

FAR-RIGHT TERRORIST MANIFESTOS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

BY DR RAKIB EHSAN AND DR PAUL STOTT



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Front Cover: Image taken from a screenshot from social media of 'The Great Replacement' manifesto published online prior to the Christchurch Mosque shootings.

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RADICALISATION
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About CRT at The Henry Jackson Society

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Their website can be viewed at **<http://www.aireyneavetrust.org.uk/>**.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The nature of contemporary far-right terrorism poses a myriad of challenges. It is global, ideologically diverse, and unpredictable. As such, analysis of the ideological motivations and characteristics of perpetrators, as well as the operational strategies associated with far-right terrorism,¹ is needed more urgently than ever. This type of terrorism is on the rise – there was a fourfold increase in far-right terrorist attacks across the Western world in 2016–17.² The challenge posed by this type of violence continues to be demonstrated, for example by the neo-Nazi gunman who conducted a massacre in Hanau, Germany on 19 February 2020, murdering nine civilians.³

Statistical data, though, do not convey the horror this violence brings to those it targets. On 15 March 2019, a 28-year-old Australian, Brenton Tarrant, allegedly shot dead 51 Muslims at the Al Noor Mosque and the Linwood Islamic Centre in Christchurch, New Zealand.⁴ A month later, on 27 April, 19-year-old John Earnest allegedly shot and killed one person and injured three others at the Poway synagogue in California, United States (US).⁵ On 3 August, 21-year-old Patrick Crusius allegedly murdered 22 people at a Walmart store at El Paso, Texas, US.⁶ All three men face trial in 2020, and seemingly chose different ethnic groups as their targets – Muslims in Christchurch, Jews in California, Hispanics in Texas. The publication online of a pre-attack manifesto by the alleged perpetrator was a feature in each of the three attacks. Each document combined a justification for the action about to be undertaken with a broader political analysis of the world's problems, as the author saw them. It should be noted that Brenton Tarrant, John Earnest and Patrick Crusius are pleading not guilty at their upcoming trials. Therefore, and throughout this report, we wish to make it clear that it is for the courts to decide if they murdered those killed in Christchurch, Poway and El Paso, and if they wrote the manifestos distributed immediately before the attacks.

This report presents a qualitative analysis of each of these manifestos. From this, we identify points of ideological convergence and divergence, in order to best understand the theoretical motivations behind this violence. In this, we make no pretence of academic neutrality – in demonstrating the ideological complexities which underpin contemporary far-right terrorism, it is intended that this study will contribute to the development of effective political responses and compelling counter-extremist narratives. In common with opposing the threat of jihadist terrorism, we believe liberal democratic values must be fought for if they are to endure. Doing nothing is a luxury we can ill afford.

1.1. Background

Whilst the combination of manifestos with terrorist attacks was a prominent component of far-right violence in 2019, statements of principle, claims of responsibility, and declarations of intent have long been a feature of politically inspired violence. In 2004 one of the doyens of

¹ In the US context, this is sometimes referred to as 'racially and ethnically motivated terrorism' (REMT).

² Wilson, T., *Terrorism in the West: An Age of Extremes* (London: Henry Jackson Society, 2018), available at: <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/publications/terrorism-in-the-west-an-age-of-extremes/>.

³ Hall, A and France, A, 'Hanau shooting: Neo-nazi gunman kills nine in Germany before turning gun on himself and mother at their home', *Evening Standard*, 20 February 2020, available at: <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/hanau-shooting-germany-nine-killed-tobias-r-neonazi-far-right-a4367161.html>, last visited: 21 February 2020.

⁴ 'Christchurch attack: Brenton Tarrant pleads not guilty to all charges', *BBC News*, 14 June 2019, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-48631488>.

⁵ 'San Diego synagogue shooting: One person dead in Poway, California', *BBC News*, 28 April 2019, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-48081535>.

⁶ 'El Paso shooting: Suspect "confessed to targeting Mexicans"', *BBC News*, 9 August 2019, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-49256867>.

terrorism studies, Walter Laqueur (1921–2018), published a compendium of such statements entitled *Voices of Terror*.⁷ This brought together statements from a range of ideological and religious positions across several centuries. The document serves as a reminder that, whilst the technological opportunities for dissemination afforded the modern terrorist may be greater than ever before, the need to explain, justify, impress, and recruit are ever present. If terrorism and terrorist attacks are a method of communication, the accompanying manifesto is a tool to ensure that the correct message is presented to the world. As Laqueur writes: ‘Public relations and projecting the right image matter’.⁸

Of significant relevance to the 2019 manifestos and terrorist incidents were the bomb and gun attacks carried out in Norway on 22 July 2011 by Anders Behring Breivik, which killed 77 people.⁹ Prior to his bombing of the Norwegian prime minister’s office, and mass shooting at a Labour Party island youth camp at Utoya, the Norwegian white supremacist produced a 1,500-page manifesto titled ‘2083 – A European Declaration of Independence’.¹⁰ Uploaded to the Internet, this statement received global attention as an international search for Breivik’s potential co-conspirators and ideological partners began. Brenton Tarrant’s alleged manifesto namechecks Breivik, and received similar levels of attention. A pattern set, John Earnest namechecks Tarrant, as in turn does Patrick Crusius, illustrating what the academic Graham Macklin calls the ‘chain reaction’ of global right-wing terror.¹¹

1.2. Definitions

One of the challenges facing any researcher studying terrorism is to find working definitions that are both justifiable and readily understandable. This is particularly problematic when covering the far right, as this is an area where a ‘conceptual chaos’ is predominant, with scholars from a range of perspectives discussing what they variously characterise as the ‘far right’, ‘extreme right’, ‘right-wing populism’, and the ‘radical right’.¹² Worse, it is also the case that sometimes precise definitions are considered superfluous. At the time of writing, the Home Office website displays an article titled ‘Fact sheet: right-wing terrorism’ that does not even attempt to define what right-wing terrorism actually is.¹³

This report’s authors make the following definition of far-right terrorism: the support for or use of deadly violence in order to promote a separation of the races, rooted in the view there is a common, exclusively white identity threatened by the presence of an ‘other’. Whilst it may be that other terms – such as ‘white separatist’ or ‘white nationalist’ – possess similar qualities, for the sake of consistency and ease of understanding, the term ‘far-right terrorism’ is used throughout.

1.3. Methodology

The ideological composition of each manifesto was examined through qualitative analysis using the software package NVivo. The aim of this was to produce a comprehensive account

⁷ Laqueur, W. (ed.), *Voices of Terror: Manifestos, Writings and Manuals of Al Qaeda, Hamas, and other terrorists from around the world and throughout the ages* (New York: Reed Press, 2004).

⁸ Ibid., p.2.

⁹ ‘Rapport fra 22. juli-kommisjonen: Preliminary English version of selected chapters’, *Oslo: Gjørv Commission*, 13 August 2012, available at: https://www.sintef.no/globalassets/project/nexus/01--report-22-july-gjorv-commission-summary_english_version.pdf, last visited: 2 January 2020.

¹⁰ “‘Breivik manifesto’ details chilling attack preparation”, *BBC News*, 24 July 2011, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14267007>.

¹¹ Macklin, G., ‘The El Paso terrorist attack: The chain reaction of global right wing terror’, CTC Sentinel 12.11 (December 2019): pp.1–9, *The Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, available at: <https://ctc.usma.edu/el-paso-terrorist-attack-chain-reaction-global-right-wing-terror/>, last visited: 2 January 2020.

¹² Perlinger, A., ‘Challengers from the sidelines: Understanding America’s violent far-right’, *The Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, November 2012: p.13, available at: <https://ctc.usma.edu/app/uploads/2013/01/ChallengersFromtheSidelines.pdf>, last visited: 2 January 2020.

¹³ ‘Fact sheet: Right wing terrorism’, *Home Office News Team*, 20 September 2019, available at: <https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2019/09/20/fact-sheet-right-wing-terrorism/>, last visited: 2 January 2020.

of the key ideological terms, thinkers, politicians, and activists referenced, as well as insights into who the declared enemy and the opponents are for each of the authors. This was used to inform a content analysis of each publication. With this, it was then possible to flesh out points of ideological convergence and divergence.

