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Nick Griffin: Profile of a fascist

The British National Party leader, Nick Griffin, is a hardline fascist. He denies the Holocaust ever took place and believes that Jews are conspiring against white British people.

Griffin comes from a wealthy family with a history of involvement in right-wing politics. His father, Edwin, a Conservative Party official in Halesworth, admits to having attended National Front meetings in the past. Griffin's sister also stood as an NF candidate in a Suffolk county council election. His mother is the administration secretary of the BNP and was a candidate in the 2001 general election.

Griffin was taken to his first NF meeting at the age of 15 by his father, but did not officially join the party until he was a student at Cambridge University, where he studied law. Griffin was quick to rise up through the ranks of the party, becoming the national organiser by 1978.

In 1980, Griffin launched *Nationalism Today* with the help of Joe Pearce, a convicted racist and editor of *Bulldog*. *Nationalism Today* became the springboard for the Third Positionist ideas that the NF later adopted. Through *Nationalism Today*, Griffin and Pearce were able to formulate the idea that a "third way", or "third position", was needed to transcend the evils of both capitalism and communism, both of which they claimed were rooted in a similar ideology of concentrating private ownership in very few hands, infringing on the right of independence of nation states and, most fundamentally, being Zionist (that is, Jewish) controlled.

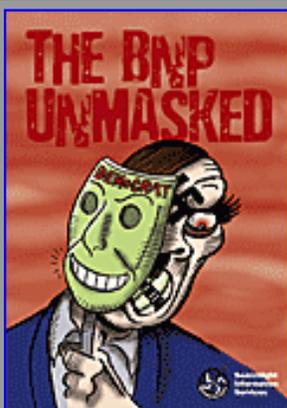
Directly challenging the traditional style of organising, which the Third Positionist wing of the NF saw as pro-capitalist, the Griffin faction wanted to create a political elite. Based on the blood and soil philosophy of Julius Evola, an Italian National Socialist who was closely aligned to the German and Austrian leaders of the SS, Griffin and the NF began to develop their anti-capitalist and Third Positionist ideas, also inspired by the Strasserites, the 'brownshirt' wing of the German Nazi party.

Friends with Italian terrorists

A strong influence on Griffin's political development was the Italian fascist Roberto Fiore, a convicted terrorist. Fiore had arrived in Britain with several other wanted terrorists



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including people implicated in the bombing at Bologna railway station in 1980, which killed 85 innocent people, including a British young couple. Fiore belonged to the Italian Third Positionist NAR.

At first Griffin tried to deny his links with the Italian terrorists. But in 1984, *Searchlight* exposed his connection with Heritage Tours. Heritage Tours was headed by Griffin and Michael Walker, the editor of *Scorpion*. Fiore regularly frequented Walker's flat, where Heritage Tours was based. Griffin has also been a frequent visitor. A further connection is that Griffin's father is Fiore's personal and business accountant.

Strange bedfellows

The NF embraced the ideology of the Third Position as the Griffin faction took control, but they soon began to make some strange alliances. The "political soldiers" wing was meeting representatives of Colonel Gaddafi's regime through the Libyan People's Bureau in London, and expressing support for it and for Ayatollah Khomeini. Writing in *Nationalism Today* in 1985, Griffin praised the black separatist Louis Farrakhan, saying, "white nationalists everywhere wish [Farrakhan] well, for we share a common struggle for the same ends: Racial Separation and Racial Freedom". Unsurprisingly this did not go down too well with rank and file members of the NF.

During this period, Griffin took an all-expenses-paid trip to Libya, along with Derek Holland, as guests of the Gaddafi regime.

As *National Front News* wrote at the time: "Common interest must be turned into practical cooperation. Those involved must work to nail the media lies which are used by our enemies to try to divide us and make us afraid to be seen standing side by side with Third Way nations such as Libya and Iran."

In 1989, Griffin left the NF and formed the International Third Position, a crazy and fanatically Catholic fascist group. The ITP campaigned against Coca Cola, McDonald's, urbanisation and "Zionism" (the Jews).

His involvement was not to last. In 1991, after a failed business venture which cost another member several thousand pounds, Griffin went his own way.

Political chameleon

In 1995, Griffin joined the BNP. He had become editor of *The Rune*, an antisemitic quarterly produced by Croydon BNP. Griffin was opposed to attempts to modernise the BNP, accusing those who wanted change of "rainbow Conservatism". He also announced that the BNP should prioritise denying the Holocaust to schoolchildren.

Five years on, Griffin has undergone a political transformation and now claims to be at the vanguard of attempts to make the BNP respectable. The ITP has been baffled by his political gymnastics, as it reported in its email newsletter: "He has been a conservative, a revolutionary nationalist, a radical National Socialist, a Third Positionist, a friend of the 'boot boys' and the skinhead scene, a man committed to respectable politics and electioneering, a 'moderniser'. Which is he in reality? Perhaps he has been all these

quite sincerely - in which case his judgement is abysmal; or perhaps he has been none of them sincerely - which speaks for itself!"

Griffin joined the BNP in 1995, and immediately had designs on a leadership position. He became the editor of *Spearhead*, then the BNP's magazine, from 1996 until his split from John Tyndall, the former BNP leader, at the end of 1999.

Throughout his time with the BNP, Griffin has tried to distance himself from the bizarre politics of the NF. He claims to have left the NF in 1989 because the party was "bedevilled by religious cranks. It was with great sadness that I made the decision to leave."

Griffin has spoken of the need for community-based politics to build respectability for the BNP in the eyes of voters. Yet it was only four years ago that Griffin wrote in *The Rune*: "The electors of Millwall did not back a Post-Modernist Rightist Party, but what they perceived to be a strong, disciplined organisation with the ability to back up its slogan 'Defend Rights for Whites' with well-directed boots and fists. When the crunch comes, power is the product of force and will, not of rational debate."

Griffin the antisemite

Griffin has also closely followed the BNP and neo-nazi tradition of antisemitism. A Griffin publication, *Who are the Mindbenders?*, claims to prove that the minds of British people are brainwashed through Jewish control of the media. The booklet includes a list of all known Jews working in the media as though they are working together for a joint cause. He proves Jewish control of the BBC by naming a mere 19 Jews who work for the corporation.

Griffin the Holocaust denier

In 1996, Griffin launched a vicious attack on the Holocaust denier David Irving for admitting that some people might have died in the Holocaust. "True Revisionists will not be fooled by this new twist to the sorry tale of the Hoax of the Twentieth Century," Griffin wrote.

In another article he said, "I am well aware that the orthodox opinion is that 6 million Jews were gassed and cremated or turned into lampshades. Orthodox opinion also once held that the earth is flat... I have reached the conclusion that the 'extermination' tale is a mixture of Allied wartime propaganda, extremely profitable lie, and latter-day witch-hysteria." (Carlisle Two Defence Fund Bulletin.)

In 1998, Griffin was found guilty of distributing material likely to incite racial hatred, for which he received a two-year suspended jail sentence.

Griffin has also held staunchly homophobic views throughout his time at the BNP. Following the bombing of a gay pub in Soho, in which three people died, Griffin wrote, "The TV footage of dozens of 'gay' demonstrators flaunting their perversion in front of the world's journalists showed just why so many ordinary people find these creatures so repulsive".

Yet Griffin's hypocrisy was starkly highlighted when he was outed by Martin Webster, the former NF organiser, as having a secret gay past.

Griffin is a typical fascist - a man for all people. He is also an outrageous opportunist. There is not a bandwagon or campaign he would not exploit or a political belief that he would not jettison if he thought he could benefit personally.

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