



THE PROPAGANDA OF THE DEED



Lisa Wynne

by Michael Paul McCusker

"In Germany in the 1920s there was a situation in which only small groups existed, not a large organization."

— Karl-Dietrich Bracher

Out of chaos came The Order, which would start the revolution to remake boisterous, heterogeneous and perverse America into an early Nazi Germany. Its members thought of themselves as Aryan warriors, dragons of God, and they practiced what they called the propaganda of the deed. They robbed, burned and murdered until they were killed or captured by agents of the government they wished to overthrow, which they named ZOG, the Zionist Occupation Government because, they claimed, it was controlled along with the nation's wealth and commerce by communist Jews. They were, in their own comic book mythology, spearheads of the White Revolutionary Army which would eliminate Jews, Negroes and homosexuals, and their brief murderous rampage was a definitive if premature revelation of a new strategy of domestic violence by the extreme right wing. The Order, which considered itself a nativist SS corps, showed what a small group of terrorists can do to a society laid open to their violence. In particular, it raised the specter of such a fanatical group armed with a nuclear device.

As the diverse populations of the world move increasingly toward a global civilization, elements in every society resist and clamor violently for separation and for racial and cultural purification. In country after country, small dedicated individuals and groups have assumed the power that brutality and terrorism bestow. In the United States, The Order dramatically represented the resurgence of anti-semitism, racial hatred and religious fratricide that is troubling most of the world.

The ancient and atrocious issue of white supremacy and dominance, the persecution of other races and of religions that are not puritanically Christian, is once more a major theme in American politics. Such moribund groups as the American Nazi Party, the Ku Klux Klan, and the Arvan Nations of Hayden Lake, Idaho, which spawned The Order, are receiving attention far out of proportion to their numbers. Although actual memberships have declined, their influence and respectability have increased as a result of the U.S. government's great swing to the right. In somewhat the manner that the radical left used to punish liberals who were in power in the 1960s, the far right kicks at conservatives with religious exhortation and genocidal rhetoric. It is the far right that now talks of revolution, that sets up paramilitary and wilderness survival training camps, patterning its concepts and plans for white revolt on a fictional account of an Aryan revolution in

the 1990s that was written by a disaffected University of Oregon physics teacher.

It might appear contradictory for adherents of the far right to plan for the overthrow of a right wing government that systematically abolishes civil rights and liberties, is rabidly anti-communist, white supremacist and fundamentalist-Christian in its practice and ideology. But whatever its sympathies or intentions, the government would have a few problems mounting a holy war against its society, and although many top officials would like to ship all blacks to Africa and Jews to Israel, a great many other officials of the large pluralistic government apparatus are blacks and Jews, not to mention that others are liberals, homosexuals and other undesirables who are on the far right's menu of removal. Purging them would entail the largest bloodbath since the Civil War and would rival Stalin's massive pogroms of the 1930s and late 1940s. The fanatical fringe has no patience with such subtleties. Its purpose is to "cleanse" the society in the same manner as the Nazis accomplished in Germany and most of Europe. The far right feels betrayed by the conservatives in power. Their wild expectations of mass and swift removal of Jews, blacks and homosexuals has not occurred, and they feel an identical contempt for the New Right that the New Left felt for the old liberals.

White supremacist groups might be small in number but, as Time magazine said in 1977, although "the whole Nazi cult is politically impotent and dwindling in numbers, its capacity for stirring hatred and creating violence is high." The Order was a volatile collection of impatient individuals from several white supremacy groups who were tired of inactive dogma — they wanted to ignite the race/religious war their peers only talked about: the propaganda of the deed. "Terrorism is a function of weakness, frustration and fervor," Irwin Suall of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith said of the chaos committed by The Order. "And our friends in the Klans and the neo-Nazi groups were very weak, very frustrated and very, very fervid. We anticipated the country would take a hit, perhaps several hits." By the time The Order was brought to ground in late 1984 with its leader dead and the rest imprisoned or hiding, it and associated sympathizers from the KKK and other white supremacy groups had murdered blacks, Jews and policemen in several states, attacked synagogues and churches, robbed banks and armored cars — and a large supply of cyanide was discovered at one of The Order's hideouts, enough to poison a city. The only complaint the far right had about The Order was that it started too soon.

It might not be altogether surprising that these groups who wish to seize control of the country are thinking of beginning with the Pacific Northwest, a direct contrast to a vision of the region as an "Ecotopia" of political, social and environmental harmony. Fostered by the leader of the Idaho-based Aryan Nations, the plan is to turn the Northwest into a whites only enclave. This would roughly encompass an area that stretches from the Tehachapi Mountains of central California, north to Homer, Alaska (although Canada might be allowed to keep British Columbia), and from the Pacific Coast to the Rocky Mountains.

The Pacific Northwest is an attractive area for a white's only civilization for a number of reasons, among them its underdevelopment and relatively sparse and scattered population, which is overwhelmingly white and, with notable exceptions, generally conservative. Eastern Washington and northern Idaho, in particular, are "one of the corners of the nation where the nuts roll," L. J. Davis wrote in a story for Harper's magazine about the founder of The Order, Robert Mathews, who died in a celebrated shootout with federal agents on Whidbey Island in Puget Sound in December, 1984. "Here a tolerance for the more baroque forms of extremist politics is not merely commonplace, it is a hallowed tradition." The Aryan Nations has its headquarters in a twenty acre fortress compound near Hayden Lake, Idaho. Its leader Richard Butler, an evangelical minister who was an aeronautical engineer, is hosting a national convention this month of neo-Nazi and nativist groups to discuss what he calls "the territorial imperative," which means plans and strategies for assuming power in the Northwest. "All we're doing is taking advantage of a natural force," Butler told a Daily Astorian reporter. "Every species has to have a territorial imper-

WINE



Laurel's Wineshop

263 N. HEMLOCK, CANNON BEACH 436-1666