Discussions held at a Henry Jackson Society roundtable on 9 January 2020 consisting of academic researchers, security practitioners, and counter-extremism advisers have fed into the policy themes and recommendations outlined in the final chapter. The policy themes discussed were wide-ranging, reflecting the need for both an effective policy mix and sophisticated multi-agency response to address the threat of far-right extremism and terrorist activity, both in the UK and overseas.

Finally, it is important to raise a particular qualification. In his compendium of terrorist manifestos, Laqueur was aware that, just because an author declares something to be so, does not necessarily mean that it is. The art of propaganda walks hand in hand with terrorism. Laqueur saw an increasing cleavage “between terrorist propaganda and terrorist practice ... the true aims of terrorist groups are often stated in veiled terms of implication, and sometimes they are not stated at all”.¹⁴ That means a critical, questioning approach to each and every word that appears in the three manifestos has been taken. The concept of ‘shitposting’,¹⁵ or laying traps for researchers and investigators, is one we have borne in mind, and we urge others to do the same.

¹⁴ Laqueur, W., *Voices of Terror*, p.2.

¹⁵ Evans, R., ‘Shitposting, inspirational terrorism, and the Christchurch Mosque massacre’, *Bellingcat*, 15 March 2019, available at: <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/rest-of-world/2019/03/15/shitposting-inspirational-terrorism-and-the-christchurch-mosque-massacre/>, last visited: 2 January 2020. See also p.22.

Chapter 2: 'The Great Replacement' by Brenton Tarrant

'The Great Replacement' was authored by Brenton Tarrant before he allegedly killed 51 Muslim worshippers during Friday prayers in the New Zealand city of Christchurch. The document, 74 pages in length, comes to over 16,500 words. Brenton Tarrant's trial is currently scheduled to commence on 2 June 2020; he has pleaded not guilty to the murder of 51 people, as well as denying 40 charges of attempted murder and one charge laid under New Zealand's Terrorism Suppression Act 2002.¹⁶ Online links to Tarrant's 'pre-attack' manifesto were posted on both 8chan and Twitter, with the document being emailed to New Zealand prime minister Jacinda Ardern's office and several media outlets.¹⁷

The dominant thread that runs through the manifesto is the view that white people are being replaced in Western countries against their will – in both a demographic and socio-cultural sense. The term "replacement" (including associated 'stemmed terms' such as "replace" and "replacing") features a total of 46 times – more than "immigration" (33 occasions). As well as criticising recent processes of mass immigration, Tarrant places considerable emphasis on the fertility rates of established migrant Muslim communities in Western countries (which in turn are blamed for spurring a rapid pace of demographic and cultural change). Tarrant's central beliefs are summarised in the bluntest of terms – writing that he is "anti-immigration, anti-ethnic replacement and anti-cultural replacement".¹⁸

Tarrant's manifesto has a segmented *Sonnenrad* on its front cover.¹⁹ Two of the segments are labelled "workers' rights" and "anti-imperialism". Tarrant makes a total of 15 separate references to corporations, advancing the view that mass inward migration of "cheap labour" into Western countries is encouraged by the profit-driven interests of private capital, subsequently placing "native populations" under both demographic and cultural threat. Further demonstrating his support for left-leaning economics, Tarrant's manifesto includes excerpts in favour of greater unionisation of workers, as well as an increase in the minimum wage in the market-based economies of the Western world.²⁰

Figure 1 presents a word cloud of the 100 most frequent terms in Tarrant's manifesto. As can be seen from this, as well as in Table 1, two terms that feature prominently in Tarrant's manifesto are "European" and "nations" (69 and 72 times respectively). This forms the basis of Tarrant's central aspiration: to stimulate an uprising across "brother nations"²¹ that share a common European heritage, and are perceived by Tarrant to be under demographic and cultural threat from Muslim migrant communities. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, this forms part of growing efforts to construct a cross-continental militant alliance in which those involved are bonded by a common racial and ancestral heritage, and a shared desire to "confront" processes of demographic and cultural change. Indeed, Tarrant uses the "brother nations" concept in an attempt to justify his act of anti-migrant terrorism – despite being an Australian citizen living in New Zealand.²²

¹⁶ 'Christchurch attack: Brenton Tarrant pleads not guilty to all charges', *BBC News*, 14 June 2019, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-486314887>.

¹⁷ 'Jacinda Ardern received Brenton Tarrant's manifesto nine minutes before New Zealand attack', *The Telegraph*, 17 March 2019, available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/03/17/jacinda-ardern-receivedbrenton-tarrants-manifesto-nine-minutes/>.

¹⁸ 'The Great Replacement', p.15.

¹⁹ *Sonnenrad* – a German word – translates as 'Sun Wheel' (a neo-Nazi symbol).

²⁰ 'The Great Replacement', p.68.

²¹ 'The Great Replacement', p.55.

²² 'The Great Replacement', p.16.

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The word cloud also includes (bottom right) “https” and “wikipedia”. This is the result of Tarrant including a stream of Internet links to Wikipedia pages documenting large-scale sexual exploitation cases in England. Taking place in post-industrial towns such as Rotherham and Rochdale, the cases selected by Tarrant primarily involved male perpetrators of South Asian Muslim origin and young female victims of white British heritage.²⁴ The cases are utilised by Tarrant to support his claims that white indigenous populations in Western societies are under Muslim-led social and cultural invasion. It is important to note that the term “invaders” is consistently used in reference to Muslims throughout the manifesto. Tarrant’s anti-Muslim sentiment lies at the heart of his fears over white replacement and cultural displacement in the “brother nations”.

Tarrant's overall threat evaluation of Muslim migrant groups in the Western world appears to be shaped by perceptions of how such communities are socially bonded and internally structured. He writes about how Muslim communities take pride in their robust traditions and internal bonds of social trust, as well as their cultured appreciation of architecture.²⁵

²³ Terms of fewer than three characters were excluded from the analysis for the word cloud, which includes 'stemmed terms' (e.g. 'immigration' incorporates 'immigrant' and 'immigrants').

²⁴ 'The Great Replacement', p.33.

²⁵ 'The Great Replacement', p.10.

Table 1: Top 10 terms (by frequency with weighted percentages) ²⁶

Root Term	Associated Term/s	Frequency	Weighted Percentage
People	Peoples	171	1.98
Attack	Attacked, attackers, attacking, attacks	95	1.10
Culture	Cultural, culturally, cultures	74	0.86
Nations	Nation, national, nationalism	72	0.83
European	Europeans	69	0.80
Time	Times	60	0.70
Invaders	Invade, invader, invaders, invading	59	0.68
Lands	Landing	48	0.56
Replacement	Replace, replaced, replacing	46	0.53
Ethnic	Ethnically, ethnicity, ethnicities	44	0.51

This is set against fundamental problems Tarrant identifies with the mainstream culture in the “brother nations” – Western societies with shared European Christian roots. This includes the proliferation of broken family units and the perceived obsession with “feckless”, “degenerate”, “drug-taking” celebrity icons.²⁷ In this part of the manifesto, Tarrant targets American pop star Madonna, labelling her as a “whore”.²⁸

This arguably strikes at the core of the threat Tarrant perceives from what he calls an “invasion”.²⁹ It is the prevailing fear of mainstream modern Western culture – perceived to be characterised by family breakdown, materialistic individualism, celebrity obsession, and general moral decay – being overrun by traditionally minded, higher-birth-rate Muslim migrant communities that are considered more socially cohesive, family-oriented, and community-spirited.

With regard to political figures, Tarrant expresses much admiration for Sir Oswald Mosley, who he describes as “the person from history closest to my own beliefs”.³⁰ While not supporting US president Donald Trump as a political leader and policymaker, Tarrant appears to view Trump as a “symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose”.³¹ In terms of current national political culture, Tarrant states that the nation with the “closest political and social value” to his is the People’s Republic of China.³² Tarrant views China’s economic success and development as rooted in ethnic and cultural homogeneity – stating that the “non-diverse” nature of East Asian countries (such as Japan and South Korea) is their greatest source of strength.³³ This in turn is compared with multiracial, ethnically heterogeneous societies such as the United States, Brazil, and South Africa, which Tarrant claims are beset with serious problems when it comes to race relations.³⁴

²⁶ Words with fewer than three characters excluded from the analysis.

