

Man in the middle: Richard Spencer

By Devin Burghart

MEET THE YOUNG American at the centre of a growing new international network of white nationalists.

University-educated, well-to-do, and full of youthful energy at 36 years-old, Richard B. Spencer has risen through the American white nationalist ranks in a remarkably short period. Thanks to an inheritance of the movement's past, he has the infrastructure to try and re-shape the movement's image and direction.

His plan involves importing New Right traditions of Identitarian politics to the American scene and bringing American white nationalism to Europe, to construct a "Cosmopolitan, pan-European nationalism." And after several visits to Europe and Asia to build alliances, he's organizing his own conference in Europe this autumn.

Who is Richard Spencer?

Richard Bertrand Spencer was born in Boston, Massachusetts and grew up in Dallas, Texas where he attended an affluent private high school. After obtaining a bachelor's degree at the University of Virginia and a master's degree the University of Chicago, he was a doctoral student at Duke University before "dropping out to pursue a life of thought-crime", according to Spencer.

Like several of his older white nationalist movement mentors, Spencer began his political activity in mainstream

conservative circles. He worked as an assistant editor at Pat Buchanan's *The American Conservative* magazine, then became executive editor of *Taki's Magazine* (the publication of Buchanan's co-founder in *The American Conservative*). But Spencer kept marching to the white side.

In November 2008 he spoke about Nietzsche at an H.L. Mencken Club event. By early 2009, Spencer could no longer hold back his fixation on "contemporary white consciousness." In a 29 May 2009 *TakiMag* piece entitled "White Like Me" Spencer opined, "In our increasingly globalized world (it's not just a cliché), race hasn't been obscured or overcome, as many had hoped, but heightened and magnified – and contemporary white consciousness, if we're to use this term, is so complicated and bizarre (more on that below) that no serious cultural publication should refrain from discussing it."

The rise (and fall) of Alternative Right

By year's end, Spencer left the semi-respectability of the paleo-conservatives for good, when he announced that he was leaving *TakiMag* to start *AlternativeRight.com*, "an online magazine of radical traditionalism". Under the financial umbrella of British expatriate Peter Brimelow's white nationalist VDARE foundation, *Alternative Right* took to repackaging old white nationalist ideas for a new generation.

Launched on 1 March 2010 with a professional-looking design and a long list of columnists, *Alternative Right* quickly became a big success in white nationalist circles. As one activist wrote, "I have been glued to the same website for hours today: Richard Spencer's new webzine *Alternative Right* ... I hope that *Alternative Right* will attract the brightest young conservatives and libertarians and expose them to far broader intellectual horizons, including race realism, White Nationalism, the European New Right, the Conservative Revolution, Traditionalism, neo-paganism, agrarianism, Third Positionism, anti-feminism, and right-wing anti-capitalists, ecologists, bioregionalists, and small-is-beautiful types."

The popularity of the website made Spencer a rising star in the movement. When Louis Andrews, the chairman of both the white nationalist think-tank, National Policy Institute, and a small publishing house, Washington Summit Publishers, took ill in 2011, Spencer was tapped to take over both operations. Spencer moved both projects to Whitefish, Montana where he lives in a \$3 million home.

For about a year, Spencer was trying to do it all. With the



Richard Spencer (left) with the right-wing libertarian writer and publisher Taki Theodoropoulos, and the British-born white nationalist Peter Brimelow

acquisitions of NPI and WSP, he suddenly found himself at the middle of a plethora of projects. Then it all became too much. "Over the past, six months, I've reached a point of professional crisis. NPI, *Radix*, AltRight, Washing Summit Publishers, Vanguard, additional writings ... Unfinished projects pile up. Emails go unanswered. More funds need to be raised. My desire to do *all* of these projects is preventing me from completing *any* of them. Something's got to give. I've decided it must be AltRight. And today, I am resigning from being the editor and main blogger AlternativeRight.com," he wrote.

Trying to assure readers and donors that the sudden announcement wouldn't change a thing, Spencer wrote, "Don't worry – AlternativeRight.com won't go anywhere. I'll keep it 'live' so long as the Internet still flickers. The articles, even the shorter blogs, won't curdle anytime soon, and I'm confident that new readers will continue to discover AltRight as the years go by."

The promise lasted roughly a year and a half. According to the current editors of the website, "on Christmas Day [2013], we discovered that Richard Spencer, the originator and former editor-in-chief of Alternative Right, had fixed the web address of alternativerright.com so that it automatically reroutes to his new magazine, *Radix Journal*. This unannounced move caught us by surprise."

Responding to the uproar when AltRight mysteriously vanished, the editors of *Radix Journal* wrote on their Facebook page: "As recently as this autumn, Spencer informed them, once again, that it is time to shut down the Alternative Right. Therefore, it was not a surprise move by any means, as has been insinuated." So, Spencer's insistence to readers that the project would live on appears disingenuous, at best.

