and Criminal Behavior in Sweden: Myths and Reality," in Bjørgo, *Terror from the Extreme Right*, p. 127.

41. Ehud Sprinzak, "Right-Wing Terrorism in a Comparative Perspective: The Case of Split Delegitimization," *ibid.*, p. 22.

42. Cohen, "Monstrous Images, Perverse Reasons," p. 13.

43. Bjørgo analyzes this sort of rhetoric in detail in "Extreme Nationalism and Violent Discourses."

44. Sørensen, *Hitler eller Quisling*.

45. *Ung Front* (Young Front) 2 (1992). This nationalist skinhead fanzine existed until 1995.

46. *Ung Front* 2 (1992).

47. Interview, 11 August 1993.

48. *Racism* is often strictly defined as "the connection of biological dispositions in humans with moral dispositions." In the old sense, racism is a belief in the superiority of one particular race, and prejudice based on this conception. Racism is also a theory that human abilities and other characteristics are determined by race. In the course of the last ten years this strict definition has usually been supplemented by "new racism," "cultural racism," or "symbolic racism." Martin Barker introduced the term "new racism" to describe prejudices that do not explicitly assume the superiority of one race but rather support the view that immigration is bad because it will

lead to cultural conflicts. See Martin Barker, *The New Racism* (London: Junction Books, 1981).

49. Robert Miles, *Racism After "Race Relations"* (London: Routledge, 1993). See also Robert Miles, *Racism* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 65.

50. Phil Cohen, in his study of British racist youth, gives a quite similar description: "They imagine themselves to be a beleaguered and oppressed minority victimized by this all-powerful conspiracy between the white liberal establishment and the various immigrant communities." Phil Cohen, "It's Racism What Dunit: Hidden Narratives in Theories of Racism," in James Donald and Ali Rattansi, *Race, Culture and Difference* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1992), p. 90.

51. Interview, 9 March 1996.

52. Interview, 11 August 1993.

53. Here they are very much in line with an international trend within white-supremacist movements—to speak of the ethnically homogeneous community as being defined by the "Law of Nature" and to believe that a racial instinct is slumbering within every human being. See Lööw, "Racist Violence and Criminal Behavior," p. 127. The Norwegian activists seem to have picked up this discourse through various sources, both from their Swedish comrades and from their reading of international white-power fanzines or other similar documents.

54. I have described these perspectives in a report on the history of racism; see Katrine Fangen, "The History and Prehistory of Racism," *SFDH-Report* (Sogndal, 1993).

55. Interview, 26 February 1994.

56. Another reaction along the same line is Ole Krogstad's advertisement that states that he rents out a flat in a guaranteed "racist zone" in Hokksund. This is a counterreaction to leftist youths' declaration of several schools and local communities as "anti-racist zones."

57. This is thoroughly analyzed by Bjørge, "Extreme Nationalism and Violent Discourses," p. 190.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 199.

59. Division S, "Säggra eller dö," *Classic Swedish Oi* (Ragnarök Records, 1995).

60. Lööw, "The Cult of Violence," p. 63.

61. Anna-Lena Lodenius and Stieg Larsson, *Extremhögern* (The extreme right) (Stockholm: Tiden Förlag, 1991), pp. 92–95.

62. Lööw, "The Cult of Violence," p. 125.

63. *Ibid.*

64. *Einherjer 1* (1996), p. 16.

65. *Ibid.*

66. The following discussion of the varying degrees to which the activists correspond to Nazism is based on the Norwegian philosopher Harald Ofstad's categorization of the different components of Nazism as they are expressed in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. See Harald Ofstad, *Our Contempt for Weakness: Nazi Norms and Values—and Our Own* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1989).

67. Interview with leading Viking activist, 23 April 1996.

68. Some of the activists who are members of the Viking group, however, have upper-working-class or middle-class backgrounds, and a couple of these activists also educate themselves at the college and university level.

69. *Ragnarok*, no. 11. This militantly anti-Semitic fanzine presented "facts" about Jews and poems from old Viking sagas. It has been replaced by *Einherjer*.

70. Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (1957; reprint, New York: Paladin, 1972).

71. Interview with Valkyria girl, 9 March 1996.

72. Interview, 5 December 1990.

73. Kaplan, "Right-Wing Violence in North America," in Bjørgo, *Terror from the Extreme Right*, p. 70.

74. According to Tore Bjørgo, Swedish neo-Nazis used the term ZOG for the first time in the skinhead magazine *Vit Rebell* in 1989, whereas in Norway it appeared for the first time in the skinhead magazine *Bootboys* in October 1991. See Bjørgo, "Extreme Nationalism and Violent Discourses," p. 216. The ZOG discourse was developed and disseminated in the late 1970s and 1980s by several American racist and Christian Identity organizations. See Sprinzak, "Right-Wing Terrorism in a Comparative Perspective," p. 26.

75. Interview, 26 February 1994.

76. Jamieson, "Entry, Discipline and Exit in the Italian Red Brigades."

77. Nils Christie and Kjetil Bruun, *Den gode fiende. Narkotikapolitikk i Norden* (The good enemy: Drug politics in the Nordic countries) (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1985).

78. For a discussion of Weber's *Hinterwelt* concept, see Tian Sørhaug, *Fornuftens fantasier* (The fantasies of the reason) (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1996).

79. Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (London: Polity Press, 1991).