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### **Colin Jordan's 'Merrie England' and 'Universal Nazism'**

The politics of Colin Jordan are perhaps not difficult to sum up: he was a British postwar neo-Nazi, one who specifically placed race above the nation, and so saw his ideas as part of an international attempt to rehabilitate Nazism as a major political force. This gravitated around promoting revolutionary violence, to be carried out by an elite task-force. The vanguard would fight to overcome an alleged Jewish conspiracy that corrupts contemporary society. Jordan also developed strong views on religion, rejecting Christianity as essentially Jewish. Instead, he promoted a pagan worldview that gave cosmic significance to his racial, revolutionary ideas. He developed this Nazi *Weltanschauung*, or worldview, from the fanatical interwar British Nazi Arnold Leese. Jordan also idolised Hitler and other leading Nazis, such as Rudolf Hess.

In this paper, I want to develop Jordan's ideas promoting racial revolution, linking local and national activism with the need for the regeneration of the whole white race, as he understood this concept. This connected his British neo-Nazism with a global 'Universal Nazism', an idea he promoted for example as part of the activities of the World Union of National Socialists, an organisation he helped to form and run from 1962. Moreover, it is important to stress that his writings, his main legacy following his death in 2009, actively attempt to give licence to commit acts of extremism, including revolutionary violence, to people attracted to neo-Nazi far-right ideologies.

To develop this theme of giving licence to violence, it is worth sidetracking a little to briefly develop some of the current thinking on the Holocaust from expert on genocide and the Holocaust, Professor Aristotle Kallis. In a paper entitled "'Licence' and Genocide in

the East", Kallis examines the willingness to commit violence inspired by Nazi ideology during the Holocaust (Kallis, 2007). In particular, Kallis was interested in how people attempted to overcome a sense of cognitive dissonance, or a disconnection, between transgressing a moral taboo (i.e. killing Jewish people and others deemed worthy of elimination) and the racial-utopian desire promoted by Nazi ideology that argues that certain people should be eliminated.

To achieve this broad acceptance of a new moral world, one where mass killing becomes possible, figures of authority within the Nazi system need to build a sustained culture that supported such extreme instances moral transgression. To achieve this, Kallis stresses that the culture developed by the Nazi regime was able to give people many formal and informal indications that such extreme acts could be viewed as acceptable. So official propaganda demonising Jews giving them superhuman qualities, speeches by leading politicians proclaiming a racial revolution, alongside formal orders to kill civilians in wartime, all authorised the morally unacceptable to become legitimate in the name of the wider Nazi cause. Kallis calls these interventions by the Nazi machine giving licence: Licence firstly to hate, and then eventually to kill on a mass scale.

I think this quality of Nazism, an ideology that is predicated on a fundamental dissonance between the goals of the racial revolution and our most basic understanding of morality, can be extended outside the context of the Holocaust and into analysis of postwar neo-Nazis. Such protagonists are also concerned with developing cultures that give licence to extreme views, which justify the morally unacceptable and extreme. So

postwar neo-Nazis also develop a culture, through writings, webpages, societies, and so forth, that demonises those it regards racially inferior, often by giving them super and / or sub human qualities. At bottom, the serious neo-Nazis, such as Jordan, promote a revolutionary overthrow of one order, deemed decadent and corrupt, in order to establish a new racially 'pure' society.

Of course, the Nazi state was supremely powerful during the period of the Holocaust, and so could offer licences to hate and to kill to a whole society. Postwar neo-Nazis are nowhere near achieving state power. Nevertheless, when we turn to the far, far smaller, counter cultural sphere of postwar neo-Nazism, Colin Jordan's writings, and living example, can be seen as giving licence to extremism. Operating on the borders of legality, Jordan offers activists a discourse that seeks to reframe the dissonance between the morally acceptable and neo-Nazi ideological goals. His work attempts to develop a licence to hate and to act violently, in particular by idealising a revolutionary vanguard. In some of his more extreme moments, he also talks of murder, and his writings can be seen as justifying the notion of killing for the revolutionary cause, especially when the victim is Jewish.

To achieve this, Jordan needed to cultivate himself as an authority figure within the movement, a feature we can see in his biography from his early years as an activist onwards. Before the war, a teenage Jordan visited Nazi Germany, an experience which he would later draw on in his postwar writings. During the war itself, he served in the Royal Army Medical Corps, after which he studied at Cambridge University. Here he formed a Nationalist Club, and after graduating he set up his first standalone organisation, the Birmingham Nationalist Book Club, before joining with A. K. Chesterton's far-right League of Empire Loyalists in the 1950s.