²⁷ ‘The Great Replacement’, p.35.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ ‘The Great Replacement’, p.3.

³⁰ ‘The Great Replacement’, p.16.

³¹ Ibid.

³² ‘The Great Replacement’, p.15.

³³ ‘The Great Replacement’, p.33.

³⁴ Ibid.

Chapter 3: 'An Open Letter' by John Earnest

'An Open Letter' was authored by John Earnest (at the time, a 19-year-old nursing student) before he allegedly killed a Jewish worshipper during Passover celebrations in the California city of Poway. The seven-page manifesto contains 4,216 words. Earnest's trial is currently scheduled to commence on 2 June 2020 – the same day Brenton Tarrant's trial is due to begin.³⁵ Earnest has been charged with murder, attempted murder, arson, and a spate of hate crime allegations for the April 2019 shooting at the Chabad of Poway, as well as a March 2019 arson attack at Dar-ul-Arqam Mosque (also known as the Islamic Center of Escondido).³⁶ The current trial date may be changed, depending on a death penalty decision by the San Diego County District Attorney's Office.³⁷ The pre-attack manifesto allegedly written by Earnest was posted on 8chan. Seeking to follow in the footsteps of Tarrant, Earnest attempted – but failed – to livestream the attack on Facebook.³⁸

The pre-attack manifesto, while much shorter than Tarrant's, shares a number of ideological themes with 'The Great Replacement': the perceived demographic threat to white people, the role of celebrity culture and the entertainment industry in perpetuating forms of moral decay, and the broader view that modern conservatism merely serves the profit-driven interests of private capital. There are notable differences, however. 'An Open Letter' is aggressively anti-Semitic. While there is considerable overlap in the nature of the grievances raised, Earnest (unlike Tarrant) blames a myriad of social ills and international conflicts on an "international Jewry".³⁹ He also advances the view that "every Jew is responsible for the meticulously planned genocide of the European race".⁴⁰

Figure 2 is a word cloud showing the 50 most frequent terms in Earnest's pre-attack manifesto. The central thrust of the document is that a global Jewish elite is directly complicit in the destruction of the white race – specifically people of ethnically European heritage. Earnest – a US citizen born and raised in California – opens his manifesto with the declaration that he is a "man of European ancestry", fleshing out that he is of English, Irish, and Nordic stock.⁴¹ As well as holding Jewish people responsible for the aggressive promotion of racial mixing, Earnest argues that their "genocidal" intent is demonstrated by the financial support they provide to progressive political parties and social organisations that supposedly "use mass immigration to displace the white race".⁴²

While white-replacement narratives are a shared and dominant feature, Earnest's manifesto differentiates itself on the grounds of its Christian-fundamentalist rhetoric. The framing of supposed Jewish-sponsored genocide is very much in religious terms as well as ethnic and

³⁵ 'Trial date set for accused Chabad of Poway synagogue shooter John Earnest', *10News San Diego*, 5 December 2019, available at: <https://www.10news.com/news/local-news/trial-date-set-for-accused-chabad-of-poway-synagogue-shooter-john-earnest>.

³⁶ Figueroa, T. and Pauline Repard, 'Criminal court cases to keep an eye on in 2020', *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 2 January 2020, available at: <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/public-safety/story/2020-01-02/criminal-court-cases-to-keep-an-eye-on-in-2020>.

³⁷ 'Trial date set for accused Chabad of Poway synagogue shooter John Earnest', *10News San Diego*, 5 December 2019, available at: <https://www.10news.com/news/local-news/trial-date-set-for-accused-chabad-of-poway-synagogue-shooter-john-earnest>.

³⁸ Wilkens, J., Kristina Davis, and Teri Figueroa, 'One dead, three injured in Poway synagogue shooting', *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 27 April 2019, available at: <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/public-safety/story/2019-04-27/reports-of-several-people-shot-at-poway-synagogue>.

³⁹ 'An Open Letter', p.1.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ 'An Open Letter', p.1.

⁴² Ibid.

Figure 2: Word Cloud for ‘An Open Letter’ (50 most frequent terms)⁴³



racial ones. Within the relatively short manifesto, Earnest provides a “historical account” containing instances of purported Jewish-led persecution of Christians. This section of the document makes reference to the persecution of “Christians of old” (namely “ancient prophets of Israel” such as Jeremiah and Isaiah), as well as referring to Simon of Trent – writing that the “horror” countless children “have endured at the hands of the Jews will never be forgiven”.⁴⁴ Lastly, and in what is a hallmark of anti-Jewish Christian fundamentalism, Earnest emphasises the role Jews played “in the murder of the Son of Man” – Jesus Christ.⁴⁵

In keeping with the Christian-fundamentalist nature of the manifesto, Earnest advances the view that his intention to carry out an attack on Jews is blessed with the understanding of God: "My God does not take kindly to the destruction of His creation. Especially one of the most beautiful, intelligent, and innovative races that He has created."⁴⁶ As shown in Table 2, 'God' is one of the most frequently used terms in the manifesto (14 times). Earnest also refers to specific passages from the Book of Matthew, Book of John, Book of Revelations, and First Thessalonians, in an effort to provide his anti-Semitic attack with theological legitimacy.

⁴³ Words of fewer than three characters were excluded from analysis for the word cloud.

⁴⁴ Simon of Trent (1472–5) was a Christian boy from the Italian city of Trento whose disappearance and murder was blamed on the leaders of the city's Jewish community.

⁴⁵ 'An Open Letter', p.1.

⁴⁶ 'An Open Letter', p.2.

Table 2: Top 10 Terms (by frequency with weighted percentages) ⁴⁷

Root Term	Associated Term/s	Frequency	Weighted Percentage
Jews	Jew, jewed [<i>sic</i>]	43	2.17
Race	Races	33	1.67
Know	Knows, knowing	20	1.01
Love	Loved, loving	17	0.86
People	–	15	0.76
White	Whites	15	0.76
Using	Use, used, useful	14	0.71
God	–	14	0.71
Hate	Hates	14	0.71
European	Europeans	13	0.66

Firmly rejecting the view that his deadly intentions are against the core essence of “Christian compassion”, Earnest offers the view that his act is one of care and protection: “It is not loving towards your friend to let him be murdered”.⁴⁸

It is important to note the degree of inspiration Earnest drew from Tarrant’s anti-Muslim attacks in New Zealand. In fact, the terms “Brenton” and “Tarrant” both feature in the word cloud (see Figure 2, bottom left and top right respectively). As well as taking ownership for the arson attack on an Islamic centre in the San Diego city of Escondido shortly after the Christchurch terrorist attacks, Earnest claims that he spray-painted the message “For Brenton Tarrant –t. /pol/” on the centre’s car park. This form of cryptic language is often used in far-right online forums on platforms such as 8chan and Gab. This particular phrase, reframed in general English terms, pays homage to alleged far-right terrorist Brenton Tarrant and celebrates perceived forms of unadulterated truth and political incorrectness. Based on his writings, Tarrant appears to have been instrumental in inspiring Earnest to carry out his terrorist attack: “Tarrant was a catalyst for me personally. He showed me that it could be done. ... WHY WON’T SOMEBODY DO SOMETHING? WHY WON’T SOMEBODY DO SOMETHING? ... – the most powerful words in his entire manifesto.”⁴⁹ Earnest also refers to Robert Bowers, an American far-right terrorist who killed 11 people in the October 2018 Pittsburgh synagogue terrorist attack, as a further source of inspiration.

Another observation from Earnest’s manifesto is its lack of substantive discussion on perceived social and political developments – in both the United States and other parts of the world. While it is far shorter than Tarrant’s pre-attack manifesto, Earnest’s document makes little reference to major political parties and global leaders – apart from an isolated reference to current US president Donald Trump as a “Zionist, Jew-loving, anti-White, traitorous cocksucker”.⁵⁰ The manifesto, as suggested by the figures shown in Table 2, is ultimately defined by its unrelenting vilification of an “international Jewry”, which is located at the heart of perceived grievances over the “replacement” of white people of European Christian stock.

