

## Hate-baiting: The radical right and ‘fifth column discourse’ in European and American democracies today

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### Abstract

Modern politics relies enormously upon shaping ‘the message’ toward targeted constituencies. Whether it’s Labour’s ‘Controls on Immigration’ or the Tories’ ‘blue-collar cabinet’ on either side of the recent 2015 General Election in Britain, reaching beyond a core ‘base’ of activists is now widely recognised as a key ingredient to political success. Whilst being ‘on message’ can be seen to be problematic for all political movements and organisations, it has special challenges for radical right movements. This short article presents a survey of some of the issues at play in terms of the post-war radical right, before focussing on two ‘doublespeak’ tactics – namely ‘metonymy’ and ‘inversion’ – as they are exemplified in the LaRouche organisation, deriving its name from the American political activist Lyndon LaRouche. There are a number of aspects are touched upon in this context, although discussion will be largely placed upon ‘coded’ anti-Semitic rhetoric since 1945, as well as postwar denial of the Holocaust. This overview argues, above all, that the variegated forces of ethno-nationalism have found novel and innovative ways to adapt in, and to, the 21st century. Indeed, the modes of expression employed in the process of re-framing radical right politics – often leading to the development of public messages that differ markedly to ‘backstage’ ideas – is an increasingly important area for scholarly enquiry.

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If vigilance was only a game of recognizing something already well-known, then it would only be a question of remembering.

- Pierre-Andre Taguieff<sup>1</sup>

Being ‘on message’ is no less vital for mainstream politicians in Europe and the US today than it has been for the radical right, even if this is manifested in a much different way. For the latter network of groups – typically characterised by ethno-nationalism, prejudice against scapegoated minorities and aggressive populism (Wodak, 2015) –

the issue is ultimately simpler: veil your true colours. Radical right activists have long tended toward racism or xenophobia and, since 1945, as this article will stress, are frequently sympathetic to fascism and to anti-Semitic ploys like Holocaust denial (or it’s cousin, Holocaust ‘revisionism’).<sup>2</sup> In postwar Europe and the US, these views are not vote-winners. In consequence, the radical right in both continents has had to go much further in ‘shaping the message’ than mere political triangulation – something perhaps better described as ‘fifth column discourse’; a deceptive rhetoric and organisational self-

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<sup>1</sup> Pierre Andre-Taguieff, cited in Feldman ed., 2008 (xxvi). This text was originally presented at the Institute for Race Relations’ one-day seminar, ‘Cults, Racism, Doublespeak and the Search for Justice’, 22 May 2015, and partially reprinted by *Fair Observer* on 9 August 2015 as “Doublespeak: Radical Right Rhetoric Today”. I am grateful to Dr Martin O’Brien and the anonymous readers for their helpful comments on earlier iterations of this text.

<sup>2</sup> For further analysis of this neglected issue, see the following recent studies: Andrea Mammone (2009). “The Eternal Return ? Faux Populism and Contemporarization of Neo-Fascism across Britain, France and Italy”, in the *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 17/2, pp. 171–192; C. Wood & W. M.L. Finlay (2008). “British National Party representations of Muslims in the month after the London bombings: homogeneity, threat, and the conspiracy tradition”, in *The British Journal of Social Psychology*, 47/4 (2008), pp. 707–26; and Pedro Zúquete (2008). “The European extreme-right and Islam: New directions?” in *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 13(3), 321–344.

ensorship by an extremist party that is sanitised in order to challenge liberal democracy from within. By no means limited to a single movement or even ideology, it is nevertheless the case that a 'mainstreaming' of previously 'taboo' (Kallis, 21) racial and religious prejudices has been a sustained and significant project for contemporary radical right discourse for decades.

The term 'fifth column' was first attributed to a Nationalist general during the opening months of the Spanish Civil War. As his army converged on Madrid in October 1936, Emilio Mola Vidal claimed to have four columns of troops surrounding the city, with a fifth column inside the city itself, in order to attack it from within. Extending this term, 'fifth column discourse' suggests a rhetorical Trojan horse, intended to bring an enemy down from within; in this case, by mimicking the language of liberal democracy. Exemplifying this longstanding phenomenon is the one-time openly neo-fascist, Nick Griffin, the recently-deposed leader of the British National Party – to date the UK's most successful radical right party. He called this embrace of euphemistic language "verbal judo" shortly after taking over leadership of the BNP in 1999:

Of course, we must teach the truth to the hardcore [... but] when it comes to influencing the public, forget about racial differences, genetics, Zionism, historical revisionism and so on [...] It's time to use the weight of democracy's own myths and expectations against it by side-stepping and using verbal judo techniques.<sup>3</sup>

This separation between 'hardcore' revolutionary rightists and 'the public' was clearly identified in Cas Mudde's landmark study, *The Ideology of the Extreme Right*, which noted that such groups

typically have a more "moderate 'frontstage'" intended for public consumption and "a radical 'back-stage'" (2000: 20) targeted at neo-fascist activists. Even earlier, another scholar on radical right ideology, Roger Eatwell, noted an "exoteric" and "esoteric" division in the 1980s National Front (1996: 100), one that doubtless also extending to the BNP in the early 1990s, when it won its first council seat under the 1990s "rights for whites" banner in London's Tower Hamlets. Applying this formula to the party as a whole under his "modernising" leadership, Nick Griffin's understanding of "verbal judo" was made abundantly clear exactly a decade later. In April 2009, a leaked internal document in the lead-up to the European elections that May was circulated, under the revealing title '[BNP Language and Concepts Discipline Manual](#)'.

As this document makes plain, when the first of your 13 internal rules is "We are not a 'racist' or 'racial' party" (just "ethno-nationalist"), it likely means you have something to hide. Some of the BNP's other 'rules' are equally telling in terms of "verbal judo", exoteric/esoteric, front-stage/backstage – or one wishes to call this turn toward euphemism; one that is seductive in deploying the language of inclusion and democracy for xenophobic and illiberal ends; one that is often populist in appealing to 'the mass', but one that is actively deceptive of its ulterior aims. For these radical right ideologues and movements, in short, leopards have not changed their spots so much as finding better cover. In looking into the varying shades of this 'cover', the present article will survey some of the principal developments in this 'fifth column discourse' as it relates to the post-war radical right. To be sure, there are a number of other ideologies, events and contexts that might be cited here – in particular, the recent [rise of anti-Muslim hatred](#) – even if the more historical aim here is to

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<sup>3</sup> Nick Griffin, cited in Feldman and Paul Jackson, 2014, (11).

identify some of the more salient euphemistic patterns in radical right rhetoric since 1945.

First of all: why 1945? To start off with, the scale of defeat of the Axis powers – and with it any overt support for extreme right views in Europe and the US – made that ideology wholly toxic. While long associated with violence and militarism, fascist praxis swiftly became synonymous with brutality and extermination in the European and American mind. And for good reason: 50 million dead in Europe, six million of them Jews, systematically murdered in specially-constructed death chambers in the so-called 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question'. Put simply, 'classic' fascism of Nazism's and Fascism's stripe was so wholly discredited – and in many parts of Europe, illegal – after 1945, that politically drawing upon its legacy was simply impossible. To this day, the image of Hitler is often synonymous with 'evil' in the public mind.

Some of the more forward-looking members of the 'old guard', like Oswald Mosley in Britain or Maurice Bardèche in France, realised that, at the very least, the outward trappings of fascism – the shirts and rallies, the overt anti-Semitism and revolutionary politics – needed to be consigned to socio-political history. Bardèche, for one, maintained in his 1962 *What is Fascism? [Qu'est-ce que le fascisme?]*:

The single party, the secret police, the public displays of Caesarism, even the presence of a Führer are not necessarily attributes of fascism, let alone the reactionary thrust of political alliances [...] The famous fascist methods are constantly revised and will continue to be revised. More important than the mechanism is the idea which fascism has created for itself of man and freedom [...] With another name, another face, and with nothing

which betrays the projection from the past, with the form of a child we do not recognize and the head of a young Medusa, the Order of Sparta will be reborn.<sup>4</sup>

To remain with France for a moment, where what matured into fascist ideology after the slaughter of the Great War had been incubated by the likes of Georges Sorel or Charles Maurras's Action Française, a new type of radical right politics gradually emerged, taking Bardèche's warnings to heart. In the words of a leading scholar of the French radical right, Jens Rydgren (2005):

an innovative master frame was constructed in France during the late 1970's and early 1980's, and was made known as a successful frame in connection with the electoral breakthrough of the Front National in 1984. As the old master frame of the extreme right [...] was rendered impotent by the outcome of the Second World War, it took the extreme right a long time to establish a new, potent master frame that simultaneously met the conditions of: being flexible enough to fit (in modified form) different political and cultural contexts; sufficiently resonated with the lived experiences, attitudes and preconceptions of many people [...] and was sufficiently free from stigma. The master frame combining ethnonationalist, cultural racism and anti-political establishment populism met these requirements.

