12

The Militant Christian Right in the United States

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RECENT MOVEMENTS OF RELIGIOUS activism in the United States also respond to a perception of secular society's moral deficiencies. At times this religious dimension has taken a turn toward politics. Politicized religion in the United States is not, in itself, a new thing. American patriotism has often been fused with biblical images and Protestant Christian rhetoric, creating a "civil religion" that has been as nationalist in its own way as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt or the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh in India. Periodically in American history, separatist movements have created their own ideal societies; native peoples have used symbols from their religious heritage to define an identity of their own that insulates them from absorption into the dominant society.[1]

What was new about American religious politics in the late twentieth century was the way that religion became infused into a radical critique of the secular political order. Though Christianity has always contained the idea of a kingdom of God that contrasts with the worldly human order, the notion of a catastrophic moment in history in which this godly kingdom intersects with the human order is peculiar to Evangelical Protestant Christianity. It began to take shape in the modern era with the theology of John Nelson Darby, a nineteenth-century British theologian, who believed that the time of the kingdom would be at hand when pious Christians experienced the "rapture" of being united with heavenly existence. This vision reemerged with remarkable popularity in the United States after the end of the Cold War. It has provided the framework for the *Left Behind* novels of Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, which have sold tens of millions of copies. Many of the sixteen volumes in the series made the *New York Times* best-seller list.[2]

The evangelical Christian movement in the United States that is the audience for the *Left Behind* books has had a profound impact on American politics. It required American political society to take on a Christian character in order to fulfill society's role in the coming of Christ.[3] Even though there were two branches of millenarian thinking about the return of Christ's kingdom to earth—premillennarian and postmillenarian, the first envisioning Christ to come again to reign on earth for a thousand years and the other imagining the return of Christ at the end of a thousand-year period—both posited the need for a virtuous political order in order to make possible the expected messianic return. Thus Christian politics was not only desirable; it was a theological necessity.

At the end of the Cold War the talk of a "new world order" alarmed many evangelical Christians, who took this to mean the global domination of secular government. Some conservative Christians interpreted it as opening up American society to a

variety of religions, races, and sexual orientations, all of which they regarded as contrary to their desire for a Christian nation that would fulfill the messianic expectations of the coming of Christ. As a result, many evangelical Christians turned to electoral politics to increase their power, and in the late twentieth century, their efforts bore fruit.[4]

One branch of postmillennial evangelical thought that had considerable political impact was Dominion Theology. This theological position maintained that Christianity had to assert the dominion of God over all creation, including secular politics and society, in order for messianic expectations to be fulfilled. This point of view—articulated by such right-wing Protestant evangelicals as Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson—led to a burst of social and political activism in the Christian right in the 1980s and 1990s. It also corresponded with the thinking of many Christians who had become politically active in their efforts to prohibit abortion in the United States.

The Christian movement opposing abortions is permeated with ideas from Dominion Theology.[5] Randall Terry, founder of the militant Operation Rescue organization and a writer for the Dominion magazine *Crosswinds*, helped craft the magazine's "Manifesto for the Christian Church." The manifesto asserted that America should "function as a Christian nation" and opposed such "social moral evils" of secular society as "abortion on demand, fornication, homosexuality, sexual entertainment, state usurpation of parental rights and God-given liberties, statist-collectivist theft from citizens through devaluation of their money and redistribution of their wealth, and evolutionism taught as a monopoly viewpoint in the public schools."[6]

At the extreme right wing of Dominion Theology is a relatively obscure theological movement, Reconstruction Theology, whose exponents seek to create a Christian theocratic state. Leaders of the Reconstruction movement trace their ideas, which they sometimes called "theonomy," to Cornelius Van Til, a twentieth-century Presbyterian professor of theology at Princeton Seminary who followed the teachings of the sixteenth-century Reformation theologian John Calvin regarding the necessity for presupposing the authority of God in all worldly matters. Followers of Van Til, including his former students Greg Bahnsen and Rousas John Rushdoony, and Rushdoony's son-in-law, Gary North, adopted this "presuppositionalism," with all its implications for the role of religion in political life, as a doctrine.