⁴⁷ Words of fewer than three characters have been excluded from the analysis for the word cloud.

⁴⁸ ‘An Open Letter’, p.2.

⁴⁹ ‘An Open Letter’, p.4.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Chapter 4: 'The Inconvenient Truth' by Patrick Crusius

'The Inconvenient Truth' was authored by Patrick Crusius, at the time a 21-year-old from Allen, Texas, before he allegedly killed 22 people at Cielo Vista Mall in the Texas city of El Paso on 3 August 2019. The shortest of the three manifestos under examination, the four-page document comes to 2,356 words. The choice of location and the content of post-attack interrogations suggests that the terrorist attack was motivated by anti-Hispanic sentiment, with the pre-attack manifesto itself containing white nationalist themes and ethnic replacement narratives. Crusius has pleaded not guilty to capital murder charges, with El Paso County's district attorney declaring his intention to pursue a death penalty sentence.⁵¹ The prosecutor for Texas's Western District has stated that the attack is being treated as an act of domestic terrorism.⁵² As in the cases of Tarrant and Earnest, the pre-attack manifesto was posted on online forum 8chan shortly before Crusius undertook his deadly act of far-right violence.

Demonstrating the self-referential nature of contemporary far-right terrorism, the manifesto expresses support for Brenton Tarrant (referred to as "the Christchurch shooter") in its opening sentence. It shares the central message contained in the pre-attack manifestos written by Tarrant and Earnest – that white people are being replaced in a demographic and sociocultural sense, with private capital and corporate-friendly mainstream political parties facilitating such processes in the name of profit and self-interest. Striking a similar tone to the documents produced by Tarrant and Earnest, Crusius couches his deadly targeting of "Hispanic invaders" in the language of protection and self-defence: "They are the instigators, not me. I am simply defending my country from cultural and ethnic displacement brought on by an invasion."⁵³

Even though Crusius does speak of 'protecting' the United States (which is reflected by the terms 'America' and 'Americans' featured in the word cloud depicted in Figure 3), the pre-attack manifesto is decidedly more 'local' and 'regional' in its focus compared to Tarrant's document. In the opening few sentences of 'The Inconvenient Truth', Crusius states that his planned attack is "a response to the Hispanic invasion of Texas".⁵⁴ Perceiving the Hispanic population to be the primary demographic and cultural threat when it comes to processes of white replacement in the American context, Crusius fleshes out his fears over political domination on local, state, and national levels of governance: "Due to the death of the baby boomers, the increasingly anti-immigrant rhetoric of the right and the ever increasing Hispanic population, America will become a one-party state. The Democrat party will own America and they know it."⁵⁵

Crusius views social developments in his home state of Texas as being integral to this broader movement towards the US eventually becoming a one-party state: "The heavy Hispanic population in Texas will make us a Democrat stronghold. Losing Texas and a few other states with heavy Hispanic population to the Democrats is all it would take for them to win nearly every presidential election."⁵⁶

Similar to Tarrant, Crusius draws a connection between profit-driven corporate interests, inward migration of cheap labour from predominantly non-white countries, and fast-paced

⁵¹ Torres, E. and Bill Hutchinson, 'Alleged gunman in El Paso mass shooting pleads not guilty to capital murder', *ABC News*, 10 October 2019, available at: <https://abcnews.go.com/US/alleged-gunman-el-paso-mass-shooting-pleads-guilty/story?id=66182203>.

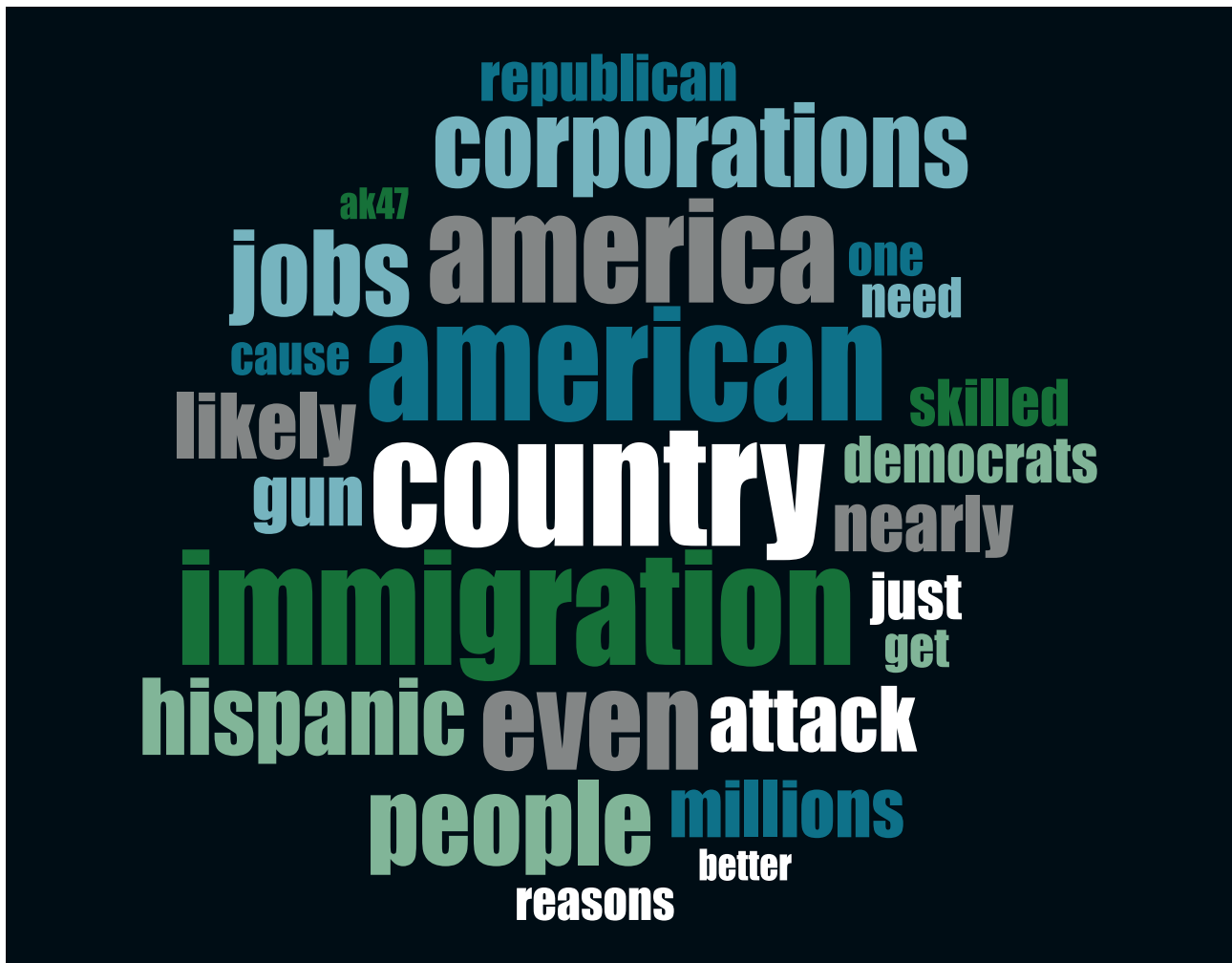
⁵² 'El Paso Walmart gunman hit with 90 federal hate charges', *BBC News*, 7 February 2020, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-51413425>.

⁵³ 'The Inconvenient Truth', p.1.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Figure 3: Word Cloud for ‘The Inconvenient Truth’ (25 most frequent terms)⁵⁷

demographic change. While Crusius is scathing of the Democratic Party, the Republican Party is not spared: “...the Republican Party are also terrible. Many factions within the Republican Party are pro-corporation. Pro-corporation = pro-immigration”.⁵⁸ Crusius also expresses his discontent over what he perceives to be bipartisan support for immigration and work visa regimes that facilitate the replacement of white Americans.

