3-27-1981

The Demise of the 'Jolly Green Giant' and the Rise of Racism in Euro-America

Prexy Nesbitt

Columbia College Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.colum.edu/nesbittwritings

Part of the Arts and Humanities Commons, Business Commons, and the Law Commons

Recommended Citation


https://digitalcommons.colum.edu/nesbittwritings/24

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Rozell 'Prexy' Nesbitt Anti-Apartheid Collection at Digital Commons @ Columbia College Chicago. It has been accepted for inclusion in Rozell 'Prexy' Nesbitt Writings and Speeches by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Columbia College Chicago. For more information, please contact drossetti@colum.edu.
Talk to WSCF Salt of the Earth Conference  
El Escorial, Spain  
April 27, 1981

"The Demise of the 'Jolly Green Giant' and the Rise of Racism in Euro-America"

THE PROBLEM AND ITS BASES

"Race prejudice, from its inception, became part of the social heritage, and as such both exploiters and exploited, for the most part are born heirs to it. It is possible that most of those who propagate and defend race prejudice are not conscious of its fundamental motivation. To paraphrase Adam Smith: They who teach and finance race prejudice are by no means such fools as the majority of those who believe and practice it."

( Oliver Cox, Caste, Class & Race, 1948, p. 333)

I was in the East End of London yesterday and attended a meeting of the unemployed. I listened to the wild speeches, which were just a cry for "bread, bread" and on my way home I pondered over the scene and I became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism...My cherished idea is a solution for the social problem, i.e., in order to save the 40,000,000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom from a bloody civil war, the colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle the surplus population, to provide new markets for the goods produced in the factories and mines. The Empire as I have always said is a bread and butter question. If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists.

(Cecil Rhodes in 1895)

*The "Jolly Green Giant" is an advertising symbol for the Green Giant Company, a large transnational specializing in canned vegetables and registered in Minnesota. Green Giant has operations in Italy, Taiwan and the U.K. The company's logo is a giant white man clothed in green standing in a spanning-the-world-type pose.
In the beginning racism was considered an individual malpractice, a sin. Most definitions of racism were and remain (for most people) a matter of individual and interpersonal prejudice and/or discrimination.

Today, there is a more developed and sophisticated appreciation of racism. We can identify 3 key elements within current formulations. First and foremost, the systemic character of racism is noted. Secondly, racism's basic motivations are identified as being directly or indirectly derived from specific patterns of economic relations or interactions between peoples. Thirdly, and perhaps most critically, "racism" is seen as something chameleon-like in its form. Like the sound of the Portuguese letter "X" racism changes its appearance according to its context, to what lies in front or behind it. As a recent world consultation on "Churches Responding to Racism in the 1980s" observed in a task group drafting some working description of racism:

1. "Racism is increasingly a pervasive, world-wide phenomenon. It is not confined to certain countries or continents.

2. The pervasiveness of racism means in part that no economic system, be it socialism or capitalism or any other, is intrinsically immune to the cancer of racism.

3. Racism manifests itself in a multiplicity of ways on the local, national and international levels." 1)

1) "Churches Responding to Racism in the 1980's," PCR Information: Reports and Background Papers, IX, September 1980, p. 43
It is in a recent book by Professor Bernard Magubane that there can be found that which is, in my opinion, the most historically sound, apt, explanatory, and adequate conceptualization of racism. Identifying racism as "ideology", Dr. Magubane writes that:

"The ideology of racism, called into life and fed by the expansionist and exploitative socio-economic relations of capitalist imperialism, became a permanent stimulus for the ordering of unequal and exploitative relations of production along "racial" lines, and further demanded justification of these relations. The seemingly "autonomous" existence of racism today does not lessen the fact that it was initiated by the needs of capitalist development or that these needs remain the dominant factor in racist societies."  