Reconstruction writers regard the history of Protestant politics since the early years of the Reformation as having taken a bad turn, and they are especially unhappy with the Enlightenment formulation of the separation of church and state. They feel it necessary to "reconstruct" Christian society by turning to the Bible as the basis for a nation's law and social order. To propagate these views, the Reconstructionists established the Institute for Christian Economics in Tyler, Texas, and the Chalcedon Foundation in Vallecito, California. They published a journal and a steady stream of books and booklets on the theological justification for interjecting Christian ideas into economic, legal, and political life.[7]

According to the most prolific Reconstruction writer, Gary North, it is "the moral obligation of Christians to recapture every institution for Jesus Christ."[8] He regarded this as especially so in the United States, where secular law as construed by the Supreme Court and defended by secular politicians has been moving in what Rushdoony and others regarded as a decidedly un-Christian direction, particularly in matters regarding abortion and homosexuality. What the Reconstructionists ultimately wanted, however, was more than the rejection of secularism. Like other theologians who invoked the biblical concept of "dominion," they reasoned that Christians, as the new chosen people of God, were destined to dominate the world.

One of the followers of Reconstruction thought was Michael Bray, a Lutheran pastor in Maryland who was convicted and served prison time for

bombing clinics that performed abortions on the East Coast. Bray had studied the writings of Reconstruction Theology authors extensively and owned a shelf of their books. He and his friend Presbyterian pastor Paul Hill regarded their political actions as sanctioned by the Bible and Christian history as interpreted by Reconstruction theologians. Hill had once studied with a founder of the movement, Greg Bahnsen, at the Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi.[9]

In my conversations with Michael Bray, he maintained that the idea of a society based on Christian morality was not a new one, and he emphasized the "re-" in "reconstruction."[10] Although Bray rejected the pope's authority, he valued much of the Roman Catholic Church's social teachings and greatly admired the tradition of canon law. Only recently in history, he observed, had political order in Europe and America not been based on biblical concepts. Opposed to the disestablishment of the political role of the church, Bray labeled himself an "antidisestablishmentarian."

Bray was serious about bringing Christian politics into power. He said that it is possible, under the right conditions, for a Christian revolution to sweep across the United States and bring in its wake constitutional changes that would make biblical law the basis of social legislation. Failing that, Bray envisaged a new federalism that would allow individual states to experiment with religious politics on their own. When I asked Bray what state might be ready for such an experiment, he hesitated and then suggested Louisiana and Mississippi, or, he added, "maybe one of the Dakotas."

Bray justified violence as an appropriate response to what he regarded as the secular captivity of American society. In an arresting book, *A Time to Kill*, Bray used biblical references and theological justifications for warfare—including those propounded (or so Bray believed) by liberal Protestant theologians Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Rein-hold Niebuhr—to justify his position.[11] His friend Paul Hill took this advice seriously. In 1994, Hill approached a medical doctor who was about to enter a clinic in Pensacola, Florida, that performed abortions and shot the doctor, John Britton, and his escort, killing them both. Hill said that in the days preceding the attack, he had opened his Bible and found verses that he thought were speaking to him and directing him to this action.[12] Hill was immediately apprehended, convicted of murder, and some ten years later was executed for the crime by the state of Florida.

Not all Reconstruction thinkers have endorsed the use of violence, especially the kind that Bray and Hill justified. As Reconstruction author Gary North admitted, "there is division in the theonomic camp" over violence, especially with regard to anti-abortion activities. Some months before killing Dr. Britton and his escort, Hill—apparently hoping for North's advance approval—sent North a letter, along with a draft of an essay justifying such killings in part on theonomic grounds. North ultimately responded, but only after the murders had been committed. North regretted that he was too late to deter Hill from his "terrible direction" and chastised Hill in an open letter, published as a booklet, denouncing Hill's views as "vigilante theology."[13] According to North, biblical law provides limited exceptions to the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:13), but in terms similar to just-war doctrine: when one is authorized to do so by "a covenantal agent" in wartime, to defend one's household, to execute a convicted criminal, to avenge the death of one's kin, to save an entire nation, or to stop moral transgressors from bringing bloodguilt on an entire community.[14]

Hill—joined by Bray—responded to North's letter. They argued that many of those conditions applied to the legal status of abortion in the United States. Writing from his prison cell in Starke, Florida, Paul Hill maintained that the biblical commandment against murder also "requires using the means necessary to defend against murder—including lethal force."[15] He went on to say that he regarded "the cutting edge of Satan's current attack" to be

"the abortionist's knife" and that his actions therefore had ultimate theological significance.[16] Bray, in *A Time to Kill*, addressed North's concern about the authorization of violence by a legitimate authority or "a covenantal agent," as North put it. Bray raised the possibility of a "righteous rebellion."[17] Just as liberation theologians justified the use of unauthorized force for the sake of their vision of a moral order, Bray saw the legitimacy of using violence not only to resist what he regarded as murder—abortion—but also to help bring about the Christian political order envisioned by Reconstruction thinkers such as Gary North. In Bray's mind, a little violence was a small price to pay for the possibility of fulfilling God's law and establishing His kingdom on earth.