More generally, the manifesto itself can be interpreted as a rally against the perceived excesses of ‘Corporate America’ and, more broadly, the US’s free-market capitalist system. This is demonstrated by the fact that ‘corporations’ and ‘jobs’ (and associated terms) are two of the most frequently used words in the manifesto (as shown in Table 3). Similar to Brenton Tarrant’s ‘The Great Replacement’, Crusius’ pre-attack manifesto expresses support for left-leaning economics and prioritises environmental sustainability. Crusius, critical of the market forces of globalisation, bemoans the socio-economic effects of industrial decline and the human cost of technological change in the form of automation (although he suggests the latter may be a blessing in disguise, as it may reduce corporate demand for low-cost migrants to fill menial roles).⁵⁹

With large-scale, automation-related job losses being considered an inevitability, Crusius suggests that the threat of widespread poverty and civil unrest can only be neutralised through

⁵⁷ Words of fewer than three characters were excluded from the analysis for the word cloud.

⁵⁸ ‘The Inconvenient Truth’, p.1.

⁵⁹ ‘The Inconvenient Truth’, p.2.

Table 3: Top 10 Terms (frequency with weighted percentages)⁶⁰

Root Term	Associated Term/s	Frequency	Weighted Percentage
Country	Countries, country	16	1.27
American	Americans	15	1.19
Immigration	Immigrant, immigrants	15	1.19
America	–	14	1.11
Even	–	13	1.04
Corporations	Corporate, corporation	12	0.96
Jobs	Job	12	0.96
People	–	12	0.96
Hispanic	Hispanics	11	0.88
Attack	–	10	0.80

the provision of comprehensive social security. However, he argues that, in order for ambitious social projects such as universal healthcare and a universal basic income (UBI) to be socially and financially sustainable, millions of migrant dependants on forms of welfare assistance need to be “removed” from the US.⁶¹

The title of the manifesto itself is worthy of discussion, given its environmentalist content. ‘The Inconvenient Truth’ seems to allude to former Democrat presidential candidate Al Gore’s environmental documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, produced in 2006, which highlighted the dangers of global warming. Following in the footsteps of Tarrant, Crusius raises a number of environmental concerns, including the perceived corporate destruction of the environment through the “shameless overharvesting” of resources.⁶² Crusius also blames “urban sprawl” for the creation of “inefficient cities” that lead to the destruction of green spaces⁶³ – which ties in with Tarrant’s concerns over mass immigration contributing to forms of urbanisation that are damaging for the environment.⁶⁴ In line with sentiments expressed by both Tarrant and Earnest, Crusius takes issue with the excesses of “consumer culture”, which he blames for the creation of mass plastic and electronic waste.⁶⁵

Crusius does propose what in his eyes is a solution to the myriad social and political problems he articulates. Labelling, somewhat ironically, the removal or murder of all non-white Americans as “horrific”, Crusius proposes dividing the US into separate confederacies based on race, arguing that this would “nearly eliminate race mixing and improve social unity”⁶⁶ – and ultimately provide White America with the opportunity to create a social-democratic, environmentally friendly, racially homogeneous ethno-state.

⁶⁰ Words of fewer than three letters excluded from the analysis.

⁶¹ ‘The Inconvenient Truth’, p.2.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ ‘The Great Replacement’, p.38.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ ‘The Inconvenient Truth’, p.4.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Overview

This chapter builds on the content analysis discussed in Chapters 2–4 by providing critical analysis of far-right terrorist manifestos. These documents are discerned as a series of interventions in which each action and each publication is created in an environment that includes past statements and past atrocities. They also signpost an end political goal and, just as worryingly, potentially inspire and direct further terrorist attacks. This continuum presents a considerable challenge for society, as more attacks will almost certainly follow the course set.

5.1. Ideological Influences

In taking the title ‘The Great Replacement: Towards a New Society’, Tarrant’s manifesto echoes a common theme in contemporary far-right thought – that long-established white communities are being replaced by non-white migrants throughout the Western world. The development of the concept of a great replacement lies with the French intellectual Renaud Camus, who published *Le Grand Remplacement* in 2011.⁶⁷ Camus sees these changes as beginning in the last quarter of the twentieth century, and accelerating ever since.⁶⁸ As shown in Table 1, the term ‘replacement’ occurs 46 times in Tarrant’s manifesto, whilst similar themes percolate John Earnest’s ‘Open Letter’ discussed in Chapter 3, and Patrick Crusius’s ‘The Inconvenient Truth’, analysed in Chapter 4.

Having agreed that a replacement of indigenous whites is occurring, Tarrant and Earnest differ, however, as to why. Tarrant appears ambivalent about Jews, stating he is not an anti-Semite, declaring rather ambiguously “A jew [*sic*] living in israel [*sic*] is no enemy of mine, so long as they do not seek to subvert or harm my people”.⁶⁹ This is in marked contrast to John Earnest, who is a robust believer in anti-Semitic conspiracy theories: “Every Jew is responsible for the meticulously planned genocide of the European race. They act as a unit, and every Jew plays his part to enslave the other races around him ...”⁷⁰

In Patrick Crusius’s ‘The Inconvenient Truth’ a great replacement is again occurring, only this time it is Hispanics replacing whites. Crusius blames this on corporations and their demand for cheap labour, and specifically frames his actions as influenced by Tarrant’s text: “... the Hispanic community was not my target before I read The Great Replacement”.⁷¹ This is potentially an honest assessment, as Tarrant’s manifesto stresses what he sees as pivotal changes occurring in Texas: “Soon the replacement of whites within Texas will hit its apogee and with the non-white political and social control of Texas”.⁷²

Each document therefore seeks to offer an explanation – albeit an unpalatable one – for not just its author’s own actions, but also the rapid demographic changes occurring in many Western societies. Replacement theories on the far right clearly matter.

On a gun used in the Christchurch massacre, among many inscriptions the number ‘14’ could be observed. A reference to the ‘14 words’, this situates the gunman firmly in the American neo-Nazi tradition. The 14 words are ‘we must secure the existence of our people and a

⁶⁷ *Le Grand Remplacement: Introduction au remplacisme global*, translated into English as *You will not replace us!*, along with other works by Camus (Plieux: Chez l’auteur, 2018).

⁶⁸ Camus, R., *Le Grand Remplacement*, p.19.

⁶⁹ ‘The Great Replacement’, p.15.

⁷⁰ ‘An Open Letter’, p.1.

⁷¹ ‘The Inconvenient Truth’, p.1.

⁷² ‘The Great Replacement’, p.69.

future for white children'.⁷³ Written by the American Nazi David Lane (1938–2007), it enjoyed widespread dissemination as notoriety followed the action of Lane's group, The Order, a neo-Nazi terrorist organisation inspired by William Pierce's 1978 novel *The Turner Diaries*.⁷⁴ In the Christchurch manifesto, in answer to the question 'What do you want?' the author declares "we must ensure the existence of our people, and a future for white children".⁷⁵ When the actions of the Christchurch gunman are considered, theory and practice are thus potentially enjoined.

The Turner Diaries is also a reference point in the manifesto by John Earnest, issued shortly before the Poway synagogue shooting. It states: "Some of you have been waiting for The Day of the Rope for years. Well, The Day of the Rope is here right now – that is if you have the gnads to keep the ball rolling."⁷⁶ In Chapter 23 of *The Turner Diaries*, the Day of the Rope is a day of mass vengeance, where 55–60,000 white Americans are publicly hanged in a ten-hour period for being 'race-criminals' guilty of acts such as miscegenation, or collaborating with the Jews.⁷⁷ By declaring the Day of the Rope, Earnest clearly hopes others will follow him to action and, presumably, commit mass murder. Whilst the manifestos authored by Tarrant and Earnest enjoyed online dissemination on 8chan and include a setting in gamer culture, the influence of Lane and *The Turner Diaries* demonstrates that much older neo-Nazi ideals also exist in the ideological base of the authors. A reminder of the potentially limitless nature of this type of terrorism comes from Tarrant's manifesto, which declares "they [*sic*] are no innocents in an invasion".⁷⁸ The text goes on to justify the murder of children: "any invader you kill, of any age, is one less enemy your children will have to face".⁷⁹

5.2. Fun, Games and Shitposting

Far-right terrorism is, it seems, a laughing matter. Among a series of quips, in-jokes and self-referential comments, Tarrant claims to have learned ethno-nationalism from the children's video game 'Spyro the Dragon 3' – something that hardly sits well with other, more substantive political references to the Fourteen Words, the British fascist Oswald Mosley, and Norwegian terrorist Anders Breivik.