---

2) Far too little is the basic question of the historical origins of racism discussed in what follows. Clearly, it does not suffice to say that racism came out of slavery and the slave trade. Its origins are more complex than that. Rather, I would suggest that the origin of racism can be located largely in the unfolding of the world's system of production and division of labor. It is in that historical process that we find a twined phenomenon: the emergence of the blue-eyed blonde, jolly green giant (the white supremacist nations) on the one hand and the gathering of "niggers", "coolies", "wogs" and "yellow pygmies with pocket knives" as Lyndon Johnson once called the Vietnamese, on the other. As W.E.B. DuBois wrote in his classic of the 1930's, Black Reconstruction, describing the role allotted to dark skinned or Third World people in the free enterprise system:

That dark and vast sea of human labor in China and India, the South Seas and all Africa; in the West Indies and Central America and in the United States—that great majority of mankind, on whose bent and broken backs rest today the founding stones of modern industry—shares a common destiny; it is despised and rejected by race and color; paid a wage below the level of decent living; driven, beaten, imprisoned and enslaved in all but name; spawning the world's raw material and luxury—cotton, wool, coffee, tea, cocoa, palm oil, fibers, spices, rubber, silks, lumber, copper, gold, diamonds, leather—how shall we end the list and where? All these are gathered up at prices lowest of the low, manufactured, transformed and transported at fabulous gain; and the resultant wealth is distributed and displayed and made the basis of world power and universal dominion and armed arrogance in London and Paris, Berlin and Rome, New York and Rio de Janeiro."

---


Thus, it is that no longer must we look merely into our own individual behaviours in order to address solving racism. Neither racism nor its antidote anti-racism thrive merely within individual hearts, minds, and souls. Racism must be faced in the context of the development of a society's entire matrix of relations. As an American sociologist - black and female - recently pointed out in an article on the situation faced by black Americans today:

...Out of the experience of the past 50 years, it can be seen that race-specific policies targeted on individuals can only have scattershot effects... the escape of a few thousands or tens of thousands from alienating conditions that determine the lives of an entire class numbering in the tens of millions will not end the alienation...

...That is why we must see the problem of the black underclass as systemic. Under our policy and our economy, the have-nots of society grudgingly accept the necessity of keeping the have-nots alive in their misery. The fact of their misery is considered their failure, not society's; it is not thought a proper function either of the "private sector" or of government to see to it that no class of citizens is deprived as class of the chance to lead human lives...

If it (racism) is to be solved, our goal must be nothing less than to redefine the purposes of our political economy. 4) (Italics mine)

---

Earlier this spring late one February evening a group of black people largely from Equatorial Guinea were at a Madrid discotèque when an altercation developed between one of their party and a man known as Jesus Javier Blanco Garcia or "Jota jota". As the tension mounted Jota jota pulled a gun and shot one of the Guineans in the stomach critically wounding him. He then opened fire wildly at some seven other black people in the discotèque. Some would say this "just a Saturday night incident not racially linked in any way." And, indeed, the Madrid police said just that. Jota jota, however, is not your ordinary disco dancer. He belongs to two ultra right wing Spanish groups known as Fuerza Nueva and Frente de la Juventud. The Jota jota incident is not a solitary one. Unfortunately, the last few years have seen a swelling tide of Jota jota-type incidents ranging from stabbings in Oslo and Stockholm to running people down with cars in London and Zurich to shootings in Madrid.

All of these incidents show specific traits. They are basically social incidents. They usually take place on social occasions, dances, concerts, music festivals, sports events, restaurants. They involve usually younger people and mixed (male-female) groups. The antagonists are usually working class or lower middle class. Historically, in most instances the people involved are not members of explicit right wing or racist political organizations. But recently more and more key participants include people who are members of various racist and neo-fascist organizations.