Another strand of radical religious thought—Christian Identity—had relatively few qualms about the use of violence. This strand of Protestant Christian thought is based on the notions of racial supremacy and biblical law and has had enormous influence on some of the most radical Christian movements in America.[18] It has been in the background of such extremist groups as the Posse Comitatus, the Order, the Aryan Nations, the supporters of Randy Weaver at Ruby Ridge, Herbert Armstrong's Worldwide Church of God, the Freeman Compound, and the World Church of the Creator. It is popular among many militia movements and motivated Buford Furrow in his 1999 assault on a Jewish center in Granada Hills, California. Christian Identity ideas were also in the background of the thinking of Timothy McVeigh, the convicted perpetrator of the 1595 Oklahoma City bombing, and Eric Robert Rudolph, who bombed the Olympic Park in Atlanta in 1996.

Timothy McVeigh was exposed to Identity thinking through the militia culture with which he was associated and through his contacts with the Christian Identity encampment, Elohim City, on the Oklahoma-Arkansas border. Although there is no evidence that McVeigh was ever affiliated with the commune, phone calls he made to Elohim City in the months before the bombing are a matter of record, including one made two weeks before the bombing.[19] McVeigh likely visited the site, since he once received a citation for a minor traffic offense ten miles from the commune on the only access road leading to it. McVeigh also imbibed Identity ideas, or similar concepts, through such publications as *The Patriot Report*, an Arkansas-based Christian Identity newsletter that McVeigh received, and perhaps most of all from *The Turner Diaries*.[20] According to McVeigh's friends, this was "his favorite book"; it was "his bible," some said.[21] According to one gun collector who saw McVeigh frequently at gun shows, he hawked the book at bargain prices, and it was always at his side.[22] More to the point, McVeigh's telephone records indicate that despite his denials, he had talked directly with the author of the novel on several occasions, including a conversation shortly before the Oklahoma City bombing.[23]

The author of McVeigh's favorite novel was William Pierce, who received a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado, once taught physics at Oregon State University, and for a time served as a writer for the American Nazi Party. Although he denied any affiliation with the Christian Identity movement—and in fact attacked the clubbishness of most Identity groups—Pierce's ideas are virtually indistinguishable from Identity thinking. In 1984 Pierce proclaimed himself the founder of a religious compound very similar to those associated with the Christian Identity movement. He called it the Cosmotheist Community.[24]

Pierce's novel, written under the pseudonym Andrew Macdonald, was the main vehicle for his Identity/Cosmotheist ideas. Published in 1978, it describes an apocalyptic battle between freedom fighters and a dictatorial American government. The novel soon became an underground classic, selling 200,000 copies in gun shows and through mail-order catalogues. It served as the blueprint for such activists as Robert Matthews, who was implicated in the 1984 assassination of a Jewish

talk-show host in Denver. Matthews, like Timothy McVeigh, seems to have taken seriously the novel's predictions of the encroachment of government control in America and the resistance by a guerrilla band known as "the Order." Matthews called his own movement "the Order," and the modus operandi McVeigh used in destroying the Oklahoma City federal building was almost exactly the same as the one used by patriotic guerrillas to attack government buildings in Pierce's novel.

Although written almost eighteen years before the r 995 Oklahoma City bombing, a section of *The Turner Diaries* reads almost like a news account of the event. It recounts in chilling detail its hero's bombing of the federal office building with a truckload of "a little under 5,000 pounds" of ammonium nitrate fertilizer and fuel oil. Timothy McVeigh's own truck carried 4,400 pounds of the same mixture, packaged and transported exactly as described in the novel. In Pierce's novel, the bombing was directed against the perceived evils of the government and sought to arouse the fighting spirit of all "free men."[25] Such efforts were necessary, according to Pierce, because of the dictatorial secularism that had been imposed on American society as the result of an elaborate conspiracy orchestrated by Jews and liberals desperately seeking to deprive Christian society of its freedom and its spiritual moorings.

