

EVERYONE WANTS TO BE FUEHRER

National Socialism in
Australia and New Zealand
David Harcourt



Durward Colin King-Ansell

DURWARD COLIN KING-ANSELL, the leader of the National Socialist Party of New Zealand, was born in Auckland in August, 1946. His parents were divorced when he was 20. His father (an engineer) is a Presbyterian and his step-father (a motor-mechanic) and his mother are members of the Church of Christ, as is Ansell himself.

He was educated in Auckland and left school at the age of 16. For two months he assembled television sets for an Auckland company before working "off and on for about a year" as a medical orderly for the Auckland Hospital Board. He enlisted in the army but subsequently transferred to a civilian job in the Defence Department at Paparua Military Camp.

He gave this up, too, in August, 1967, to start work as a barman. In December, he was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment for causing malicious damage to a synagogue. He was released at the end of January, 1969, after having been given a remission of four months for good behaviour.

He worked as a labourer for about a month before finding another job as a barman. In May, following the publicity given to the National Socialist Party's activities, he fled to Wellington and worked as a barman there for a week before he was sacked because of his politics.

He returned to Auckland where he worked as a labourer for two weeks before he found a more permanent job as a "clerical storeman." He was dismissed after working with the company for seven hours because the union members threatened to strike over his presence.

Then he found a job as a claims adjuster in an insurance company and kept this job until he left

New Zealand for Australia in February, 1971. While in Australia he worked in an engineering firm as a "part-time factory manager." He returned to New Zealand in November.

Of his interests outside politics, Ansell says he's a member of the Scottish National Party ("both my grandparents were Scottish"), and, while in Australia, of the Fort Artillery Society. Of the society he says: "We'd dress up in period uniforms and put on a display for the public."

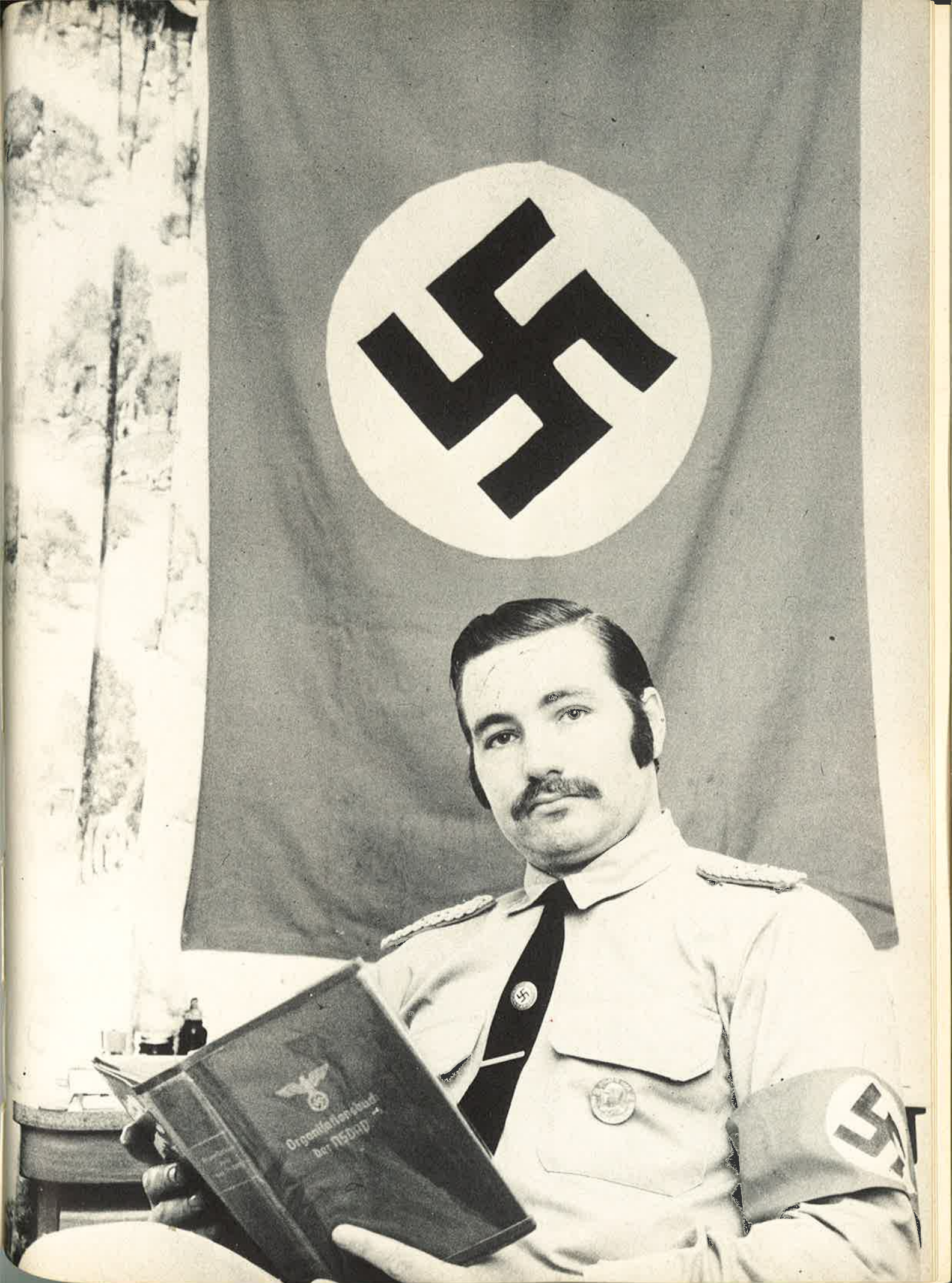
The uniform he wore — it belonged to the society — dated from about 1885 and was that of the Garrison Artillery in the NSW Military Forces. It consisted, Ansell says, of a blue coat with white braid, blue trousers with a red stripe, black boots and a white pith helmet.