This euphemistic 'master frame' met with surprising success in 1984, when a suited Jean-Marie Le Pen appeared on French television to discuss his party, the Front National. Crucially, he came across reasonably in advancing prejudicial ideas. In keeping with this new shift of emphasis on mainstream

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<sup>4</sup> Maurice Bardèche, cited in Griffin ed., 1995 (318ff).

discourse, rather than engaging in anti-Semitic conspiracism, in [1987 Le Pen notoriously declared](#): “I’m not saying the gas chambers didn’t exist. I haven’t seen them myself. I haven’t particularly studied the question. But I believe it’s just a detail in the history of World War II”. He was convicted in France and, later, in Germany, for these and similar remarks, [which he reiterated earlier this year](#). This was classic dog-whistle politics for the ‘hardcore’, while at the same time not attempting to deny, just ‘revise’, public understandings of the Holocaust. One explanation for Jean-Marie’s recent reiteration of Holocaust revisionism is that his daughter, Marine – who now leads the party he founded in 1972 – has moved in a still more publicly moderate direction, shifting her focus (as has been common amongst the [‘new far right’](#) over the last generation) away from anti-Semitism and toward anti-Muslim prejudice, immigration and hostility to the EU. As a result, Jean-Marie Le Pen was ultimately expelled from the FN by his daughter who, on one hand, he has disowned, and on the other, now leads perhaps the largest political party in France, boasting of 23 MEPs since the 2014 European elections. Testifying to the success of their ‘fifth column discourse’, the Front National received more than 25% of the vote share in regional elections in December 2015, and despite failing to win any of the 12 ‘super-regions’ nonetheless polled nearly [7 million votes](#).

From this new ideological sleight-of-hand also emerged the public stirrings of Holocaust denial less than a generation after WWII, which tried to sanitise fascism and especially Nazism by claiming to ‘debunk’ the Holocaust narrative. At first, writes Sir Richard Evans, their writings were instead “mostly distributed by mail order,” and of a calibre that “seemed to belong in the world of sensational newspapers such as you could buy in American supermarkets, recounting the experiences of people who had been abducted by little green aliens or who had seen Elvis Presley still alive.” (2001: 107-8) A

classic example is the 1974 pamphlet called *Did Six Million Really Die?*, written by ‘Richard Harwood’, a pseudonym for the neo-Nazi National Front deputy chairman Richard Verrall. Britain’s NF was thoroughly anti-Semitic. Such anti-Jewish hatred, in fact, takes us back to the wartime Holocaust: the most totalising expression of anti-Semitic hatred, and of genocide, in history. It bears remembering that the first people going to great lengths to deny extermination of Europe’s Jews were the Nazis and their wartime collaborators. For it was elites in the Third Reich that destroyed evidence, ranging from documents to crematoria; they [exhumed and burned](#) already-desecrated corpses; and they kept the existence of their horrors as great a secret as possible during the Second World War.

These early Holocaust deniers were clearly writing from within an anti-Semitic framework, typically alleging Jewish conspiracies to invent, inflate or exploit the Shoah. Yet here too, ‘fifth column discourse’ was able to wrap the message in superficially innocuous language. Think of the Institute for Historical Review, a clearing-house of nearly 4 decades for well-circulated, now online, Holocaust ‘revisionism’. Scarcely by coincidence, the organisation’s longstanding acronym has been IHR: all too easily confused with London’s renowned Institute for Historical Research – and deliberately so (the web address of the former is [www.ihr.org](http://www.ihr.org), while that for the latter is [www.ihr.ac.uk](http://www.ihr.ac.uk)). The Institute for Historical Review is currently directed by Mark Weber, earlier of the white supremacist, anti-Semitic National Alliance; moreover, from 1978 he helped edit the movement’s openly fascist journal, *National Vanguard*. Styling himself as a disinterested ‘historian’, in 2012 Weber described Holocaust memorialisation [in the following terms](#):

Lurid falsehood and outright lies are routinely promoted, even by supposedly reputable media, as part of the seemingly endless

campaign of 'Holocaust Remembrance' [...] Such historical deceit is a routine part of the relentless 'Holocaust' campaign, which plays such an important role in our society because it's an expression of Jewish-Zionist power, and is meant to further Jewish-Zionist interests.