In an early assessment of the Christchurch terrorist's manifesto, Bellingcat researcher Robert Evans warned "this manifesto is a trap itself, laid for journalists searching for the meaning behind this horrific crime. There is truth in there, and valuable clues to the shooter's radicalization, but it is buried beneath ... 'shitposting'".⁸⁰ For the uninitiated, this is where an author "posts something typically nonsensical, surreal, and ironic online – sometimes in order to bait people into a reaction".⁸¹

This reaction was achieved when it was realised that 'The Great Replacement' namechecked the American conservative activist Candace Owens, with a national newspaper reporting she

⁷³ Michael, G., 'David Lane and the Fourteen Words', *Politics, Religion and Ideology*, 10.1 (2009): pp.43–61.

⁷⁴ Pierce published *The Turner Diaries* under the pseudonym Andrew Macdonald. After *Mein Kampf*, it was arguably the most important call to arms on the far right in the twentieth century. For an assessment, see Berger, J.M., 'The Turner Legacy: The Storied Origins and Enduring Impact of White Nationalism's Deadly Bible', ICCT Research Paper (The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2016), available at: <https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/ICCT-Berger-The-Turner-Legacy-September2016-2.pdf>, last visited: 29 January 2020.

⁷⁵ 'The Great Replacement', p.7. It is unclear why Tarrant replaced the original word 'secure' with 'ensure,' although this hardly changes the meaning.

⁷⁶ 'The Open Letter', p.7.

⁷⁷ Macdonald, A., *The Turner Diaries* (Hillsboro, WV: National Vanguard Books, 1995), pp.160–169.

⁷⁸ 'The Great Replacement', p.13.

⁷⁹ 'The Great Replacement', p.22.

⁸⁰ Evans, R., 'Shitposting, Inspirational terrorism and the Christchurch Mosque massacre', *Bellingcat*, 15 March 2019.

⁸¹ Manavis, S., 'What is shitposting? And why does it matter that the BBC got it wrong?', *New Statesman*, 8 November 2019, available at: <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/media/2019/11/what-is-shitposting-and-why-does-it-matter-bbc-brexitcast-laura-kuenssberg-got-it-wrong>, last visited: 6 January 2020.

had been “named as killer’s ‘biggest influence’ in his manifesto”.⁸² It is highly unlikely that Owens, who is black, inspired the Christchurch terrorist. Robert Evans argues “this was almost certainly misdirection”.⁸³ Owens is a contentious figure for some on the American left due to her support for President Trump and insistence that black Americans should abandon the Democrats. Evans believes that, when read in context, Tarrant’s “references to Owens were calculated to spark division, and perhaps even violence, between the left and the right”.⁸⁴ There are other examples of this. Tarrant’s claim that hundreds of thousands of members of the military in Europe, and a similar number of police officers, “also belong to nationalist groups”⁸⁵ should almost certainly be seen in a similar light.

This brings us to something hidden beneath the shitposting and quips – possible attempts in the Christchurch manifesto to lay false evidence trails. There are claims to have made money investing in cryptocurrency, and a hint of possible earlier involvement in violence by claiming to have been working as a part-time “kebab removalist”.⁸⁶ This is a reference to the Serbian paramilitary song ‘Remove kebab’, which glorifies violence against Muslims in the Balkans.⁸⁷ These claims may be true, or they may equally be false, but any thorough investigation into the Christchurch crimes will accordingly have to examine each. This may even extend to suggestions that are almost certainly fictitious, such as having contacted “the reborn Knights Templar for a blessing in support of the attack”⁸⁸ and having had “brief contact” with “Knight Justiciar Breivik”.⁸⁹ How much contact would it be possible to have with Anders Behring Breivik, who is in a top-security prison in Norway with limited access to the outside world?

5.3. The Challenge of locating the far right on the ideological scale

In earlier chapters we noted the mixture of ideological positions adopted by Brenton Tarrant and Patrick Crusius in particular, and to analyse this we return to some historically familiar arguments. In Weimar Germany, the Nazis and communists had in many ways competed for the same target audience, both claiming to best represent the working class against exploiters.⁹⁰ That Tarrant and Crusius each adopt positions that combine racial separatism with anger at economic exploitation and the behaviour of big corporations is therefore not an aberration. Although Tarrant’s manifesto makes 15 references to corporations and Crusius’s 12, the shorter length of the latter’s text ensures it is the sixth-most popular term in his testament.

Further complexities, and indeed paradoxes, abound. After describing himself as a “fascist” and an “eco-fascist”, Tarrant claims that the “nation with the closest political and social values to my own is the People’s Republic of China”.⁹¹ China is officially a communist country, and one recognised for its homogeneity, but hardly for its environmentalism. Indeed, it is the world’s most polluting country, emitting more carbon dioxide than the United States and the European

⁸² Apen-Sadler, D. and Jennifer Smith, ‘Right-wing commentator Candace Owens is eviscerated for putting a LAUGHING emoji on a post about the New Zealand mosque massacre after being named as killer’s “biggest influence” in his manifesto’, *Daily Mail*, 15 March 2019, available at: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6812739/Christchurch-shooting-Candace-Owens-eviscerated-putting-LAUGHING-emoji-post-attack.html>, last visited: 7 January 2020.

⁸³ Evans, R., ‘Shitposting, Inspirational terrorism and the Christchurch Mosque massacre’, *Bellingcat*, 15 March 2019.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ ‘The Great Replacement’, p.10.

⁸⁶ ‘The Great Replacement’, p.5.

⁸⁷ ‘Remove Kebab’, *Serbia Strong*, 4 December 2018, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WshDkAbFBoc>, last visited: 28 January 2020.

⁸⁸ ‘The Great Replacement’, p.10.

⁸⁹ ‘The Great Replacement’, p.18.

⁹⁰ See, for example, Klussman, U., ‘The Ruthless rise of the Nazis in Berlin’, *Spiegel International*, 29 November 2012, available at: <https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/how-the-nazis-succeeded-in-taking-power-in-red-berlin-a-866793.html>, last visited: 29 January 2020.

⁹¹ ‘The Great Replacement’, p.15.

Union combined.⁹² The environment also takes a major chunk of Crusius's focus. In declaring the position that "our lifestyle is destroying the environment of our country",⁹³ a familiar green argument is presented. Elsewhere, however, Crusius moves towards a race-based futurism in which he expects the corporate appetite for cheap labour to stall: "Automation is a good thing as it will eliminate the need for new migrants to fill unskilled jobs".⁹⁴

Sometimes, far-right extremists do not say what some might expect. The author of the Christchurch manifesto seemingly rejects homophobia⁹⁵ and, whilst it expectedly considers celebrities like Madonna, Michael Jackson, Kurt Cobain, and Freddie Mercury evidence of a decadent, dying culture, there is focused criticism of Mercury's hedonism, but not of his sexuality.⁹⁶ Perhaps the homosexuality of Renaud Camus, the originator of the Grand Replacement thesis, has influenced thinking here.

5.4. Internationalism

The content analysis in Chapters 2–4 demonstrates that two of the three manifestos we considered were deeply internationalist in their outlook. Tarrant's focus on European peoples envisages a white, European internationalism, inevitably bounded, not by language, culture, or national borders, but by race. The term 'European' is the fifth-most common in his Christchurch manifesto, appearing no fewer than 69 times (see Table 1). John Earnest is similarly minded, with 'European' the tenth-most common term in his text (see Table 2). Indeed, if we add the word 'whites' to Earnest's word count – his sixth-most frequent term – the view of an ethnically driven, pan-nationalist vision is even further enhanced. The exception here is very much 'The Inconvenient Truth', in which Patrick Crusius is overwhelmingly focused on domestic matters. Only in the final paragraph does he mention "the beginning of the fight for America and Europe".⁹⁷

5.5. The problem of popular arguments

For disinformation to work, it must be presented alongside accurate, reliable information from respected sources. Similarly, if far-right terrorist manifestos consisted solely of calls for mass murder and statements of racial hatred, and appeared draped in Nazi banners or the SS Death's Head, they would likely have little popular appeal. A significant part of the threat from contemporary terrorist manifestos is the combination of deeply dangerous messages – for example, the open calls to racial violence in all three texts considered here – with comment and criticisms that will appeal to mainstream audiences. The material on the environment and criticism of corporations, discussed above, provides evidence of this. Further examples may be found in 'The Great Replacement', where Tarrant assesses the failures of contemporary conservatives, asking: "What has modern conservatism managed to conserve? What does it seek to conserve? The natural environment? Western Culture? Ethnic autonomy? Religion? The nation? The race?"⁹⁸

It is likely that few modern conservatives in the UK view the world in terms of preserving race or ethnic autonomy. Any reader would struggle to find such declarations at a Conservative

⁹² Rapier, R., 'China emits more carbon dioxide than the US and EU combined', *Forbes*, 1 July 2018, available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rrapier/2018/07/01/china-emits-more-carbon-dioxide-than-the-u-s-and-eu-combined/>, last visited: 5 February 2020.