In 1956 he gained his first criminal conviction, and significantly also set up the White Defence League, with funding secured from the estate of interwar British Nazi, Arnold Leese. The WDL was active in the Not-

ting Hill Riots, and by 1960 merged with the National Labour Party to form the British National Party (the second of four). After internal differences, Jordan and fellow neo-Nazi John Tyndall left the BNP, and on April 20 1962 formed the National Socialist Movement, again reconfiguring Nazism to a postwar British context. In the summer of 1962, Jordan met with American Nazi Party leader George Lincoln Rockwell, and other postwar neo-Nazis, to form the World Union of National Socialists. This set out the principles of a new 'Universal Nazism' in the notorious Cotswold Declaration. Again, the theme of racial unity allowed for a global union, with national Nazi organisations linking up to form a wider, global network.

Jordan's extremist National Socialist Movement was also directed towards revolutionary violence, and possessed a paramilitary unit, called Spearhead, with its own uniform. Jordan was wearing this outfit at the notorious 1962 Trafalgar Square demonstration to promote the movement to the nation. After the rally turned violent, he was convicted for organising and equipping a paramilitary force for political ends. In the 1960s, National Socialist Movement members were active in a number of racially motivated attacks, while Jordan himself was imprisoned for distributing racist literature. 1967 was a key year in postwar far-right politics, as the National Front was formed. Tellingly, after his release in 1968, Jordan decided to remain outside the NF, and formed the uncompromising British Movement, an openly neo-Nazi grouping. Again, highlighting Jordan's proclivity for political violence, the British Movement also developed its own paramilitary grouping, the National Socialist Group.

Jordan's role as a leader of neo-Nazi extremists remained intact until he was prosecuted for stealing women's underwear from Tesco's in the mid 1970s – which seriously dented his credibility in neo-Nazi circles. Thereafter, he retired from active engagement with such vanguard movements, yet continued to develop his profile as a neo-Nazi publicist. This included publishing the deeply anti-Semitic magazine originally cre-

ated by Arnold Leese, *Gothic Ripples*. Some of these writings are reproduced online, for example a set of *Gothic Ripples* essays outlining his general worldview is currently available, titled *The Way Forwards*.

From the 1990s, he also published a number of books that have become central to his legacy, and again are available to purchase online. This included two fictional pieces, which set his ideas in the form of far-right novellas, *Merrie England – 2000* and *The Uprising*. *Merrie England* was published in 1992, and has echoes of George Orwell's *1984* as it depicts the takeover of modern Britain by a totalitarian, multiracial society, which imposes multicultural values. *The Uprising* meanwhile is more akin to *The Turner Diaries*. It was published in 2002, and depicts a violent revolution in Britain by an elite neo-Nazi taskforce. Finally, his book of selected writings, *National Socialism: Vanguard of the Future* again offers readers a summary of his ideology. Jordan died in 2009, though before his death he gave some financial support to the British People's Party, formed in 2005, and developed a series of interviews to promote his ideas to the wider National Socialist community.

By analysing these later, key texts we can see how Jordan's ideas can help to give licence to hate, and licence to commit acts of ideological violence, to those drawn to neo-Nazi extremism. We can already see from his biography that Jordan is a figure who has inspired others to act in such a manner, especially in his 1960s heyday. So how do his writings actively subvert a prevailing morality, giving licence to extremism? How does his neo-Nazism contribute to a culture where violence against the dominant social order is seen as justifiable and legitimate?

Jordan's whole perspective is based on biological racism. As with his mentor, Arnold Leese, race was essentially a question of biology and conspiracy. Two major targets come through, Jews and non-white migrants. The latter, predominantly Asians and Black people in Jordan's texts, are seen as symptoms of social decay, but not its instigators. This active role is given to Jews, and Jordan is a

wholehearted believer in a Jewish world conspiracy.

We can see this distinction come through clearly in *Merrie England*, a book which tries to satirise a multicultural Britain entering terminal decline by the turn of the century. The novel's central protagonist, Annie, is imprisoned by the sinister Ministry of Harmony after she racially abuses a black man. The story then follows her life through a series of situations which allows Jordan to develop his central critique of contemporary society: since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the global forces of communism and capitalism have fused to become 'commu-capitalism', and essentiality disempower white people. The narrative is clear that a Jewish conspiracy controls the white race, and enforces complicity in a humiliating multicultural society. In Jordan's dystopia, television brainwashes mass society into complicity, schools promote false values of racial inferiority of whites, and tellingly the Holocaust is presented as a fiction developed by Jews who had actually won the Second World War by defeating Nazi Germany. The book finishes its dystopian vision for the future by arguing that the state will start beaming rays that can control the minds of white people, forcing submission to the system.