He collects old manuscripts and books — "I've got about 30 now, dating from about 1669" — old gramophones and gramophone records, and old guns.

He reads several newspapers each day and enjoys books on military history. He says he read "War and Peace" while in prison. He goes to the cinema only occasionally (the last three films he'd seen were "Patton," "Waterloo," and "Too Late the Hero") but watches films on television "quite a lot — if I'm home on a Sunday afternoon I just turn on the set."

He says that he likes listening to Wagner and Beethoven and enjoys playing the piano. He lives alone in a little flat in Auckland.

Colin Ansell: "We'd dress up in period uniforms and put on a display for the public."



You know... thump, thump, thump

"In those days, I wasn't a National Socialist," Colin King-Ansell recalls. "I was just anti-Jew. I was very much in favour of supporting Nasser." It was 1967. Ansell was 21 and merely anti-Semitic. Wandering down an Auckland city street with a friend one night, he threw a brick through the window of a synagogue.

"It was just some stupid thing that we did," Ansell says. "I wasn't sober." He was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment "by a Jewish magistrate, Mr Izard." Does he regret the incident? "Not really, no. It made up my mind which way I was heading. I was like a lot of young chaps who were on the fringes."

In prison, Ansell was examined by a psychiatrist. "A chap named Harry Cohen. A Jew, an orthodox Jew. He tried to convince me that everything I was doing was wrong. He wasn't actually qualified. After a few sessions he gave me up as a bad job. I just continued to read what I wanted to and do what I wanted to. I'd proved my point."

Prison life was "quite bearable," Ansell says. "I quite enjoyed it. I ended up as the editor of the prison newspaper. I had all the facilities that I wanted: typewriter, record-player, tape-recorder — all those in my cell."

"I had everything my own way. I was running all the films down there. I was in practically every discussion group that was going. Prison's only what you make of it. If you've got something to do, time goes quickly."

In 1969, Ansell was released from prison. He returned to his work as a barman. One change which had taken place

was the disappearance of a group of right-wing friends who used to discuss "world problems, latest correspondence that had arrived from overseas: we were in direct contact with George Lincoln Rockwell. I still have the record he sent me."

The six members of the group had met "practically every weekend" for their discussions. When Ansell found that all but one had left Auckland or lost interest, he formed a new group. "In June, 1969, it officially became the Nazi Party." Meetings were held once a month, Ansell says, and there was usually an attendance of "about 20".

Prior to his conviction, Ansell had spent a year and a half in the New Zealand Army. He didn't enjoy the experience greatly — "I wasn't the type of person who could settle down and knuckle under anybody else; I was too independent" — but says that the party nevertheless encourages its members to join the army. "It's one way of training the members into discipline," he says. Discipline is very important? "Yes. There's a lack of it in this country. A great lack of it, actually."