All of these social incidents, however, constitute but part of what could be dubbed 'a rising tide of racism'- inspired conflicts. In London the Metropolitan Police recorded some 3,827 attacks on Blacks and Asians during 1979 - an increase of 40.3 % since 1975. Most sources say that in 1980 the Home Office and Police registered even more attacks than in 1979. In France, according to the Association Henri Curiel (an organization monitoring French press clips) there were between May and August 1910,9 racist attacks, 5 anti-semitic attacks, 9 anti-democratic attacks and 17 actions claimed by self-proclaimed nazi organizations. Between September 1980 and January 1981 there were 24 racist attacks, 34 anti-semitic attacks, 15 anti-democratic attacks and 16 attacks claimed by Nazi-type organizations.

It is important to note here that police departments the world over are extremely loathe to record, let alone investigate racial incidents. There are various reasons for this but the end result is, as a London community leader recently said, "The police always try to avoid admitting that an incident is racialist." Sunday Times, February 8, 1981.
In addition to these social-racial incidents, though, there is another type of incident which is taking place more and more throughout Europe. These are organized and racially motivated attacks directed at individuals or groups precisely because of the victims belonging to a specific ethnic group. The attacks to which I refer are those seen more and more in Europe against foreign workers, black people, Indians, Jews, gypsies and others. Such offenses may at times be verbal as opposed to physical. On the other hand, they may entail the use of violent force against isolated members of various groups, e.g. breaking the windows of people's homes or attacking lone individuals at bus stops. But in all instances, whether "Paki-bashing" or "killing niggers" expeditions, they are the result of an organized effort. As a priest in an inner-city London housing estate recently described neo-Nazi recruitment of "skinheads" there:

"The Nazi's method of operation is to go to an area of high unemployment, pick one or two intelligent boys from, perhaps a right wing, military family, and persuade them of their views and then get them to stir up the kids who are not very articulate, (but who are scared to death because of unemployment, crime and general alienation, author's addition) who are intended to form the base of the movement." (6)

In both West Germany and the United States there is a clear pattern of attacks upon foreigners which seem to be conducted as organized campaigns by neo-Nazi and racist groups. (7) In both countries, Vietnamese refugees as well as others, seem to be a particular target. Often the actual physical attacks were prefaced by abusive letter-writing and leafleting campaigns and as well radio and newspaper warnings.


In both countries, these attacks seem to be rooted in not only rejection of the ethnic identity of the victim but also in the fact that the victims were brought in by the host state itself as its response to dislocation in the victim's own country. The arrival of the newcomers is portrayed by the hate groups as yet another way that "they will take our jobs and our housing".

"It's the flashing lights and wailing sirens which give elevated importance to what they are doing. Sometimes they use sirens deliberately to give alarm and raise apprehension."

Social Service Workers, p.77

"Selection procedure takes three months: initially you're called for interview and subtly probed about political affiliations - my impression is if you've taken part in any political activity, perhaps even signed a petition, they won't take you. They look for attitudes - if they turn you down they don't have to give reasons. Two officers investigate your reference, etc. I think, they particularly look for 'left-wing' inclinations."

Ex police officer p.66

"As in any organization, the leadership given from the top is crucial in setting the standards and determining the outlook of the organization as a whole. The public in Lambeth are no exception to this. However successful a progressive training programme was in equipping recruits with a positive attitude and ideas with which to combat the racism which seems rife throughout the police force, this would be nullified within a very short time if it was not backed up within the operational structure by strong leadership from the Commander and his senior officers and by a clear policy towards non-racist policing practices."

Lambeth Central Labour Party
There is another form of organized racial attacks which foreign workers, Jews, gypsies and people of colour in large municipalities throughout Euro America must face. It is that emanating from metropolitan police forces. It is my contention that essentially police forces in the large metropolitans (8) from London to Toronto and from Oslo to Los Angeles have declared war on foreign workers, Blacks, Indians, gypsies and others who are not blue-eyed, rosy cheeked and middle class. A recent excellent article by Michael Klare of the Institute for Policy Studies makes the same point. It quotes Prof. Lucian Pye of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as warning that "the teeming urban populations are so highly politicized that they have become in a sense loaded revolvers pointed at the responsible governments."