Still more recently, Weber appeared in London at an April 2015 meeting of more than 100 fellow "[Nazi sympathisers, Holocaust deniers and their supporters from across the world](#)", where he gave a speech entitled "The Challenge of Jewish-Zionist Power".

Without doubt, the gold standard of historical deceivers, David Irving, had long been a denier of the Holocaust – calling it an Allied "propaganda exercise" – but crucially, posed as a reasonable, "revisionist" historian while doing so (his books are heavily laden with footnotes, academic jargon and other forms of intellectual camouflage). Irving had an important fringe following in the 1980s and 1990s, especially among the radical right, when he sued Penguin Books and Deborah Lipstadt for libel after she claimed, in her 1993 *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*, that Irving was an influential mouthpiece for Holocaust denial.

A famous case in 1996 then saw several historians of Nazism and the Holocaust testify for the defense, including the aforementioned Richard Evans, who concluded:

The supposed evidence for the Nazis' wartime mass murder of millions of Jews by gassing and other means, he [Irving] claims, was fabricated after the war. He has referred repeatedly to the 'Holocaust myth' and the 'Holocaust

legend' and has described himself as engaged in a 'refutation of the Holocaust story.'<sup>5</sup>

After a four-month trial, it was found that "Irving had 'significantly' misrepresented, misconstrued, omitted, mistranslated, misread and applied double standards to the historical evidence in order to achieve his ideological presentation of history". [Judge Gray's ruling](#) also found that Irving was an "active Holocaust denier; that he is anti-Semitic and racist, and that he associates with right-wing extremists who promote neo-Nazism." In attempting to invert the role of Nazis and Jews, then, this most sophisticated of Holocaust 'revisionists' was shown to be a fraud shaping historical evidence for ideological ends.

As this suggests, anti-Semitic conspiracy theories have remained an essential recourse for radical right movements in this century. For instance, commenting upon the German radical right scene in 2002, a report by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution maintained that hatred of Jews remained an "essential ideological ingredient of the radical right" in Germany – but with this caveat:

Although all relevant extreme right parties and factions work with anti-Semitic stereotypes, and anti-Jewish feeling is always present, no organization has hitherto placed the central focus of their propaganda on anti-Semitism. Recently, however, the use of anti-Semitic stereotypes has increased. Putative taboo-breakers could (unintentionally) break the 'communication latency' down.<sup>6</sup>

Bearing in mind this persistence of anti-Jewish stereotyping, the remainder of this article will move across the Atlantic in order to consider an

<sup>5</sup> Richard Evans, cited in "David Irving, Hitler and Holocaust Denial: Electronic Edition", *Holocaust Denial on Trial*, available online at: [www.hdot.org/en/trial/defense/evans/360.html](http://www.hdot.org/en/trial/defense/evans/360.html); all websites last accessed 27/9/15.

<sup>6</sup> Cited in Botsch and Kopke, 2014 (209).

emblematic case study in this 'communication latency'. Indicative of this sheep's clothing is a political activist that notoriously declared in the late 1970s:

It is not necessary to wear brown shirts to be a fascist [...] it is not necessary to wear a swastika to be a fascist [...] It is not necessary to call oneself a fascist to be a fascist. It is simply necessary to be one!

This quotation forms the [frontispiece to Dennis King's 1989 exposé of this man, aptly titled \*Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism\*](#). Charting the development of LaRouche's charismatic domination over his veritable political cult, from its left-wing origins to an embrace of radical right milieux in the 1970s, King's "Afterword" concludes: "As early as 1976-77, recognition that LaRouche had gone fascist could be found in places as diverse as the newsletter of the Christian anti-Communist Crusade and the Op-Ed page of *The Washington Post*" (1989: 372). Likewise in 2003, Helen Gilbert described LaRouche in the following terms:

There's something strange and cultish about LaRouche—but it's hard to figure out exactly what he's up to. Much of his message appears to be innocuous, kooky,

contradictory, esoteric or shamelessly inflammatory. But underneath the weirdness lies a radical right worldview [...] LaRouche's brand of politics both employs standard elements of fascism and revisions that may initially throw some people off track. (5-6)