Pierce and Christian Identity activists yearned for a revolution that would undo America's separation of church and state; in fact, disdaining organized religion, they sought to merge "religion and state" in a new society governed by religious law. That aspiration may explain why so many Identity groups lived in theocratic societies such as Elohim City, the Freeman Compound, the Aryan Nations compound, and Pierce's Cosmotheist Community. Although these religious communalists believed in capitalism, many held property in common. They also shared an apocalyptic view of history and an even more conspiratorial view of government than the Re-constructionists. They believed that the great confrontation between freedom and a government-imposed slavery was close at hand and that their militant efforts might awaken the spirit of the freedom-loving masses. These ideas came to Timothy McVeigh from "William Pierce *and The Turner Diaries* and indirectly from the theories of Christian Identity.

Christian Identity thought originated in the movement of British Israelism in the nineteenth century. According to Michael Barkun, who has written extensively about the movement, one of the founding fathers was John Wilson, whose central work, *Lectures on Our Israelitish Origin*, brought the message to a large British and Irish middle-class audience.[26] Wilson claimed that Jesus had been an Aryan, not a Semite; that the migrating Israelite tribes from the northern kingdom of Israel were in fact blue-eyed Aryans who somehow ended up in the British Isles; and that the "Lost Sheep of the House of Israel" were none other than present-day Englishmen.[27] According to later versions of this theory, people who claim to be Jews are imposters. Some versions of Identity thinking regard them as descendants of an illicit sexual act between Eve and Satan; other versions identify them as aliens from outer space. In either case, Identity thinking claims that the people known as Jews pretend to be Jews in order to assert their superiority in a scheme to control the world. According to Wilson, the Jews' plot is allegedly supported by the secret Protestant order of Freemasons.

British Israelism came to the United States in the early twentieth century through the teachings of the evangelist Gerald L. K. Smith and the writings of William Cameron, a publicist for the automobile magnate Henry Ford.[28] Ford himself supported many of Cameron's views and published a book of anti-Semitic essays written by Cameron but attributed to Ford, *The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem*. Cameron conveyed such Christian Identity tenets as the necessity for the Anglo-Saxon race to retain its purity and political dominance and the need for Western societies to establish a biblical

basis for governance. The Christian Identity philosophy was promoted further by Bertram Comparet, a deputy district attorney in San Diego, and Wesley Swift, a Ku Klux Klan member who founded the Church of Jesus Christ-Christian in 1946. This church was the basis for the Christian Defense League, organized by Bill Gale at his ranch in Mariposa, California, in the 1960s, a movement that spawned both the Posse Comitatus and the Aryan Nations.[29]

British Israelism appealed to some members of the elite of nineteenth-century British society, but by the time these ideas came to the United States, the ideology had taken a more strident and political turn. Most of the followers of Christian Identity were relatively benign, and according to Jeffrey Kaplan, who has studied contemporary Christian Identity groups in the American Midwest and Northwest, their ideas tended to be simplified in the public mind and the groups reduced to the ranks of "monsters" in America's right-wing fringe.[30] Though that may be true, the fact remains that the ideology underlay a strain of violent religious activism in American society in the late twentieth century.

In recent decades the largest concentration of Christian Identity groups in the United States was in Idaho—centered on the Aryan Nations compound near Hayden Lake—and in the southern Midwest near the Oklahoma-Arkansas-Missouri borders. In that location a Christian Identity group called the Covenant, the Sword and the Arm of the Lord (CSA) established a 224-acre community and a paramilitary school, which it named the Endtime Overcomer Survival Training School.[31] Nearby, Christian Identity minister Robert Millar and former Nazi Party member Glenn Miller established Elohim City, whose members stockpiled weapons and prepared themselves for "a Branch Davidian-type raid" by the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.[32] It was this Christian Identity encampment that Timothy McVeigh contacted shortly before the Oklahoma City bombing.