AltRight has re-emerged, this time with a UK website address. One of the remaining co-editors, Colin Buchan Liddell, once wrote an article entitled "Is Black Genocide Right?"

Even after Spencer abandoned AltRight, the project still garnered him significant attention. In May 2013, Spencer gained notoriety for the site when it was uncovered that a staffer for the conservative Heritage Foundation had written two anti-immigrant articles for the site.

Resurrecting the National Policy Institute

When Spencer bailed out of the AltRight project in 2012, he put forward a vision centred on the projects he'd inherited. "My central goal moving forward is to develop The National Policy Institute and Washington Summit Publishers into a successful think-tank and book-making firm, both of which can harness the energies of our movement, speak forthrightly and publicly, and begin articulating an alternative social and political vision for traditional Americans, and Europeans around the world," he wrote.

When Spencer took over Washington Summit Publishers, the catalogue consisted primarily of dry tomes by scientific racists like Richard Lynn, J. Philippe Rushton and Michael Hart, alongside white nationalists like Jared Taylor, Sam Francis, and Troy Southgate.

Spencer brought in new works like Guillaume Faye's *Why We*

Fight: Manifesto of Resistance and *Sea Changes* by Derek Turner to sell alongside classic racist publications, like Francis Parker Yockey's *Imperium*, to *Fascism Viewed From The Right* by Julius Evola, to Madison Grant's *The Passing of the Great Race* (complete with a new foreword written by Spencer).

Several of the new titles in the WSP catalogue come from Wermod and Wermod, a small publishing group based in Abergele. Founded by Alex Kurtagić, Wermod and Wermod's catalogue consists of reprints of old works of racist authors like Madison Grant and Francis Parker Yockey, and new works by authors familiar to readers of *Searchlight*, including Jonathan Bowden and Troy Southgate.

Born in Spain, raised in South America and the United States, but settled in Britain, Kurtagić had previously been engaged in the European white power music scene through his music label, Supernal Music. As *Searchlight* noted in "A Darker Shade of Black" back in 2008, Supernal carried a slew of racist and antisemitic National Socialist Black Metal and other white power music CDs.

Spencer and Kurtagić worked closely together on Alternative Right, and the two have shared the platform on multiple occasions, including the Traditional Britain Group conference.

The two also worked on a new project together, *Radix*, "a periodical on culture, history, politics, spirituality and society".

As Spencer explained in the introductory statement to the new venture, "the name 'Radix' has already been established as an imprint on Washington Summit Publishers. While WSP proper focuses on scientific study of man, Radix publishes fiction, criticism, and writings on the intersection of genetics, culture, and society." Edited by Spencer, the first issue of *Radix Journal*, "The Great Erasure: The Reconstruction of White Identity", was dedicated to Jonathan Bowden, the former BNP Cultural Office and chairman of the New Right who died in March 2012.

Washington Summit Publishers and *Radix* gave Spencer additional revenue streams, but credibility was to be had from the think-tank, the National Policy Institute.

Founded in 2005 by William Regnery II, a member of a wealthy conservative publishing family, and the influential white nationalist figure Sam Francis, the National Policy Institute's goal was "to elevate the consciousness of whites, ensure our biological and cultural continuity, and protect our civil rights". NPI published several so-called studies, including: "The State of White America – 2007", "The Costs and Benefits of Mass Deportation", "Conservatives and Race", "The Wealth and IQ of Nations" and "Uhuru for South Africa". Before moving to Montana, it was located in Augusta, Georgia.

Spencer's first big move as executive director of the National Policy Institute was to hold a splashy conference in Washington DC entitled "Towards a New Nationalism: Immigration and the Future of Western Nations" in September 2011. He kicked off the conference with a direct invocation of Enoch Powell's infamous Rivers of Blood speech. Other speakers at the event included white nationalist stalwarts like Council of Conservative Citizens leader Sam Dickson and Jared Taylor of American Renaissance. At the

conference, the National Policy Institute also published a pamphlet by Spencer entitled *The Majority Strategy – the Essential Argument – Why the GOP Must Win White America*.

After the re-election of president Obama, however, many white nationalists gave up their hopes that Republicans would adopt their “White America” strategy. Some, like Spencer, gave up on the idea that they could win back America altogether and retreated towards enclave-style white nationalism.