⁹³ 'The Inconvenient Truth', p.2.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ 'The Great Replacement', p.16.

⁹⁶ 'The Great Replacement', p.35.

⁹⁷ 'The Inconvenient Truth', p.4.

⁹⁸ 'The Great Replacement', p.24.

Party conference or issued by conservative parties elsewhere in the West. But conservatives do, supposedly, seek to defend the environment, the culture of the West, and their own nation-states. Have they done so? There is a danger here, for conservatives across the Western world, of such criticisms landing a blow, especially in countries where conservative parties are under attack from populist rivals.

5.6. Copycats

‘The Great Replacement’ manifesto refers directly to Anders Breivik. The Poway synagogue manifesto, ‘An Open Letter’, refers to Tarrant’s manifesto. Patrick Crusius’s ‘The Inconvenient Truth’ opens with a declaration of support for the Christchurch shooter and his manifesto. If terrorism is a conversation, it is one where far-right participants are now repeatedly referencing earlier discussions, and each other, as well as the general public. This is beginning to have a serious knock-on effect, which poses a challenge to the authorities and to our communities. On 7 January 2020, an unnamed 17-year-old male from County Durham was jailed for six years and eight months, having been found guilty of six terrorism offences in November 2019.⁹⁹ Among his preparations was the writing of a manifesto, reportedly inspired by Breivik’s 2011 tome, entitled ‘Storm 88: A manual for practical and sensible guerilla [*sic*] warfare against the kike system in Durham City area, Sieg Heil’.¹⁰⁰

On 9 October 2019 in Halle, Germany, there was a botched attempt to attack a synagogue on Yom Kippur, followed by a shooting at a fast-food outlet nearby. Two people were killed. The alleged gunman, Stephan Balliet, livestreamed his attack to a gaming site, and released a manifesto online, in English.¹⁰¹ Just before Christmas, police arrested a Polish man living in Luton, England, on suspicion of plotting to carry out a terrorist attack inspired by the one in Christchurch.¹⁰²

The need to break the chain of manifesto followed by attack, followed by manifesto, followed by attack, is pressing.

⁹⁹ ‘Durham teenager sentenced for terrorism offences’, *Counter Terrorism Policing*, 7 January 2020, available at: <https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/durham-teenager-guilty-of-terrorism-offences/>, last visited: 29 January 2020.

¹⁰⁰ ‘Teen plotted terror attack on shuls’, *Jewish Chronicle*, 22 November 2019.

¹⁰¹ ‘Deadly attack exposes lapses in German security apparatus’, *Der Spiegel*, 11 October 2019, available at: <https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/far-right-terrorism-in-germany-shooting-exposes-lapses-in-security-apparatus-a-1291075.html>, last visited: 29 January 2020.

¹⁰² Camber, R. and Larisa Brown, ‘Far-right terror plot smashed’, *Daily Mail*, 12 December 2019, available at: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7787393/Man-arrested-dawn-raid-planning-attack-inspired-Christchurch-massacre-sources-say.html>, last visited: 29 January 2020.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

Having established the ideological diversity present in far-right terrorist manifestos and the international, self-referential nature of the violence they justify, this chapter focuses on two core issues. First, how might we reduce the political space in which the far right is able to operate, in this country? The dangers inherent in political disaffection and distrust towards authority, plus low levels of community interaction, are issues deserving of institutional response. That doing so can weaken the propaganda base of the far right should be considered an added bonus. Second, the international nature of the contemporary far-right is characterised as both something in need of a proper, international response, and a potential weakness in an era when national sovereignty, as opposed to racial separatism, is being re-established.

6.1. Political disaffection and institutional distrust

With far-right extremism being the fastest-growing terror threat in the UK,¹⁰³ the social grievances and political concerns driving its growth need to be critically examined and robustly addressed.

Predominantly white working-class communities – particularly in pro-Brexit areas in northern England, the Midlands, and post-industrial Wales – have suffered from acute forms of political disaffection and disillusionment with public authorities. This is visible in a number of ways. North East England, which has witnessed a notable spike in the number of far-right referrals to Prevent and the recent imprisonment of a would-be neo-Nazi terrorist in Durham, is a region of particular interest in this context.¹⁰⁴ Traditionally minded communities in deindustrialised regions which have not fared well under the market forces of globalisation tend to be in a more protectionist economic and cultural space. Stronger appreciation of socio-economic and cultural anxieties over the pace of technological and social change in policymaking could play an important role in fighting the growth of far-right extremism.

A lack of trust in public authorities – some of whom are increasingly seen to run against their primary function of ensuring public safety and the security of communities – provides fertile ground for the far right's anti-establishment narratives to gain traction. The credibility of public authorities – including the police – has been called into disrepute.¹⁰⁵ Perceived mismanagement of cases of large-scale sexual exploitation involving perpetrators of South Asian Muslim origin, in both post-industrial towns and major cities such as Manchester, are likely to undermine forms of institutional trust within predominantly white British, working-class communities. It is in these social conditions that far-right extremist narratives containing anti-establishment sentiment and 'Muslim invader' rhetoric could gather appeal. The potential for future attacks, aimed not just at minority communities but also at the officials and authorities who have apparently mishandled such cases, cannot be discounted.

Grooming cases have the potential to feed into the broader perception that institutions cannot be trusted to prioritise public safety and are ultimately disinterested in addressing primary social grievances within predominantly white working-class communities. It is important to note that Brenton Tarrant's pre-attack manifesto included a list of online links to cases of sexual exploitation cases in England that involved 'rings' consisting of male perpetrators of South Asian Muslim heritage. A myriad of developments – social, cultural, economic – have

¹⁰³ 'Fastest-growing UK terror threat from far-right', *BBC News*, 19 September 2019, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-49753325>.

¹⁰⁴ 'Durham neo-Nazi teenager convicted of planning terror attack', *BBC News*, 20 November 2019, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-50470957>.

¹⁰⁵ Norfolk, A., 'Rotherham police chief: we ignored sex abuse of children', *The Times*, 18 January 2020, available at: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/police-chief-we-ignored-sex-abuse-of-children-hgrhc358v>.

created feelings of ‘political abandonment’ and anti-authority sentiment that can be exploited by far-right extremist forces. National politicians, local councillors, police forces, and social services must all develop a comprehensive re-engagement strategy designed to rebuild public confidence and regain the trust of those living in such disaffected communities. This may be a task that takes many years, and involve a return to reports such as Ted Cantle’s of 2001 on parallel lives and Dame Louise Casey’s of 2016 on opportunity and integration. Both are discussed in the following section.

6.2. Community relations

The divisive nature of the manifestos is reflective of extremist narratives that are used to inflame social tensions in urbanised parts of the UK. This type of material is particularly problematic if cross-group contact is limited.