And the value of discipline is what? "Well, that people have self-control. They learn how to control themselves." Why should one control oneself? "It's hard to

explain. I consider discipline essential to growing up.

"You find most of these characters who knock discipline away end up roaming the streets as bums. They're not able to keep a job. You see them all the time. In most cases they've been rejected from military service because they're unfit. You can also see them as I see them, across the bar: dirty, unwashed alcoholics."

How many National Socialists are there in New Zealand? "Actually, membership's kept a secret. We don't like to reveal our full strength." Why? "Well, at the moment we're not designing on the same lines as Hitler. We have no stormtroopers. I don't believe in stormtroopers."

Then why be concerned about concealing the number? "Well, the numbers fluctuate, you could say. The fact is that propaganda is propaganda. Even Rockwell used the art of propaganda. No one really knew what his membership was, but when he did turn out, he turned out in force."

Can you give it to within 100, or within 50, or within ten? "It's over 100. It's climbing very close to 200. We're attracting a different kind of person than they did in the 1930s. We're not getting ruffians now. We're getting more educated people."

"For example, we get quite a few public

servants. Some of them are in the Ministry of Finance, some of them are in Foreign Affairs. They're a great help to us."

Ansell also says that "quite a number" of police are party members: "I'd say ten of our members in Auckland would be policemen." And in Wellington? "I wouldn't be quite sure on the Wellington numbers. I know one person who's written to me who said he's a member of the police. He's a detective."

It was this claim of police membership which attracted attention when an interview with Ansell was published in *Salient*, the Victoria University of Wellington student newspaper, in May, 1970. The story was picked up rather dubiously by the daily papers, and Ansell became front-page news for a few days. Then he was interviewed on the national television current affairs programme "Gallery".

It was a fairly sterile confrontation. For the most part, the interview seemed to consist of propositions of this kind: "Many New Zealanders fought against the Nazis. Isn't your party's existence an affront to those men and women?" Ansell was uncomfortable, a little defensive, perhaps, but largely undismayed. (Later, however, he remarked that the interview had been "a bit of a gruelling session.")

The interviewer did get in one good shot. He challenged Ansell to name two members of the party who were also members of the police. Ansell said he would — but after the programme, when he could refer to his files. He didn't want the names made public, he said. The interviewer agreed, saying that he would check the names and let the viewers know during the next programme how Ansell's claim had held up.

But Ansell never produced the names. Instead, he disappeared from Auckland, only to be discovered a week later, working as a barman at a Wellington Hotel. "The Hotel Association of New Zealand," said the assistant manager of the hotel after Ansell was sacked, "has taken steps to minimise Mr King-Ansell's chances of getting a job in any New Zealand hotel." Ansell vanished from the public eye once again.

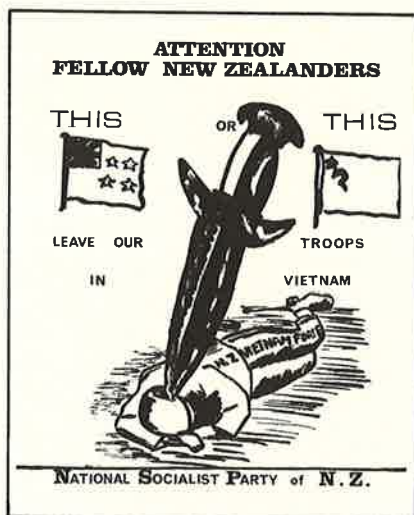
His party has been moribund since. It still maintains its Auckland post office box, however, and occasionally sends circulars to its tiny membership (which consists of perhaps 60 people; all of them passive in their membership and some of them, undoubtedly, also members of the police and the Security Service interested in ensuring that the party does not make a nuisance of itself).

The only newsworthy incident of any kind which has occurred since May, 1970, took place in January, 1971, when a home-made bomb was found on the doorstep of the Ansell family's home in Auckland. An anonymous caller telephoned a local radio station at 3.10 am to say that there was "a bomb on the doorstep of King-Ansell, the Nazi Party leader."

The house was evacuated (Ansell was not at home, having — according to his sister — "packed his bags and left" about a fortnight before) as were the adjacent houses. Then the "bomb" was dragged 150 yards away into an open space and dismantled by an explosives expert.