Klare continues in the same article to succinctly describe the current strategy of urban counter-insurgency being marketed by the USA saying:

"To preserve order in the face of these 'revolvers', US strategists favor the creation of omnipresent militarized police forces equipped with a sophisticated arsenal of riot control and anti-terrorist munitions. This approach, already fully tested in cities like Buenos Aires, Belfast and Manila, is being refined for use in other countries - including many in the industrialized world - that are likely to experience urban disorders in the years ahead." (9)

(8) The capitalist mode of production has itself created an objective problem beyond the resources of any mere police department to cope with. The fact that foreign workers, gypsies and black peoples, after being recruited to meet the economy's needs, are then systematically grouped in very few (relatively speaking) municipal centres of industrial activity, means that there develop physical problems of sheer concentrated numbers, density, accommodations and servicing which go far beyond mere policing questions. One third of France's minorities are in the Paris region, foreigners (largely Turkish) in West Germany reside mainly in Frankfurt, Munich and Stuttgart. In Britain, black and Asian immigrants are mainly in London, Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester. In the USA, Mexicans are mainly in Los Angeles and Chicago. Working blacks are mainly in Los Angeles, Chicago and Detroit. New York City is now over 60% Puerto Rican. Thus in a sense the police become an institutional buffer for the inadequacies of the system itself.

A recent article "Cities of Despair" in the Guardian Weekly May 3, 1981 highlighted another dimension of the same problem of the SUPERCITY when it pointed out that the fact of intense unemployment amongst youth from Brixton to Zurich was aggravated by a "lack of decent recreational facilities...which do not have an oppressively establishment approved and managed atmosphere."

And so the rubber bullets and vomiting gas abounds from Mexico City to Zurich for police forces are not neutral and uninvolved. The police are a political institution. As such, they are state-appointed participants representing specific material and non-material interests. They respond to the threat of the revolver. Additionally, individual police, more often than not, are members of the very white working class to lower middle class communities most threatened in the current political and economic circumstances. A recent article discussing the events in Brixton in London's The New Statesman highlighted the political content of police actions saying:

"Black activists link the behaviour of the police with the Nationality Bill which is presently before Parliament, and with the economic climate, which is biting hardest in the areas where black people live... With predictions of trouble proliferating as dole queues lengthened... Most blacks maintain that there was indeed a strategy and that it consisted of a crude reliance on the police to contain trouble." (10)

A further and perhaps classic illustration of the police as a political force and the police as warrior is the late 1960s covert war on black American political figures directed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and called COINTELPRO (Counter Intelligence Program). One stated purpose, among others, was "to prevent the rise of a black messiah who could unify and electrify the black masses." (11)

(10) Phillips Mike, "It Couldn't Happen to the Met", New Statesman, 17 April 1981, p.3.

(11) Listed as goal number two, the exact text of the 1967 FBI memorandum to field offices in 23 major US cities was as follows: "Prevent the rise of a 'messiah' who unify and electrify the militant black nationalist movement might have been such a "messiah"; he is the martyr of the movement today, and all aspire to this position. is less of a threat because of his age. could be a real contender for this position should he abandon his supposed "obedience" to "white liberal doctrines" (nonviolence) and embrace black nationalism. has the necessary charisma to be a real threat in this way."

The key missing name in the passage above is the late Dr. Martin Luther King. The reader is urged to examine the entire memorandum and other material available in United States Senate, 94th Congress, 1st Session, Hearings Before the Select Committee to Study Govern-
Moreover, there is an identifiable growth in what accurately can be called "police terrorism" (one measurable whether in the States, Canada or Europe in statistics (12) like those involving police/civilian kill ratios growth in 'sus'-type laws, increase in numbers of incidents involving police over-reaction, increase in per capita arrests of certain population groups as opposed to others (13) throughout Euro America. This trend is partly traceable to the police as a political force.