The 2001 report by Professor Ted Cantle suggested that intergroup tensions could be addressed through greater cross-community contact:

In order to combat the fear and ignorance of different communities which stems from the lack of contact with each other we propose that each area should prepare a local cohesion plan, as a significant part of its Community Strategy. This should include the promotion of cross-cultural contact between different communities at all levels, foster understanding and respect, and break down barriers.¹⁰⁶

Fifteen years later, the central view advanced in the Cantle report was similarly expressed in a 2016 report by Dame Louise Casey:

There is strong evidence around the benefits that can derive from high levels of meaningful contact between people from different backgrounds. ... social mixing can ... increase trust and understanding between groups ... Whereas ... a lack of mixing can ... increase community tensions and risk of conflict.¹⁰⁷

The Cantle and Casey reports on integration correctly identified social, residential, and economic segregation as a fundamental problem from a social cohesion perspective. A lack of contact between different social groups in ethnically and religiously diverse parts of ‘post-industrial Britain’ remains a serious problem from a counter-extremism perspective. Experiences of positive intergroup contact through active participation in cross-community projects – skills schemes, health-awareness workshops, inter-institution competitions – can help to foster meaningful intergroup relations that act as an effective shield from deliberately divisive narratives constructed by extremist narratives.

6.3. Responding to the far right

In the far-right context, these divisive narratives tend to incorporate negative stereotypes of British Muslims, based on wide-ranging generalisations. This can be especially problematic in deindustrialised parts of the UK that not only are ethnically and religiously separated in terms of neighbourhood, friendship group, and employment network, but also have been disproportionately affected by cuts to public expenditure over the past decade. This has arguably intensified the perceived competition for resources along ethnic, racial, and religious lines. Policymakers need to devote more energy – and, crucially, resources – towards improving

¹⁰⁶ ‘Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team Chaired by Ted Cantle’, Home Office (2001): p.11, available at: <http://tedcantle.co.uk/pdf/communitycohesion%20cantlereport.pdf>.

¹⁰⁷ Casey, Dame L., ‘The Casey Review: A review into opportunity and integration’, Department for Communities and Local Government (2016), available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575973/The_Casey_Review_Report.pdf.

social cohesion outcomes, as well as economically regenerating ailing post-industrial towns and inner-city areas that are both socially segregated and socio-economically disadvantaged.

A characteristic of the far-right manifestos produced in Christchurch and at Poway is their international focus, rooted in a transnational, white identity. Contrary to what many activists on the left argue, it is not that the far right wishes to put up borders. Tarrant's cross-continental focus showed that he wished to tear down barriers between 'brother nations' on terms rooted in racial and ancestral heritage. In the UK, at least, the international nature of such thinking may prove to be a weakness, not a strength. It is potentially a hard sell in a Britain that prides itself not on racial identity but, rather, on strong class, regional, and national identities. If there was something rather un-British about the BNP,¹⁰⁸ there is even less of an instinctive relationship between Britons who have just voted for Brexit, declaring the importance of national sovereignty, and an international identity politics in which those from Warsaw to Wyoming to Walsall are invited to unite around a common white identity. Just as overtly Nazi organisations rarely prospered in a Britain where at least part of the national narrative comes from having 'saved' ourselves and others from Nazi domination, so broadly 'international' campaigns present ready weaknesses for counter-extremism practitioners, and political rivals, to attack. We should not be afraid to do so. It also seems equally unlikely that the type of bible-quoting anger in John Earnest's manifesto will find a ready home in a Britain where religious adherence has rarely featured heavily on the far right. Political attacks on such material from these angles may thus prove productive.

Challenging the distribution of far-right pre-attack manifestos through the law is a further option for the authorities. Here the nature of technology may, however, mitigate against relying on such an approach. Once a document is in pdf form, its distribution on file-sharing sites, and on the dark web, will follow as a matter of course. Whilst possession of such material may provide an opportunity for an intervention from policies such as Prevent, legislating far-right material into the dustbin of history may prove easier said than done. This is not to rule out such an approach, but it would appear one with very significant limitations.

At an international level, a legislative approach seems even more likely to fail. Each of the terrorist attacks considered in this analysis was publicised in advance by the alleged perpetrator on 8chan. After the El Paso shooting, the forum closed, as its network provider, Cloudflare, terminated its access. It has reportedly reappeared, although it is inaccessible via conventional search engines.¹⁰⁹ As Macklin points out, any response to far-right agitation in the United States will differ from that in Europe, due to America's legally enshrined commitment to freedom of speech via the First Amendment. When added to the inability of some countries in Eastern Europe to address far-right agitation, it does suggest Western European nations such as the UK are operating within a framework in which restrictions on written materials are unlikely to ever be blanket. Indeed, Tarrant's 'Great Replacement' appears to have been translated and printed in significant numbers in Russia and Ukraine in the months following his attack.¹¹⁰

6.4. Policy recommendations

The proposals that follow call for new policies, and in places new thinking, at the local, national, and international level. Underpinning each is a belief that significant weaknesses exist in many

¹⁰⁸ The BNP is a far-right political party that, under its former leader Nick Griffin, enjoyed some success among white working-class voters in parts of England until about 2014. Its collapse since then has been marked.

¹⁰⁹ Macklin, G., 'The El Paso terrorist attack: The chain reaction of global right wing terror', CTC Sentinel 12.11 (December 2019): pp.1-9 (*The Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*).

¹¹⁰ 'The Russians and Ukrainians Translating the Christchurch shooter's manifesto', *Bellingcat Anti-Equality Monitoring*, 14 August 2019, available at: <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2019/08/14/the-russians-and-ukrainians-translating-the-christchurch-shooters-manifesto/>, last visited: 29 January 2020.

of our societies that need to be addressed for liberal democracy to prosper. Filling this vacuum will also deprive the far right of much of its current oxygen supply.

- Develop an effective community relations strategy through Prevent that views social cohesion as an integral part of a broader counter-extremism strategy. Such initiatives would have a particular focus on post-industrial towns and inner-city areas historically blighted by disruptive race relations and which have witnessed a recent growth of extremist referrals to Prevent.
- Public authorities – including police forces – must engage with white British working-class communities where trust has been undermined by industrial-scale cases of sexual grooming and exploitation. There must also be greater co-ordination between police forces, social services, and community groups on this front, as well as greater central funding to support an effective multi-agency approach.
- There has to be a renewed focus on the possible connection between the UK's politico-economic model and the threat of far-right extremism. A more inclusive economy – one that is committed to comprehensive public investment in skills development, tackles forms of precarious employment, and promotes local regeneration – may ease anti-system sentiment within 'at risk' communities.
- The international focus of white far-right terrorism requires a co-ordinated international response. This needs to be at the level of the United Nations, not that of a regional bloc such as the European Union. Indeed, the need to share intelligence, monitor the distribution of extremist materials, and respond to the cross-fertilisation of ideas from far-right activists increasingly working across continents, requires the type of response that can only come from combining the national and the truly international.
- Politicians need to recognise that the demographic change some Western countries are experiencing is significant and, for some citizens, distinctly unsettling. Immigration is not always an issue on which the predictions or commitments of politicians have proved accurate. On 8 March 1971, in a debate on what was to become the 1971 Immigration Act, the (Conservative) Home Secretary, Reginald Maudling, told the House of Commons:

It is right to say that if we are to get progress in community relations, we must give assurance to the people who were already here before the large wave of immigration that this will be the end and that there will be no further large-scale immigration.¹¹¹

That did not prove to be the case. In France, Renaud Camus, the inventor of the Great Replacement theory, is currently facing a jail sentence for referring to immigration as an 'invasion'.¹¹² Given the contradictory statements politicians in many nations have made on immigration in the past, such actions appear unwise, if not undemocratic.

- Finally, political trends come and go. It could be that the current trend of posting manifestos immediately before an attack comes to be seen, by the next generation of far-right terrorists, as old-fashioned or clichéd. The method of publicising or justifying such attacks may change, as technology advances and the state garners its technological forces in response. There seems little doubt, however, that far-right terrorism will be with us for some time to come.

¹¹¹ Hansard, House of Commons Debates, 8 March 1971, Vol 813, col 44, available at: <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1971/mar/08/immigration-bill>, last visited: 28 January 2020.

¹¹² Khanna, R., 'French intellectual sentenced to prison for calling mass immigration an "invasion"', *Recently Heard*, 22 January 2020, available at: <https://recentlyheard.com/2020/01/22/french-intellectual-sentenced-to-prison-for-calling-mass-immigration-an-invasion/>, last visited: 29 January 2020.

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