At the spring 2013 conference of the other white nationalist think-tank, *American Renaissance*, Spencer took to the podium to advocate for “the creation of a White Ethno-State on the North American continent”. He told the small crowd on hand in Tennessee that “We need an ethno-state so that our people can ‘come home again’, can live amongst family – to put it banally, so that they can feel safe and secure”. To create a white homeland, Spencer argued for peaceful ethnic cleansing to solve the problem. “Today, in the public imagination, ‘ethnic-cleansing’ has been associated with civil war and mass murder (understandably so). But this need not be the case. 1919 is a real example of successful ethnic redistribution – done by fiat, we should remember, but done peacefully.” He elaborated on his dream, “It is perfectly feasible for a white state to be established on the North American continent. Action is the easy part.”

Later that year, in October NPI held its leadership conference “After the Fall: The Future of Identity” in Washington DC. The event featured Alain De Benoist and Roman Bernard from France, Piero San Giorgio from Switzerland, Alex Kurtagic from Britain, and John Morgan from Hungary, alongside Americans Sam Dickson, Jack Donovan, Tom Sunic, Andy Nowicki, and Matt Parrott.

Just a week before the NPI conference, Spencer flew to London to speak alongside Markus Willinger of Generation

Identity and others at the Traditional Britain Conference. It was, in fact, the second time Spencer spoke to the TBG conference, having done so the year before. In 2010, Spencer travelled to Bodrum, Turkey to speak at a gathering of the Property and Freedom Society.

While international activism takes up an increasing amount of Spencer’s time, he has not lost interest in the American conservative politics that initially drew him into the movement.

To gain attention by crashing the conservative party, Spencer organised the National Policy Institute “Unconference” inside the facility of the annual Conservative Political Action Conference, in March 2014. Spencer noted that “for years, supporters have urged NPI to make an appearance at CPAC. This year, we’re doing it.” The rationale, “people don’t really attend CPAC for what happens on stage. They go to meet people. And CPAC is a captive audience of individuals who self-identify as conservative. Our ideas resonate with many of them; and most all of them, I would guess, have a gut feeling that something is terribly wrong with America.” The group held a gathering at the Old Hickory Steakhouse featuring special guest Jared Taylor of *American Renaissance*. Spencer attended the conference workshops and did a little recruiting in the halls.

Back to Europe

Writing in the first edition of *Radix Journal*, Spencer put forth his vision for moving forward, “one of our most important tasks – and one for which Traditionalism could be a great aid – is to form a cosmopolitan, that is, pan-European nationalism, an identity that stretches beyond ethnicity, tribe, religious sectarianism, and the disputes that have, from time to time, turned the continent into a slaughter bench.”

Putting that vision into practice, on 28 April Spencer announced that he had scheduled the 2014 National Policy



Markus Willinger, Arktos Media author and Motpol activist



Paul Gottfried, a mentor to Spencer

Institute conference, "Identitarian Congress" to be held in Budapest, Hungary on 3-4 October.

Along with NPI, co-sponsors for the event include Arktos Media and MOTPOL.nu.

Arktos Media is a "Euro-centric publishing house" whose motto is "making anti-globalism global". Created in 2010 by John Morgan, an American, the publishing house was based in India, but now operates out of Hungary. Arktos was a principal publisher of English translations of many of the writings of Identitarian European New Right figures, including Alain de Benoist, Guillaume Faye and Pierre Krebs. It also issued the first English translations of Russia's Alexander Dugin. Morgan recently returned to the United States to speak at the twentieth conference of *American Renaissance* where he discussed his visit to the Ukraine to speak with Euromaidan protesters.

Motpol (which translates as "Antithesis") is a Gothenburg, Sweden-based portal for Scandinavian Identitarian activists run by Daniel Friberg. Other interesting characters listed among Motpol's "Our People" are the American paleo-conservative Paul Gottfried (a "mentor" to Spencer), Arktos Media's John Morgan and *Generation Identity* author Markus Willinger.

Spencer's emergence and ambitious organising agenda may signal a new turn for white nationalists and paleo-conservatives searching for a new strategy. It emerges without the old-style white supremacists such as David Duke and Don Black, and may bring a certain brand of success for those long-starved for it. But an ambitious organising strategy in Europe is no substitute for winning the hearts and minds of American bigots. And international cooperation by opposing forces, such as *Searchlight* and IREHR, may give them the kind of exposure they don't want.

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NPI's 2014 conference in Budapest, Hungary

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IDENTITARIAN CONGRESS

THE NATIONAL POLICY INSTITUTE is proud to announce its 2014 conference:

THE IDENTITARIAN CONGRESS

Budapest, Hungary

October 3-5, 2014

Our partners and co-hosts will be MOTPOL.nu and ARKTOS MEDIA.

Our event will be an exceptional opportunity to experience one of the jewels of Central Europe and build ties with European nationalists and traditionalists.

More information about the location, speakers, and related events will be released in the coming days.

We hope you join us!

Richard Spencer

President

The National Policy Institute

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The National Policy Institute's 2014 conference will be held in Budapest