The American incarnation of Christian Identity incorporated many of the British movement's paranoid views, updated to reflect the social anxieties of many contemporary Americans. The United Nations and the Democratic Party were alleged to be accomplices in a joint Jewish-Masonic conspiracy to control the world and deprive individuals of their freedom. In a 1982 Identity pamphlet, Jews were described as "parasites and vultures" who controlled the world through international banking.[33] The establishment of the International Monetary Fund, the introduction of magnetized credit cards, and the establishment of paper money not backed by gold or silver were listed as the final steps in "Satan's Plan."[34]

Gun control is also an important issue to Christian Identity supporters, since they believe that this is how the "Jewish-UN-liberal conspirators," as they call them, intend to eliminate the last possibilities of rebellion against centralized power. These "conspirators" are thought to be intent on depriving individuals of the weapons they might use to defend themselves or free their countrymen from a tyrannical state. This obsession with gun control has made many Christian Identity followers natural allies with the National Rifle Association. The association's rhetoric has played a significant role in legitimizing Christian Identity members' fears of the evil intentions behind governmental gun control and has provided a public voice for their paranoid views.

By the last decade of the twentieth century, the Christian Identity movement had become publicly identified as one of the leading voices of America's radical right. At that time the dean of the movement was Richard Butler, a former Presbyterian minister sometimes described as "the elder statesman of American hate."[35] Butler's designated successor was Neumann Britton of Escondido, California. Although Butler's Aryan Nations compound in Idaho consisted of only a handful of supporters on a twenty-acre farm, its website received over five hundred hits a day. Moreover, the

movement received an infusion of financial support from two Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, Carl E. Story and R. Vincent Bertollinni. Their organization, the Eleventh Hour Remnant Messenger, is said to have spent a million dollars promoting Christian Identity ideas as of 1999. It was also said to have had access to fifty million more. One of the projects they funded was the mass mailing of a videotape of Butler presenting his Christian Identity theory of "Adam's pure blood seed-line," and the alleged global conspiracy to destroy it.[36]

At the extreme fringes of the Christian Identity movement have been rogue terrorists. Some were closely linked to Identity organizations. Buford Furrow—the man who attacked the Jewish day-care center in Los Angeles—once lived in Butler's compound and had married Matthews' widow. Benjamin Smith, the 1999 Fourth of July sniper in Illinois and Indiana, belonged to an Identity-like church that eschewed other Identity groups and, for that matter, all of Christianity. Others were like Timothy McVeigh, whose group was virtually an anti-organization: a nameless, close-knit cadre that shared Identity beliefs but did not have formal ties to organized Identity groups.

One of the most elusive of the lone-wolf Christian Identity terrorists was Eric Robert Rudoph, who was captured in 2003 after having successfully dodged a massive and well-publicized seven-year manhunt. In 2005 Rudolph pleaded guilty to a long list of charges, including bombing abortion clinics in Birmingham, Alabama, and Atlanta, Georgia and a lesbian bar in Atlanta, and exploding a bomb at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics that killed three and injured 150. What these incidents had in common is their relationship to what many Christian activists regard as sexual immorality: abortion and homosexuality. According to another Christian activist, Michael Bray, Rudolph's anger at the Olympic organizers came in part because the carriers of the Olympic torch, which passed through the southern United States on its way to Atlanta, skirted one county in North Carolina that had approved an ordinance declaring that "sodomy is not consistent with the values of the community." Rudolph is said to have interpreted this detour in the torch's journey as a pro-gay stance on the part of the Olympic organizers.[37]

In a broad sense, Rudolph was concerned about the permissiveness of secular authorities in the United States and "the atheistic internationalism" controlling one side of what Bray called "the culture war" in modern society.[38] These concerns are shared by many Christian activists, but in Rudolph's case they were associated especially with the ideas of the Christian Identity movement with which Rudolph became familiar in childhood. At one time he and his mother stayed at the American Identity compound led by Dan Gayman, and there are press reports that Rudolph knew the late Identity preacher Nord Davis.

The world as envisioned by Eric Robert Rudolph, Timothy McVeigh, Buford Furrow, Benjamin Smith, "William Pierce, Richard Butler, and Michael Bray—by followers of both Christian Identity and Reconstruction thought—is a world at war. Identity preachers have cited the biblical accounts of Michael the Archangel destroying the offspring of evil to point to a hidden, albeit cosmic, war between the forces of darkness and the forces of light.[39] Reconstruction thinkers have also seen the world enmeshed in a great moral struggle. "There is murder going on," Mike Bray explained, "which we have to stop." In the Christian Identity view of the world, the struggle is a secret war between colossal evil forces allied with the United Nations, the United States, and other government powers, and a small band of the enlightened few who recognized these invisible enemies for what the Identity followers thought they were—satanic powers, in their view—and were sufficiently courageous to battle them. Although Bray rejected much of Christian Identity's conspiratorial view of the world and specifically decried its anti-Semitism, he valued its commitment to fight against secular forms of evil and its insistence on the need for a Christian social order.