Similar views by experts abound on the inflammatory activist and eight time Presidential hopeful – running seven of those times on the democratic ticket – which tend to emphasise his coded anti-Semitism and oftentimes-bizarre talking-points (such as the Queen of England allegedly running the global drugs trade).<sup>7</sup>

In the main, LaRouche's idiosyncrasies have often seen him dismissed as a fringe figure, allowing him to build a substantial intelligence gathering organisation; an international network of affiliated groups with hundreds – at times perhaps thousands – of dedicated, cult-like followers; and an outsized propaganda arm. To be sure, when it comes to the LaRouche group, there is no shortage of material: publishing is one thing this movement does exceedingly well. For example, the following are a few recent or ongoing publications owing fealty to the convicted fraudster: the *New Federalist*

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<sup>7</sup> Over the years a diverse group of organisations have adjudged the LaRouche movement to be akin to a radical right political cult that is, at core, anti-Semitic. For the US-based Anti-Defamation League, LaRouche is a "longtime anti-Semitic conspiracy theorist" and, in the words of ADL President Abe Foxman, is "a man who has a long track record of anti-Semitic fear mongering". The *Encyclopedia Judaica* defines LaRouche as a "notorious anti-Semite" whose "international organization" is today a "major source of [...] masked antisemitic theories globally". Also in the US, Chip Berlet, a long-standing LaRouche watcher, likewise asserts: "The LaRouche organization is currently the world's largest distributor of literature based on 'coded anti-Semitism', rooted in the false allegation of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion."

In Germany, as early as 1994 the Bundestag described LaRouche's political arm based in Wiesbaden, Civil Rights Solidarity Movement, (Bürgerrechtsbewegung Solidarität, or *BüSo*), as a "political sect". German Green MP Hans Christian Ströbele later characterised the German organisation as "anti-Semitic and extremely right-wing". In similar vein, Germany's *Aktion für Geistige und Psychische Freiheit Bundesverband Sekten-und Psychomarktberatung e.V.* considers the LaRouche movement in Germany to be "part of a political sect which aims at completely capturing its members through conspiracy theories and anti-Semitic content." With respect to the LaRouche movement's activities in Australia, operating as the Citizens Electoral Council, Dr Paul Gardner, Chairman of the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation Commission in Australia, maintains that the "LaRouche organisation spreads anti-Semitic propaganda throughout the world and in many place acts like a cult group which attempts to indoctrinate young people with its ideology. They are accused of propagating incitement to hatred towards the Jews, the British and the Anti-Defamation League. Coupled with this they stand accused of using sinister secretive methods of recruitment."



newspaper (defunct as of spring 2006) and its predecessor, *New Solidarity*; *Nouvelle Solidarité*, *Neue Solidarität*, *Executive Alert Service*, *Executive Intelligence Review*, *21st Century Science & Technology* and its predecessor, *Fusion*; *The Campaigner* (now defunct) and its successor, *Fidelio* (also defunct), *Ibykus*, *The New Citizen* (Australia).

Over the years, these publications have evolved a sophisticated method of encoding their anti-Semitism and revolutionary politics. As with the radical right more broadly, this rhetorical throwing “some people off track” best comes into focus by taking the long view. In this vein, two methods applied by the LaRouche movement will be examined in the remainder of this article as exemplars of this radical right manipulation of language, especially as it relates to anti-Semitism and ‘Holocaust revisionism’. The first, innovative method by LaRouche might be dubbed *metonymy*; that is, using individual Jews as shorthand for the entire group. Joseph Goebbels was particularly skilled at this technique, singling out the Jewish deputy police chief in Weimar Berlin, Bernhard Weiss, calling him “Isidor” in the Nazi paper *Der Angriff* [The Attack]. According to Peter Longerich’s recent study of Goebbels,

this distorted image of ‘Isidor Weiss’ was to pillory the alleged dominance of “the Jews” in the Weimar “system”. Under the steady barrage of this smear campaign, the person of Weiss became a type and the name ‘Isidor Weiss’ a byword. This confirmed the motto with which Goebbels prefaced [one of his] Isidor book[s]: ‘Isidor: not a person or an individual in the legal sense. Isidor is a type, a mentality, a face. (94; emphasis added)

Returning to the postwar period, some of LaRouche’s preferred bêtes noires have long included