How does this police war manifest itself? It is revealed - often very dramatically, complete with international TV special and film proto-types, like Policewoman, Dallas, Kojac and SWAT - in the array of various units which exist in various cities throughout Europe and America especially created to contend with the so-called high crime or inner city areas (code words for the ghettos of the dark skinned peoples and/or foreign workers). It is also seen in a noteworthy pattern wherein the line between police and military realms becomes more and more blurred. The former US Undersecretary of State, U. Alexis Johnson, observed recently that "effective policing is like 'preventive medicine' ".

Footnote 11 page 9, cont'd

mental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, volume 6, Federal Bureau of Investigation and is encouraged to an excellent summary called "The FBI's Vendetta against Martin Luther King" by Jerry Berman in Halperin, Berman, Borosage, Marwick, The Lawless State: The Crimes Of the US Intelligence Agencies, Penguin, 1976.

(12) Another measurable item would be an examination of the political associations taken up by police officers throughout these metropolitan centres. It is rare indeed when one identifies even individual police espousing liberal doctrines, let alone entire units. Far more common is the presence in police locker rooms throughout Euro America of Conservative, neo-fascist and openly racist political literature. Also reflective of police political attitudes, despite numerous protestations that they are only the people's servants, neutral to issues, is the high correlation between police work, military work and mercenarism.

(13) For example, "Home Office figures (in London) show that between 1976 and 1979 "L" Division, which includes Brixton had the highest number of arrests under the notorious "sus" laws of any Metropolitan District outside the West End and 75% of those arrested were black. Between 1975 and 1979 there were at least six Special Patrol Group operations in the Brixton area." Colin Prescod, Chairman, Institute of Race Relations, London, letter to the editor. Guardian (London) April 20, 1981.
"The police can deal with threats to internal order in their formative states. Should they not be prepared to do this, 'major surgery' may be required in the sense that considerable force (i.e. military intervention) would be needed to redress those threats." (14)

In London there is the SPG, Special Patrol Group. In Germany there is the GSG9, Grenzschutzgruppe 9 (part of the "Bundesgrenzschutz", paramilitary organization for defence of "our" frontiers, created before remilitarization of FRG). In France there is the

In Detroit there was STRESS (acronym for Stop-The-Robberies-Enjoy Safe-Streets). Each of these units - often composed of people from the area with multiple language skills and sharp shooter ballistics ratings - are basically a blend of the police and military function. Rather than serving and protecting the communities in which they are located, these special forces are a sophisticated and subtle intermediate step to the introduction of an occupying army. In addition, within each of those units there are those legendary AJAXES specially known for their individual feats of brutalization. (The Gloves Davis Story).

There are special station houses in cities across Euro America re-known as places where a lot of beating and abuse goes on. They may not be regularly discussed in the New York Times, Le Monde or the International Herald Tribune, but the folk on the streets in these different areas know both persons and station houses well - usually too well.

The vocabulary of these special units is a vocabulary of war. In Chicago they talk about going into "the jungle" (the black ghetto) and about "gooking jungle bunnies" (black youth men or women).

In London, police talk about chasing black, Asian (and significantly, white working-class "skinheads") youth and "hammering" them. How much like "search-and-destroy" missions during the Vietnam war the following passage describing the police presence in Brixton

(14) As quoted in Klare, Michael, op.cit.
before the events of Saturday, April 10:

"Even respectable residents commented on it. Last week, the police launched Operation Swamp, timed for completion at the weekend. This was to foreshadow Operation Star, a London-wide production. Brixton had been chosen for the experimental run. Uniformed police officers were pulled out and sent in again in plain clothes. A thousand people were stopped and questioned in the four days immediately prior to the riot." (15)

Why the incidents, the attacks in this period? Secondly, who are the victims? Why are the attacks so consistently directed against "foreigners", blacks, Indians, gypsies and others? Let us turn to this second question first for, in responding to it, we begin to delineate the answer to the first as well.