As Mike Bray explained, his justification of violence against abortion clinics was not the result of a personal vendetta against agencies with which he and others had moral differences, but the consequence of a grand religious vision. His position was part of a great crusade conducted by a Christian subculture in America that considered itself at war with the larger society, and to some extent was victimized by it. Armed with the theological explanations of Reconstruction and Christian Identity writers, this subculture saw itself justified in its violent responses to a vast and violent repression waged by secular (and, in some versions of this vision, Jewish) agents of a satanic force.[40]

Mike Bray and his network of associates around the country saw themselves engaged in violence not for its own sake but as a response to the institutional violence of what they regarded as a repressive secular government. Those within his culture did not view his burning of abortion clinics as an assault on civil liberties or as a vengeful and hateful crime. Instead, Bray was seen as firing the opening salvos in a great defensive Christian struggle against the secular state, a contest between the forces of spiritual truth and heathen darkness, in which the moral character of America as a righteous nation hung in the balance.

NOTES

1. See, for instance, Weston LaBarre, *The Ghost Dance: The Origins of Religion* (New York: Dell, 1970).
2. The first in the series is Tim F. LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, *Left Behind: A Novel of the Earth's Last Days* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Tyndale Publishing House, zooo). For an analysis of the series as a publishing phenomenon, see Glenn Shuck, *Marks of the Beast: The* Left Behind *Novels and the Struggle for Evangelical Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 2004); Michael Standaert, *Skipping Towards Armageddon: The Politics and Propaganda of the* Left Behind *Novels* (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Soft Skull Press, 2006); and the essays in Bruce David Forbes and Jeanne Halgren Kilde, eds., *Rapture, Revelation, and the End Times: Exploring the* Left Behind *Series* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).
3. For a discussion of the rise of Christian religious political movements at the turn of the twenty-first century, see Michelle Goldberg, *Kingdom Coming: The Rise of Christian Nationalism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007); Chris Hedges, *American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War on America* (New York: Free Press, 2007); and Kevin Phillips, *American Theocracy: The Peril and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil, and Borrowed Money in the 21st Century* (New York: Penguin, 2007).
4. See, for instance, Stephen Bruce, "The Moral Majority: The Politics of Fundamentalism in Secular Society," in Lionel Caplan, ed., *Studies in Religious Fundamentalism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987); and Capps, *The New Religious Right.*
5. Bruce Barron, *Heaven on Earth? The Social and Political Agendas of Dominion Theology* (Minneapolis: Zondervan, 1992.).
6. "Manifesto for the Christian Church," *Crosswinds.* Quoted in Chip Berlet, John Salvi, *Abortion Clinic Violence, and Catholic Right Conspiracism* (Somerville, Mass.: Political Research Associates, 1996), 8.
7. The book that established Reconstruction Theology as a movement is Rousas John Rushdoony's two-volume *Institutes of Biblical Law* (Nutley, N.J.: Craig Press, 1973). Introductions to Cornelius Van Til's thought are found in R.J. Rushdoony, *By What Standard?* (Tyler, Tex.: Thoburn Press, 1978), and Richard Pratt, *Every Thought Captive* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1982.). The journal of Reconstruction thought, *Chalcedon Report,* is published in Vallecito, California.
8. Gary North, *Backward, Christian Soldiers? An Action Manual for Christian Reconstruction* (Tyler, Tex.: Institute for Christian Economics, 1984), 267. According to North, the four main tenets of Christian Reconstruction are biblical law, optimistic eschatology, predestination, and "presuppositional apologetics," which North defines as a "philosophical defense of the faith" *(Backward, Christian Soldiers?* 267). North has authored or edited over twenty books, including *An Introduction to Christian Economics* (Tyler, Tex.: Institute for Christian Economics, 1973), *Unconditional Surrender; God's Program for Victory* (Tyler, Tex.: Institute for Christian Economics, 1988), *and Millennialism and Social Theory* (Tyler, Tex.: Institute for Christian Economics, 1990).