Henry Kissinger, Leo Strauss the Rothschilds and other prominent Jews. When paired next to more familiar forms of encoded language, such as reference to “special interests” or “international financiers”, these anti-Semitic tropes can be bewildering, and difficult to detect for a ‘front-stage’ audience; yet at the same time, appealing to more informed activists ‘backstage’. To return to the words of LaRouche’s biographer in 2009, Dennis King, [20 years after the publication of his exposé](#):

*Anti-Semitism lies at the core of LaRouche’s beliefs.* He uses a mixture of hate and scorn; thinly-veiled euphemisms and conspiracy theories involving Jewish banking families. His methods are to build up *prominent Jews as symbolic hate figures*, developing new forms of ‘blood libel’, and the concoction of the myth of an evil ‘oligarchy’ – also known as the ‘Zionist-British organism’, the ‘Venetian party’ or simply ‘the British’. This ‘oligarchy’ is the target of the LaRouche organization’s most violent abuse; naming them as utterly evil and parasitical (emphasis added).

The second of these linguistic techniques can be called *inversion*; that is, calling others fascists and Nazis. This has the effect of discrediting opponents, while distancing one’s own position from the radical right. Amongst the clearest examples of this tactic was furnished by the aforementioned Nick Griffin in 2007, then head of the BNP. Having been invited to debate alongside David Irving at the Oxford Union Society, he found the event disrupted by protesters who he described as “a mob which would kill.” [Griffin went on to add](#): “Had they grown up in Nazi Germany they would have been splendid Nazis.” While this may have been an opportunistic comment at the time, this paradigm is a recurrent one amongst radical right ideologues. In thus hoping to shed light on these two general techniques in the

radical right's 'fifth column discourse', namely *metonymy* and *inversion*, the following case study attempts to put some flesh on these elements by identifying the progressive encoding of demonising language by the LaRouche movement, from the 1970s to the 2010s.

Amongst the scores of articles and editorials assembled by the anti-LaRouche website, [LaRouche Planet](http://laroucheplanet.info), LaRouche's main publishing arm, *New Solidarity*, offers the an array of revealing publications. Consider the following, pretty unreconstructed radical right language in 1978:

America must be cleansed for its righteous war by the immediate elimination of the Nazi Jewish Lobby and other British agents from the councils of government, industry, and labor.<sup>8</sup>

That same year, one of increased contact with Willis Carto, the notorious anti-Semite and founder of the aforementioned Institute for Historical Review, LaRouche's language started to become increasingly veiled in terms of anti-Semitism:

Even on a relative scale, what the Nazis did to Jewish victims was mild compared with the virtual extermination of gypsies and the butchery of Communists. The point is that Adolf Hitler was put into power largely on the initiative of the Rothschilds, Warburgs and Oppenheimers, among other Jewish and non-Jewish financial interests centered in the City of London [...] The Jews who did die at the hands of Nazism were the victims of fascism, the victims of the Schactian form of "fiscal austerity." The "Holocaust" simply

proves that the failure of the Nuremberg tribunal to hang Hjalmar Schacht made the whole proceeding a travesty of justice. The murderers of the million and a half or more Jews who died in the "holocaust" are any group, Jewish or non-Jewish, which supported then or now the policies advocated by Felix Rohatyn or Milton Friedman. Either you, as a Jew, join with the U.S. Labor Party to stop Rohatyn, Friedman the Mont Pelerin Society now, or you are implicitly just as guilty of the death of millions of Jews as Adolf Hitler.<sup>9</sup>

As noted above, these views unmistakably attempt to refute central aspects of the Holocaust: to marginalise suffering, relativise guilt, question facts, and shift blame away from the perpetrators of the Holocaust. Secondly, they try to sanitise fascist practice by referring to one's enemies as Nazis, fascists, or totalitarians. Through this technique of inversion, fascism's crimes are both normalised and applied to perceived enemies.

