

Nazis and the Republican Party

By Carla Binion

January 28, 2000—Investigative reporter Christopher Simpson says in “Blowback” that after World War II, Nazi émigrés were given CIA subsidies to build a far-right-wing power base in the U. S. These Nazis assumed prominent positions in the Republican Party's "ethnic outreach committees." Simpson documents the fact that these Nazis did not come to America as individuals but as part of organized groups with fascist political agendas. The Nazi agenda did not die along with Adolf Hitler. It moved to America (or a part of it did) and joined the far right of the Republican Party.

Simpson shows how the State Department and the CIA put high-ranking Nazis on the intelligence payroll "for their expertise in propaganda and psychological warfare," among other purposes. The most important Nazi employed by the U.S. was Reinhard Gehlen, Hitler's most senior eastern front military intelligence officer. After Germany's defeat became certain, Gehlen offered the U. S. certain concessions in exchange for his own protection. Gehlen promoted hyped up cold war propaganda on behalf of the political right in this country, and helped shape U.S. perceptions of the cold war.

Journalist Russ Bellant (“Old Nazis, the New Right, and the Republican Party”) shows that Laszlo Pasztor, a convicted Nazi war collaborator, built the Republican émigré network. Pasztor, who served as adviser to Republican Paul Weyrich, belonged to the Hungarian Arrow Cross, a group that helped liquidate Hungary's Jews. Pasztor was founding chairman of the Republican Heritage Groups Council.

Two months before the November 1988 presidential election, a small newspaper, Washington Jewish Week, disclosed that a coalition for the Bush campaign included a number of outspoken Nazis and anti-Semites. The article prompted six leaders of Bush's coalition to resign.

According to Russ Bellant, Nazi collaborators involved in the Republican Party included:

- (1) Radi Slavoff, GOP Heritage Council's executive director, and head of "Bulgarians for Bush." Slavoff was a member of a Bulgarian fascist group, and he put together an event in Washington honoring Holocaust denier, Austin App.
- (2) Florian Galdau, director of GOP outreach efforts among Romanians, and head of "Romanians for Bush." Galdau was once an Iron Guard recruiter, and he defended convicted Nazi war criminal Valerian Trifa.
- (3) Nicholas Nazarenko, leader of a Cossack GOP ethnic unit. Nazarenko was an ex-Waffen SS officer.

(4) Method Balco, GOP activist. Balco organized yearly memorials for a Nazi puppet regime.

(5) Walter Melianovich, head of the GOP's Byelorussian unit. Melianovich worked closely with many Nazi groups.

(6) Bohdan Fedorak, leader of "Ukrainians for Bush." Fedorak headed a Nazi group involved in anti-Jewish wartime pogroms.

The Philadelphia Inquirer ran an article on the Bush team's inclusion of Nazis (David Lee Preston, "Fired Bush backer one of several with possible Nazi links," September 10, 1988.) The newspaper also ran an investigative series on Nazi members of the Bush coalition. The articles confirmed that the Bush team included members listed by Russ Bellant.

Journalist Martin A. Lee, has written for The Nation, Rolling Stone, The San Francisco Chronicle, and other publications. In "The Beast Reawakens," Lee confirms that during both the Reagan and Bush years, the Republican Party's ethnic outreach arm recruited members from the Nazi émigré network.

Lee says that the Republican Party's ethnic outreach division had an outspoken hatred of President Jimmy Carter's Office of Special Investigations (OSI), an organization dedicated to tracking down and prosecuting Nazi war collaborators who entered this country illegally. Former Republican Pat Buchanan attacked Carter's OSI after it deported a few suspected Nazi war criminals.

According to Lee, public relations man Harold Keith Thompson was principal U.S. point man for the postwar Nazi support network known as die Spinne, or the Spider. In the late 40s and early 50s, Thompson worked as the chief North American representative for the remaining National Socialist German Worker's Party and the SS. Lee writes that the wealthy Thompson gave generously to Republican candidates Senator Jesse Helms and would-be senator Oliver North. Thompson's money gained him membership in the GOP's Presidential Legion of Merit. Lee says Thompson also "received numerous thank-you letters from the Republican National Committee." Those letters are now in the Hoover Institution Special Collections Library.

Christopher Simpson writes in "Blowback" that in 1983, Ronald Reagan presented a Medal of Freedom, the country's highest civilian honor, to CIA émigré program consultant James Burnham. Burnham was a psychological warfare consultant who promoted something called "liberationism." Just before the 1952 election, the CIA worked up a multimillion-dollar public relations campaign aimed at selling Americans on expanding cold war activities in Europe. Part of the guiding theory (given the name "liberationism") was the idea that certain Nazi leaders from World War II should be brought in as "freedom fighters" against the USSR.

Reagan said that Burnham's ideas on liberation "profoundly affected the way America views itself and the world," adding, "I owe [Burnham] a personal debt, because throughout the years of travelling on the mashed-potato circuit I have quoted [him] widely." Reagan may not have known Burnham's theories were based on his work on projects that enlisted many Nazi

collaborators, but it seems that Reagan's CIA Director Casey or former CIA Director, Vice President George Bush, would have informed him.

At a May 9, 1984 press conference, Simon Wiesenthal said, "Nazi criminals were the principal beneficiaries of the Cold War." The cold war mentality, hyped by Reinhard Gehlen and other Nazis, became the shelter for tens of thousands of Nazi criminals. Helping the far right in this country to promote cold war hysteria became the Nazi war criminals "reason for being." As Christopher Simpson says, the cold war became those criminals' means "to avoid responsibility for the murders they had committed."

Journalist Seymour Hersh says Christopher Simpson's "Blowback" is "the ultimate book about the worst kind of cold war thinking, in which some of our most respected statesmen made shameful decisions that they mistakenly believed to be justified." To this day, says Simpson, the U. S. intelligence agencies hide the scope of their post-World War II collaboration with Nazi criminals.

Are Republicans like George H. W. Bush, Oliver North, and Jesse Helms aware they have been assisted by Nazi collaborators? Bush once worked for the CIA and should have known about the nature of the Nazis in his '88 campaign. No doubt he knows the history of Nazi/CIA collaboration. Whether or not Bush knew of the fascists' involvement in his campaign, the Republican Party should have done a far better screening job. One thing is certain: The intelligence agencies know the scope and extent of Nazi involvement with the political right in this country. It is a shame they keep it hidden from the majority of the American people.

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