The victims of the attacks are, for the most part, workers or the families of workers, i.e., they are people who came to various of the world's industrial centres (whether Western Europe, Canada or USA) seeking work. (16) They did not come seeking absorption into an oft-times hostile but always cold, blonde, blue-eyed, dominant culture. They did not come because they wanted to abandon the warmth of home, family and communal roots. They came for work in order to build better lives for themselves and especially for their children.

(15) Phillips, Mike, "It Couldn't Happen to the Met", New Statesman, 17 April 1981, p.3

(16) The case of black Americans is most blatant in this respect even if slightly different. The presence of 23 million black Americans in the USA is the result of an involuntary process, one which initially transported them as slaves. But the cases of West Indians in Canada and the United Kingdom, Italians in Switzerland, Assyrians in Sweden and Algerians in France, like others, must be seen as well to be the result of involuntary movements of people. All are not as rapacious and abrasive as the slave trade and slavery were to the African continent. But often the differences are of a secondary nature with the commonalities being the primary question.
The dislocation and costs to the migrant, Richard Wright described in his 1938 essay depicting the great black American migration north for jobs to the industrial centres of Chicago and Detroit just after WWI seems to accurately portray as well the movements of Africans into France, West Indians into the United Kingdom and Turks and other Mediterranean peoples into Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands and Scandinavia:

Perhaps never in history has a more utterly unprepared folk wanted to go to the city; we were barely born as a folk when we headed for the tall and sprawling centers of steel and stone. We, who were landless upon the land; we, who had barely managed to live in family groups; we, who needed the ritual and guidance of institutions to hold our atomized lives together in lines of purpose; we, who had known only relationships to people and not relationships to things; we who had never belonged to any organizations except the church and burial societies; we, who had had our personalities blasted with two hundred years of slavery and had been turned loose to shift for ourselves - we were such a folk as this when we moved into a world that was destined to test all we were, that threw us into the scales of competition to weigh our mettle. And how were we to know that, the moment we landless millions of the land - we men who were struggling to be born - set our awkward feet upon the pavements of the city, life would begin to exact of us a heavy toll in death? (17)

Or as Stephen Castles recently summed these movements up in his succinct and insightful essay on structural racism:

"Since 1945 nearly all Western European countries have become multi-ethnic societies. This development has been neither planned nor predicted ...."
The creation of the new ethnic minorities is the result of the migration of workers from the poorer peripheral areas of Europe and from Third World countries to meet the needs of Western Europe's expanding economies...

The position of ethnic minorities in Western European societies is not a product of their own cultural characteristics, nor merely of the attitudes of the receiving populations, but of a type of racism which is a *structural feature of modern capitalism*. (Emphasis added) (18)

Why the rise in racist incidents in this particular period? The primary arena in which a response must be situated is the economic one for, fundamentally, racism is an economic question. Therefore, it is necessary first to point out that today's growth in racism coincides with a period of global and structural changes in the labour market. These changes have ushered in a generalized sense of job insecurity throughout the world. Stephen Castles describes this changed situation as follows:

"However, the major change in the structure of the labour market is related to the transition from temporary migrant labour to permanent ethnic minorities, described above. This transition was itself an indication of the declining need for relatively cheap, mobile and flexible labour power - as a result of falling growth rates, rationalization of production and export of labour-intensive stages of production. The reduced need for this type of labour is now met by restricted groups of specially underprivileged workers: illegal migrants, refugees, women. The millions of migrant workers who have

(18) Castles, Stephen, "Structural Racism: Ethnic Minorities in Western Europe", a specially commissioned paper, PCR Information: Reports and Background Papers, 8, 1980, p. 18. This is but one of an excellent, comprehensive, and readily available set of documentation on racism in the 1980's compiled by the World Council of Churches in 1980.
remained and settled are taking on a new function vital for capital and the state: that of a social buffer at the lowest level of society, absorbing the main brunt of the restructuring of the economy and the labour process and helping to cushion higher strata against it." (19)

Secondly, and a concomitant aspect of the primary cause, there is a growing xenophobia through Euro America. Related to this is a greater and greater turn to the use of rituals and decoratives to re-invigorate dominant cultures. In Germany, reference is being made again to a greater Germany.