Finally, LaRouche's rhetoric makes use of individual Jews as anti-Semitic code: reference to Rohatyn and Friedman above, therefore, can be usefully understood as a symbolic metonymy for Jews generally. In this way, anti-Semites deliberately disguise their attacks on Judaism by singling out 'bad' Jews – wealthy or powerful individuals, political supporters of Zionism and, of course, anything relating to Israel (which is consistently portrayed in LaRouche propaganda as a Nazi-like regime). As a result, actual fascist and Nazi actions – especially the Final Solution – are systematically trivialised; they return within the boundaries of normal human activity. Likewise, enemies are vilified and

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<sup>8</sup> Lyndon LaRouche, "A War-Winning Strategy", *New Solidarity*, 21 March 1978, online at: <http://laroucheplanet.info/pmwiki/pmwiki.php?n=Library.Awarwinningstrategy>

<sup>9</sup> Lyndon LaRouche, "New Pamphlet to Document Cult Origins of Zionism", *New Solidarity*, 8 December 1978, p.3, available online at: <http://laroucheplanet.info/pmwiki/pmwiki.php?n=Library.CultOriginsofZionism3>.



demonised: they are the ones considered to be conspirators and genocidaires; the very embodiment of evil. These individuals are typically Jews prominent in public life. To again cite LaRouche's "[New Pamphlet to Document Cult Origins of Zionism](#)" from 1978:

The impassioned sophistry which the Zionist demagogue offers to all foolish enough to be impressed with such hoaxes is the "holocaust" thesis: that the culmination of the persecution of the Jews in the Nazi holocaust proves that Zionism is so essential to 'Jewish survival' that any sort of criminal activity is justified against anti-Zionists in memory of the 'six million.' This is worse than sophistry. It is a lie. True, about a million and a half Jews did die as a result of the Nazi policy of labor-intensive "appropriate technology" for the employment of "inferior races", a small fraction of the tens of millions of others, especially Slavs, who were murdered in the same way that Jewish refugee Felix Rohatyn and others of his ilk propose to revive today.

In this reading, "Zionists" act as the *real* Nazis, and combatting them is the task for 'humanism'. For LaRouche, a nefarious oligarchy (identified as a Jewish-British conspiracy earlier put forward by a number of early and mid 20th century American racists, most prominently 'Cincinnatus' and Francis Parker Yockey) lies at the root of the world's problems. To again return to New Solidarity in 1978, this time from a different text:

At this late hour each delay brings us closer to holocaust. America must be cleansed for its righteous war by the immediate elimination of the Nazi Jewish Lobby and other British agents from the councils of government, industry, and labour.

[President] Carter must be forced to carry out this task by the public emergence of a Labour Party lobby. Competent and committed to save this world that Britain has once again brought to the brink of destruction. War against Kissinger, Brzezinski, and British oligarchical Nazis is a just war.

The message should be clear, and was repeated for years by LaRouche with growing sophistication. A few decades later, and LaRouche is still at it – the same radical right ideology, albeit with more encoded language. Thus in 2003, [LaRouche's "Physical Geometry as Strategy"](#) declared:

Who's behind it? The people I referred to, in January 2001: the independent central-banking-system crowd, the slime-mold. The financier interests. The same type of financier interests: descendants of the same interests that were behind the Hitler project, when the head of the Bank of England, backed by Harriman money, and by the grandfather of the present President of the United States, moved the money to refinance the Nazi Party, and the pressure to bring Hitler to power, on Jan. 30, 1933: This is what is happening now.

The world is thus divided into two — the enemy, characterised as implacably evil (the 'financier interests and their Jewish agents) — and the putative saviors of humanity; namely, LaRouche and his fanatical followers. Major world events, like September 11th, 2001, are consequently viewed through the prism of a global conspiracy, of which only LaRouche is fully cognisant. From the same year, consider "[War, Hitler and Cheney](#)":

The Nazi-like doctrine adopted by the Bush administration—merely the lackeys of the

circles of influence emanating from Leo Strauss are hell bent on war and destruction along Nazi lines and what faces the world is “virtually endless world war” unless stopped.

LaRouche clearly blames Leo Strauss for the growth of Nazism and Hitler’s rise to power: Strauss was the evil one, not Hitler:

All too obviously, the leading war-makers inside the Bush Administration today are mere lackeys, nasty pimps like the Leporello of Mozart’s famous opera [Don Giovanni—ed.]. These real-life Leporellos such as the politically pimpish Wolfowitz and Ashcroft, were spawned, chiefly, by Chicago University [sic] and associated circles of a prominent fascist ideologue, the late Professor Leo Strauss. This Strauss was a follower of the Carl Schmitt who crafted the law under which Hitler became dictator of Germany; so are Strauss’s ardent followers inside the Bush Administration today. This fascist, Strauss, who created Wolfowitz, was imported to the U.S. from the Germany of Carl Schmitt and Hitler-midwife Hjalmar Schacht.