It consisted of a rusty, defused mortar shell, with two torch batteries and a live .303 practice cartridge attached. It was unlikely that the device could have exploded, the expert said.

From February to November, 1971,



Above, a New Zealand National Socialist Party leaflet; at right, Errol James Silvester, deputy leader of the New Zealand party; and below, Brian Edwards, front-man for the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation's current affairs programme "Gallery," interviews Ansell in the confrontation which effectively destroyed the party.



Ansell was in Australia "observing" the ANSP. In his absence, the party's affairs were handled by its secretary, Mr Benstead. He is in his sixties ("an engineer," Ansell thinks), and has been a supporter of the party since 1969. Benstead and Ansell exchanged letters and Ansell telephoned New Zealand several times about party matters.

In April, Gibbett, then New South Wales state leader, told the writer that Ansell was "simply over here on a training course. He's been working in New Zealand for quite a while now but he hasn't developed any techniques. He's had very little active help, little support and no money. All we're trying to do is pass on the techniques we've learned so when he goes back he can take New Zealand by storm."

"I haven't seen Colin blooded yet," Gibbett continued. "I haven't seen how he works out in a fight. In this type of business you've got to have a strong leader. He's got to be ready to get into the middle of a Communist demonstration and... you know... thump, thump, thump."

Gibbett's remarks are interesting in the light of some comments made about his own behaviour by party members. May says that "Ken's all right, but I think he could do a bit more punching himself. It's more or less been left up to me and Alan (Parziani) and Peter (Wells)."

Alan Parziani says: "Gibbett's big-mouthed, but when it comes to doing anything he's just a bag of wind. At Mascot he did nothing at all. All he's interested in is not having to work — he wasn't interested in whether the party would go ahead. He's a professional bludger. For a bloke like that there's no room at all."

"I've seen more action in a few months here than in all the time in New Zealand," Ansell said. "The average Australian in the street seems to accept the party more readily, too. I think this is because of the way they've gone about things. They've tried to *win* the people. They haven't alienated themselves from the people like the Communists have."

Ansell says that the National Socialist movement in Australia is also "a lot bigger, and they've got more experienced people generally. They've got people trained in propaganda, public speaking, street work..." Street work? "Yes. Men who know how to handle themselves in the street or in crowds."

Ansell's deputy leader and head of the party's South Island branch had been Errol James Silvester, a 22-year-old farm worker. An Invercargill newspaper, the *Southland Times*, reported this exchange with Silvester in January, 1970:

How many party members are there in the North Island? "I couldn't say... 5000 or more. I know they've got quite a lot." And how many in the South Island? "I don't know... We have one member in Invercargill that I know of."

Before his departure to Australia, Ansell "officially closed" the South Island branch because his former deputy leader was "now defunct." And where was Silvester? "Where he ought to be — in gaol." Why? "Criminal activities." Which were? "Burglary. The type of thing I will not tolerate in the movement. He'd been using the party as a criminal front — something I only found out at a later date, unfortunately."

Ansell says that the following letter was

the last communication he received from Silvester:

c/o Wi-tako Prison,
Private Bag 300,
Wellington.
24 Feb. 1971.

Dear Mr Ansell,

I think you should know I have resigned from the Party about two months ago. The Party has ruined my Name and turned my family against me.

Were you suspended from Active duty after desecrating a Jewish synagouge? Oh yes, I know all about you Mr D. C. King-Ansell. Also, I have disbanded all groups and Cells of the South Island Corps. I do not wish to be associated with the Nazi Party again. I was a fool for joining. You have no idea how to run the Party.

Furthermore, on my release, my activities will be to get the party outlawed in New Zealand. Though I will not affiliate myself with the Communists. I shall also be exposing the insides of the Nazi Party, here and in Australia. I have two National Socialist Contacts, who in the Party are Communists, to expose the whole show.

You will never discover the planted spys so tread Careful. One spy is in Australia and the other in Auckland. Remember this, Silvester is a Jewish Name. I wish to destroy all types of Nazism.

You may remember I tried to kick you out, a Putsch, more or less. Well that was only the start. Beware.

Yours sincerely,
Errol J. Silvester, Esq.

Hitler and I have surrendered to our illusions
like a couple of lunatics. We have only
one hope left — to create a myth.
(Mussolini, 1944.)