Thirdly, the growth in racism coincides with what I hypothetically call the demise of "the blonde, blue-eyed jolly green giant". Simply put, this is the fact that with the victory of the Vietnamese people and the victories in Angola, Mozambique and Guinee-Bissau came what was perceived as the last days of the great blonde, blue-eyed, overseas empires. The 1974 coup of the Portuguese Caetano government, the victory of the Nicaraguan people, the overthrow of the racist colonial system in Zimbabwe, the end of US occupation of the Panama Canal, and finally events in El Salvador marked a terminal stage for the mythological "civilizing missions" of the great Green Giant's overseas empires. In a sense this period of setbacks was foreseen much earlier by capital's corporate strategists and managers. For as early as by the mid-60's David Rockefeller of the Chase Manhattan Bank, Zbigniew Brzezinski, George Ball, Undersecretary of State for Economic Affairs in the Kennedy Administration, and others began to conceive of a Trilateral Commission intended to respond to what was seen as an "excess of democracy" throughout the world.

A key architect of the group is Samuel Huntington, an expert on forced urbanization, warfare and population management. In 1975 in the middle of the Angola crisis (amongst others) and a swelling popular tide to brake any possible US overt intervention into Angola, Huntington wrote sounding ever so much like Cecil Rhodes eighty years before:

(19)IBID, p.27
"For a quarter-century the United States was the hegemonic power in a system of world order. The manifestations of the democratic distemper, however have already stimulated uncertainty among allies and could well stimulate adventurism among enemies... A decline in the governability of democracy at home means a decline in the influence of democracy abroad."

(Emphasis Added) (20)

What this very generalized perception of the decline of the (white) West - aggravated by the 1973 Watergate affair - (widely publicized in the popularized major media of Euro-America, e.g., the Daily Telegraph (England), La Suisse (Switzerland), the San Francisco Chronicle (USA), Time (International distribution), Readers' Digest (International distribution) means for the average person is an intensification of his or her already-trembling self-esteem. Fears about the loss of one's job are intensified every evening by the standardized - newsless but highly dramatic - TV presentation of the day's events. Hence, the recruitment efforts of politically 'right' groups like the neo-Nazis, the Ku Klux Klan, the National Front, and the new religious right forces (currently largely in Canada and the USA but bound to spread) prosper in this environment so media-pumped with news each evening of an impending, soviet-initiated tidal wave of terrorism, spreading from the Third World to the very living rooms of "decent" and "proper" people. Thus it is that the Right groups can realistically implement projects like the current $1 billion one being undertaken by the Texas billionaire Nelson Bunker Hunt. (21) Hunt and others propose taking the bible


(21) For an excellent article exploring this entire question see Duncan, Muriel, "The Saving of America: Bible-based Politics Gains Momentum", The United Church Observer (Toronto, Ontario) November 1980: 14-19.
and their $6 million movie Jesus to every person on the planet by 1982. The others include former President Ford, astronaut James Irwin, Watergate prosecutor Leon Jaworski, cowboy star Roy Rogers and football quarterbacks Roger Stauback and Terry Bradshaw.

One major advertising theme recently publicised in all major Texas newspapers by the Hunt public relations team shows the astuteness of their approach. The theme is: We are not failures. We are not going to let the world fail either. Like the jingle of the Pepsi-Cola Company, "You got a lot to live and Pepsi's got a lot to give" or the Coca-Cola Company's "It's the Real Thing" (both of which slogans were introduced during 1969 when the US was being torn apart by the tensions derived from the Vietnam War), "we are not failures" is addressing itself to a fundamental despair abroad within the Euro-American social/political psyche. The "we are not failures" motif is an example of a growing reliance by the 'right' groups upon media (electronic and print) with special hopes for what two authors have recently called "advertising's pervasive myth-making power, a power...that can get stronger the more anxious, confused and uncertain modern society becomes." (22)

Black American novelist, James Baldwin, recently summarized this point far more eloquently when he wrote in a US magazine, The Nation:

"I am speaking of the break-up - the end - of the so over-extended Western empire. I am thinking of the black and non-white peoples who are shattering, re-defining and recreating history. Making all things new - simply by declaring their presence, by delivering their testimony...