Allegedly once in America, Leo Strauss influenced rich Jews, British agents, and politicians, including, of course, the “neo-conservatives”. The following is from “[Insanity as Geometry](#)”, also published in April 2003:

That new Reichstag Fire of which I warned in that January 2001 address, actually came, less than nine months later, on Sept. 11, 2001. Like Hitler’s Reichstag fire of 1933, the Sept. 11, 2001 attack was exploited by Vice President Dick Cheney and such followers of the Nazi-like Professor Leo Strauss as Attorney-General John Ashcroft, to unleash

an attempted step-wise, fascist takeover of the U.S.A. from within. That incident of Sept. 11, 2001 was then used to unleash a campaign of international world-wide warfare, warfare modelled on Athens’ tragic folly of the Peloponnesian war, and on such Classically fascist precedents as those of the Roman Caesars, the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, and Adolf Hitler. Thus, the ideology of that thieving, imperial outlook of Cheney and his fascist Chicken-hawks, now combines the nuclear ‘preventive war’ dogmas of Bertrand Russell with the imported Nietzschean mode of fascist ideology of Germany’s Carl Schmitt, Martin Heidegger, and Leo Strauss.

Amongst a number of “symbolic” Jewish targets, Strauss is accused by LaRouche of facilitating Hitler’s rise to power, of having been involved in Sept. 11th, and of promoting alleged Israeli inhumanity. That same year, moreover, exactly 70 years after Goebbels organised the burning of Jewish and other “decadent” books in 1933, the LaRouche Youth Movement published a text called “[Burn the Textbooks](#)” shortly after a youth training and “pedagogical” weekend in Germany at the end of May 2003. It is difficult to view this move as pure coincidence, or to mistake the echo of fascism.

For LaRouche it is the British, Jews and their supporters who stand accused of being fascists and Nazis; and of course, of that well-worn conspiracy theory, of being monopolistic conspirators. It is not merely that LaRouche uses ‘esoteric’ language and seemingly-eccentric redefinitions to hide references to the Jews; rather, he deploys Jewish “sounding” names or stereotypical Jewish references to convey his underlying message. Connected to this, there is also a proliferation of obvious epithets and codes such as “usurer”, “cabalist”, “Venetian”, “locust” or “Babylonian”. This may puzzle the uninitiated, but

strikes an unmistakable chord with contemporary right-wing extremists. This was aptly captured in 2009 on the largest radical right forum online, *Stormfront*, by an unabashed white supremacist (posting as 'Europa88' – the numbers a reference to Heil Hitler, the h's corresponding to the eighth letter of the alphabet). In response to an enquiry about one of LaRouche's political posters that compares President Obama with Adolf Hitler (please see Image A in appendix), 'Europa88' replied:

He is apparently a guy advocating our cause by using politically correct terms so as not to be labeled an anti-jew [sic]. He has some very interesting writings, especially about the federal reserve [sic; please see Image B].

Through these techniques of inversion and metonymy, LaRouche's propaganda outlets return to blaming Jews for the problems facing the world. Yet when it comes to the now-93 year old activist, a familiar response is that he is so eccentric as to be dismissed. That may be true for the casual observer, but as with the wider radical right's 'fifth column discourse' more broadly, such a view misses the wood through the trees. For the radical right will not simply show the same face, with the same jackboots, salutes and manifestos of old; for they, too, know their (toxic) history. For the radical right, language remains an indispensable key in unlocking populist respectability. Yet it is no longer simply language of the gutter, even if it persists in language *from* the same place. Tracing this genealogy over the post-war decades remains a daunting task, even if some of the patterns are discernable across seemingly disparate radical right groups in Europe and the US. In undertaking such intrinsically interdisciplinary

scholarship, hopefully the wise words of Umberto Eco, now 20 years on, will continue to usefully serve as a methodological call to action:

A new fascism, with its trail of intolerance, of abuse, and of servitude, can be born outside our country and imported into it, walking on tiptoe and calling itself by other names [...] It would be so much easier, for us, if there appeared on the world scene somebody saying, 'I want to reopen Auschwitz, I want the Black Shirts to parade again in the Italian squares.' Life is not that simple. Ur-Fascism can come back under the most innocent of disguises. Our duty is to uncover it and to point our finger at any of its new instances – every day, in every part of the world.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Umberto Eco, cited in Griffin with Feldman, 2004 (415).

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APPENDIX



Image A

Image B