Regarding the theme of neo-Nazi literature giving licence to extremism, *Merrie England's* reception suggests how its extremist vision can resonate to the converted. For example, a review from Michael Walker's *The Scorpion* stressed:

That emotive reaction of ours reveals a truth which our reason may have otherwise succeeded in hiding from us, protesting, "no, no that isn't right"; or, "that's a terrible exaggeration". Deft use of satire is the outstanding quality of George Orwell's *1984*, a satire written on more levels than most readers have appreciated, when at the time it was written the belief that the British would ever accept the political tailoring of their language or the enforcement of metrication seemed very fanciful, not to be taken too seriously. There are ech-

oes of 1984 in Jordan's *Merrie England ...* It is written in the same line of political satire, extrapolating certain tendencies in society and imagining that we have not long to go now before we have arrived at a point where the tendencies have become have omnipresent facts of life.

So *Merrie England* evokes the crisis that neo-Nazis believe is unfolding, but only implies that there needs to be a sustained alternative. Turning to Jordan's collection of essays, *National Socialism: Vanguard of the Future*, we can see the solution fleshed out in more detail.

The first section of the book contains several essays that develop Nazism as an ideology in its historical context. Subverting conventional wisdom, Hitler's Germany is painted as a modern, visionary state that attempted to generate a new order, yet was held back by a corrupt wider world. Democratic political leaders of the period, especially Winston Churchill, come across as extreme anti-patriots. Contrastingly, the discussions on Hitler himself are particularly revealing. Specifically, Hitler is presented as 'the messiah of the Aryans', a superhuman figure akin to a religious leader.

Other quasi-religious themes also come though too. Time is presented as operating in cycles, and so the degeneracy and decay found in the modern world – themes he developed in *Merrie England* – point towards an inevitable ending of an old order, and the regeneration of society in a new form at some point in the future. This evocation of a higher destiny, with Hitler as the redeemer, leads Jordan to describe his worldview as a 'creed', and as a 'political religion', generating a sense of common cause. For example, the following extract highlights this community of dead, living, and those yet to be born at the core of his 'National Socialist creed':

As we focus our thoughts on the founder of our faith, embracing his spirit, we bring to life in memory all those who have lived and died in his case, holding hands with them, and likewise

with all those today, wherever they are, who actively serve the cause. Thus we create comradeship of spirit a bridge of dedication, past to present and present to future.

Meanwhile, in one of his most widely reproduced essays, available on the internet too, 'National Socialism: A Philosophical Appraisal', Jordan again sets up Nazism as a faith operating on a higher plain. Arguing that National Socialism is ultimately an attitude he argues that it 'Sets a meaning and purpose of cosmic dimension to life as a personal fulfilment'. The cosmic dimension is significant. The nation is merely a constituent part of the white race for Jordan, itself grounded in cosmic forces of nature. True National Socialists need to be aware of this wider loyalty, not to one's nation but primarily to one's race. So again, such ideas not merely allow for critique of the present democratic order, but are designed to give licence to commit acts of extremism against the nation-state, which holds back the white race from achieving liberation and spiritual fulfilment.

Jordan's views on political tactics are also developed in these writings. Essentially, he rejects forms of nationalist populism, found in far-right parties that engage in electioneering. All democracy is a conspiracy to legitimise capitalist and communists ruling the world for Jordan. So developing an electoral tactic inevitably leads to compromise, and a slow conversion to a non-revolutionary agenda, and so a false racial consciousness. As he put this point:

All the signs are that, unless and until there is a complete breakdown of the old system to administer sufficient of a jolt to the masses to bring them to their sense, they will not come to support National Socialism in sufficient numbers to enable acquisition of power.

The telling phrase here is 'the complete breakdown of the old system', which would come about through a combination of historical inevitability – the present society was likely to get into a major crisis in the near

future – and also through the active effort of an ideologically pure vanguard, described as follows:

since we need the breakdown of the old order to build the new, the more spanners we can throw in the works of the present system, the better. Its systematic sabotage in every possible way is purposeful commendable demolition for the real National Socialist revolutionary, who appreciates things have to get worse before they get better, and that an existing decrepit structure has to be torn down before a new and better edifice can be put in its place.

To develop this sort of revolutionary activity, a paramilitary taskforce was vital. This would comprise an elite who were true believers in the ideology as he saw it, people who understood National Socialism as faith and a higher cause. This could only be achieved by rejecting everyday morality, and developing a new one in tune with the desires of the ideology. So any member of the vanguard had to:

Purge his mind of all attachments to the existing state and system and society, abstracting himself to the utmost from the grip of this alien world so as to be in total rebellion against its decadence, becoming a fragment of the future.