One can speak, then, of the fall of an empire at that moment when, though all of the paraphernalia of power remain intact and visible and seem to function, neither the citizen-subject within the gates nor the indescribable hordes outside it believe in the morality or the reality of the Kingdom anymore - when no one, any longer, anywhere aspires to the empire's standards. (23)


It is in this historical moment, one being poignantly experienced on both sides of the Atlantic, that we see people desperately turn to their guns on the wall, Pakki-bashing and I-hate-Niggers T-shirts in an effort to obtain what, for them, are "final solutions". As Baldwin put it in the same essay:

"When Americans (and I would add Europeans) look out on the world, they see nothing but dark and menacing strangers who appear to have no sense of rhythm at all, nor any respect or affection for white people; and white Americans really do not know what to make of all this, except to increase the defense budget." (24)

KLANSMAN'S PRAYER

In the tradition of the Ku Klux Klan and the white race we will have a word of prayer. All Klansmen and white people bow your heads:

Our Lord we thank you for the opportunity to assemble here today and exercise our free rights that our fore-fathers fought and died for. That right to assemble and worship God and love one another as white men and women and to gather together and stand up for our rights.

Lord help us to be men and women and help us not to be afraid. Give us victory over the race mixers, the communists and the liberals. Give us victory over the politicians who sell their souls out for a vote. Give us victory over the socialists and communists.

Lord protect the Klan and bless our leadership. We thank Him for us being here; make everything that is said and done here today be for the honor and glory of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and may we always be thankful to Him, for we pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

- June 9, 1978, Decatur Alabama


(24) Baldwin, James "Carter this time: Notes on the House of Bondage", The Nation, November 1, 1980
There are yet two other key dimensions to this period's cascading racism. The first is a notable development of international networking by fascist/racist groups. The Ku Klux Klan moves into Canada concentrating (as it did earlier in the 1930's) on organizing around people's economic uncertainties. In Toronto it demands that the Canadian government give thirty five thousand dollars to every non-white family so as to facilitate that family's migration to another country. Bill Wilkinson, Wizard of the Invisible Empire of the KKK travels to London in early 1979 to help organize there against the Labour Party, its communism and its race mixing.

The Belgian Parliament points out that the VMO or Flemish Militant Order, a group dedicated to preventing foreign workers from voting, has financial and para-military links with the Ku Klux Klan and other racist/fascist organizations in the USA. The Council of Europe at its meeting in early October 1980 calls on member countries to combat a "resurgent propaganda which taking advantage of a period of social and economic uncertainty, is seeking to rehabilitate fascist theories in several Council of Europe countries." The British Joint Committee Against Racialism including representatives of the Labour Party, Conservative Party, British Jews Board of Deputies, British Council of Churches and the Home Office, HMG, in its Report "Racial Violence in Britain 1980" states about the situation in Britain:

"It must also be accepted that there are organized attempts being made by extreme right wing political groups to persecute and intimidate the black and Jewish communities. It is known that several if not all of these groups do have links with their European counterparts some of whom have been involved in the dreadful incidents of last year." (the Bristol Riots)

And in late 1980 the American National States Rights Party at a meeting in Belgium reportedly offers a gathering of European fascist groups - including the British League of St. George, Column 88 and the German Nazi group Deutsche Bürgerinitiative - 10,000 guns.

(26) Yerkey, Gary "Belgian Parliament will Look at Fascist Links between Europe and US", Christian Science Monitor, December 1, 1980