9. Gary North, *Lone Gunners for Jesus: Letters to Paul J. Hill* (Tyler, Tex.: Institute for Christian Economics, 1994), 2.
10. Interview with Michael Bray, Reformation Lutheran Church, Bowie, Maryland, March 20, 1998.
11. Michael Bray, *A Time to Kill: A Study Considering the Use of Force and Abortion* (Portland, Oregon: Advocates for Life, 1994).
12. Paul Hill explains the reasons for the shooting in his autobiographical statement "I Shot an Abortionist," on the Army of God website (www.armyof-god.com/PHilL_ShortShot.html).
13. North, *Lone Gunners for Jesus*, 25.
14. Ibid.
15. Paul Hill, *Paul Hill Speaks* (pamphlet published by Reformation Press, Bowie, Maryland, June 1997), 1.
16. Ibid., 2.
17. Bray, *A Time to Kill*, 158.
18. Chester L. Quarles, *Christian Identity: The Aryan American Bloodline Religion* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2004). For a discussion of the significance of the radical Christian right on American politics and society, see Hedges, *American Fascists*; Goldberg, *Kingdom Coming*; Clyde Wilcox and Carin Larson, *Onward Christian Soldiers: The Religious Right in American Politics* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2006); Robert Booth Fowler, Allen D. Hertzke, and Laura R. Olson, *Religion and Politics in America: Faith, Culture, and Strategic Choices* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2004); and William Martin, *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America* (New York: Broadway, 2005).
19. Morris Dees, *Gathering Storm: America's Militia Threat* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996), 165. Reports of McVeigh visiting Elohim City are made in David Hoffman, *The Oklahoma City Bombing and the Politics of Terror* (Venice, Calif.: Feral House, 1998), 83–84.
20. Andrew Macdonald [William Pierce], *The Turner Diaries* (New York: Barricade Books, 1996) (originally published by National Alliance Vanguard Books, Arlington, Va., in 1978).
21. Dees, *Gathering Storm*, 154.
22. Ibid., 158.
23. Although Pierce, the author of *The Turner Diaries*, denies knowing McVeigh or talking to him, two separate law enforcement sources claim to have telephone records proving that McVeigh placed a lengthy call to Pierce's unlisted number in West Virginia in the weeks before the bombing. This information was first reported by CNN and is mentioned in Dees, *Gathering Storm*, 165.
24. Amy C. Solnin, *William L. Pierce, Novelist of Hate: Research Report of the Anti-Defamation League* (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1995), 8.
25. Macdonald [Pierce], *Turner Diaries*, 64.
26. Michael Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).
27. Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right*, 7.
28. Leonard Zeskind, *The "Christian Identity" Movement: Analyzing Its Theological Rationalization for Racist and Anti-Semitic Violence* (New York: Division of Church and Society of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., 1986), 12.
29. Zeskind, *"Christian Identity" Movement*, 14.
30. Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far Right to the Children of Noah* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 175.
31. Zeskind, *"Christian Identity" Movement*, 45.
32. Gerald Baumgarten, *Paranoia as Patriotism: Far-Right Influences on the Militia Movement* (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1995), 17.
33. Gordon "Jack" Mohr (founder of the Christian Patriot Defense League), "Know Your Enemies," 1982 pamphlet, quoted in James Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990), 96.
34. Aho, *Politics of Righteousness*, 91.
35. Kim Murphy, "Last Stand of an Aging Aryan," *Los Angeles Times*, January 10, 1999, A1.
36. Kim Murphy, "Hate's Affluent New Godfathers," *Los Angeles Times*, January 10, 1999, A14.
37. Michael Bray, "Running with Rudolph," *Capitol Area Christian News* 28 (Winter 1998–99): 2. Eric Rudolph's own explanation of why he exploded the bomb at Centennial Park emphasizes the attempt to punish and embarrass the United States government for its stand on abortion. See his autobiographical statement on the Army of God website (www.armyofgod.com/EricRudolphAtlantaCourtStatement.html).
38. Bray, "Running with Rudolph," 2.
39. Aho, *Politics of Righteousness*, 85.
40. I explore further this discussion of Christian activism in America in my book *Terror in the Mind of God*, where parts of this section were first published.