Addressing the reader directly as such a protagonist, he continues:

In the beginning you may be alone in all this, an isolated revolutionary agent in enemy-occupied territory. If so, understand at once that this is no cause for lament and despondency, and no excuse for inhibition and inaction, but the very test of initiation as to your suitability because the true elitist is precisely the one capable of operating on his own, if needs be...

So littered through the text are such statements, assertions giving license to individual terrorist action. This was also a theme developed in fiction too. His second novella, *The Uprising*, saw the themes I have been high-

lighting coalesce in a final, influential work. Tellingly, the book is dedicated to Bob Matthews of the American neo-Nazi terrorist organisation, The Order. Unlike *Merrie England* which tried to satirise the degeneration of British society, and echoing *The Turner Diaries*, *The Uprising* allowed the victory of Jordan's elite task force to be narrated.

In a series of fictive accounts that are really dressed up essays on particular topics of aggravation to Jordan, various targets are dealt with by the elite force of the British Freedom Fighters. Overcoming a Jewish conspiracy through terrorist violence is central to the account, with a Jewish Home Secretary being assassinated early on in the story; and even a Jewish journalist, who publishes an anti-fascist magazine called *Stoplight*, is dealt with in a violent manner. Throughout this narrative, the book normalises Jordan's brand of revolutionary violence. Tellingly the British Freedom Fighters seek to develop their own, countervailing system of revolutionary justice throughout the story, comprising of an alternate court and system of punishment. So the violence meted out by this revolutionary vanguard is presented as justifiable, so long as one has accepted the ideology of the Nazi revolution. Once again, the theme of transgressing normal morality, legitimising terrorist violence, is evoked by the fictional account.

Its reception is also revealing. Despite violence occurring on most pages, a complementary review in *Blood and Honour* felt that the novel was 'remarkably violence free' when compared to the violence committed by the present system to the white race. Tellingly, Jordan was also described as Britain's leading National Socialist activist. Meanwhile, NSM88 Records also reviewed the book. Prefacing the review for American audiences with a biography of Jordan that styled him as a living legend, the review highlights the comic style of the book in particular – it is characterised positively as a cross between Monty Python and Adolf Eichmann.

Also, the review stresses that the book is valuable as it promotes new media, radio and especially online activism, highlighting

these technologies as crucial tools to develop a revolutionary situation. So Jordan's fictional account actively contributes to discussion on tactics, and is not just a passive story. The review concluded by taking issue with the central theme of promoting violence as the only strategy for achieving political breakthrough, yet finished with the line 'But we encourage everyone to read *The Uprising* for himself or herself and draw his or her own conclusions.' So this message is an ambivalent promotion of Jordan's licence to act violently. While encouraging its readers to make up their own mind on this issue, NSM88Records is also helpful here, as the website sells a number of CDs of Jordan's speeches, including his most recent interviews, as well as copies of *The Uprising*.

A final point here, such reception of *The Uprising* highlights Jordan's significant status within the neo-Nazi discourses. After his death, his obituaries also provide interesting material to measure his status. One example is from the Racial Volunteer Force's website. The obituary gives a generous overview of Jordan's inspirational life. Significant in itself as such 'propaganda by deed' inspires fellow neo-Nazis. The text also praises his encouragement of transgressing taboos: 'His books and essays gave us much inspiration and provoked the wrath of zog and state oppression'. Moreover, Mark Atkinson adds a personal note, stating that Jordan's 'writings inspired many of our folk to the White call, and they will continue to do so until we have total victory.' And that Atkinson 'first came in contact with Mr Jordan while in prison for racial hatred in 96-97, he wrote to me stating his disregard for our foes ... His support helped me through my incarceration, and that support continued for the RVF 4 on their last sentence.'

So, to sum up, Jordan's vision for a Nazi was global, and even cosmic, in scope. Yet his writings and actions have inspired many localised movements in Britain, including recent extremists such as the RVF and the BPP. His views are likely to continue to operate within the neo-Nazi discourse, give licence to hatred, extremism, and potentially

violence conceived as revolutionary. This licence offered to neo-Nazi extremism will only resonate with a handful of convinced ideologues. However, Jordan's aim was not for mass recognition but to retain ideological purity, and to keep the revolutionary dream alive. So though he is likely to influence few, the message he conveys can appear very profound, and therefore dangerous.

### **Bibliography:**

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