NZ First Party youth leader linked to neo-Nazi groups

John Braddock
7 August 2026

On August 3, the *Press* reported that a leader of the New Zealand First Party's youth wing has been linked to neo-Nazi groups and online social media accounts praising Hitler. Nicholas Newport, 23, became an executive member of Young New Zealand First in late 2024 and spoke at the party's national convention last month.

NZ First plays a major role in the National Party-led coalition government, in which NZ First leader Winston Peters is the foreign minister. Emulating US President Trump and far-right politicians around the world, NZ First frequently agitates against immigrants from India and China, as well as Muslims and LGBT people. It has also viciously denounced protests against the Gaza genocide.

The *Press* article states that Newport, under a former name, Nicholas Wells, "appeared at two protests involving far-right activists and was linked to accounts expressing support for the National Socialist Network (NSN), an Australian neo-Nazi organisation that later rebranded as White Australia."

One 2023 post reportedly described Wells' plan to travel to Australia and "train" with NSN members. The fascist gunman Brenton Tarrant, who massacred 51 people in attacks on two Christchurch mosques in 2019, interacted for years with members of fascist Australian groups, including the United Patriots Front (UPF) and its offshoots, the True Blue Crew and the Lads Society, whose leaders went on to found the NSN and White Australia.

The *Press* reported that social media posts from an account used by Wells dating from September 2024 included explicit praise for Hitler and for an Australian neo-Nazi, Nathan Bull, described as a "true hero of the White Race."

"When another user described a [NZ government] policy as fascist, the account replied: 'As a Fascist I don't appreciate you comparing this liberal government to me. Hail Hitler.'

"Responding to a post by a Holocaust Museum, the account referred to 'wooden doors'—an apparent nod to a claim used by Holocaust deniers to dispute the existence of gas chambers. The account also regularly shared material from New Zealand First."

In March 2023, Wells was reportedly one of five men who provocatively invaded a crowd protesting the British anti-transgender activist Posie Parker in Auckland. He wore badges associated with the Rise Above Movement, designated a "white-supremacist organisation" by the US government, as well as the extremist far-right Boogaloo Boys.

In early 2024, Wells reportedly took part in an action by members of Action Zealandia, a far-right group that espouses the same ideology as Australia's NSN. The men disrupted an event featuring a transgender artist at a Hamilton library and displayed a banner accusing transgender people of paedophilia.

The *Press* notes: "Under his current identity, Newport has continued to express strongly anti-immigration views. In one Instagram comment, he claimed immigration from India would cause an 'explosion in sexual related crimes'. In another, he wrote: 'Mass immigration will kill our country.'"

There is no indication that Newport has been suspended or expelled from NZ First for his reported neo-Nazi connections and positions. On the contrary, party leader Peters issued a belligerent social media post labelling the *Press* article a "pathetic lowball hit job" by "the leftwing shill media… to try and drag a young member of our party through the mud."

He declared that NZ First did not "hire a private investigator to interrogate" new members and it was

© World Socialist Web Site

"utterly ridiculous" to suggest that Newport's alleged associations had any reflection on the party.

The fact that Newport was able to become an executive member of NZ First's youth organisation reflects the extent to which fascistic ideas are encouraged and normalised by the political establishment.

The *Press* article was published days after Peters unleashed a racist tirade in parliament against Chinese-born Green Party MP Lawrence Xu-Nan, telling him to "go back to your own country" where, he declared, they "lie like flatfish." Xu-Nan is a NZ citizen whose family immigrated in 1994 when he was a child.

It also follows numerous racist comments against Indians by Peters and NZ First's deputy leader Shane Jones. NZ First is campaigning in the election with a policy to strip voting rights from recent immigrants, who are currently allowed to vote if they are permanent residents and have lived in NZ for one year.

NZ First's convention on July 18–19, at which Newport spoke, was a jamboree of chauvinism and militarism. Members lambasted National and the opposition Labour Party alike for supporting a free trade agreement with India, which Peters labelled a "free migration deal" for Indians.

At an election rally on August 2, NZ First announced a policy to give three-year $5,000 grants to New Zealand citizens who have children, declaring in a statement that the number of "citizen births" was diminishing while "the non-citizen birth number is dramatically increasing." Peters warned that "New Zealand needs to get our birthrate increasing before it's too late."

The policy echoes the demands by fascistic figures such as US trillionaire Elon Musk that the birthrate of citizens must be elevated to offset the alleged dangers of ethnic "replacement." Concern about white birthrates was also central to Tarrant's manifesto issued to justify the Christchurch massacre.

Meanwhile, Peters has refused to apologise for his attack on Xu-Nan. Prime Minister Christopher Luxon has not sacked him as foreign minister, despite admitting that the remarks were "racist" and "offensive."

The opposition Labour Party and the Greens have called for Peters' sacking. But both parties governed in coalition with NZ First between 2017 and 2020, in which Peters also served as foreign minister and deputy prime minister. Labour campaigned on anti-Chinese demagogy—notoriously scapegoating people with "Chinese sounding names" for the housing crisis in 2015, then in office tightened the residency pathway for tens of thousands of applicants.

Like far-right parties internationally, NZ First is seeking to divert growing anger over the worsening social disaster in a reactionary and nationalist direction in order to divide and break up any opposition movement of the working class.

According to a *Stuff* survey released on August 4, a staggering 39 percent of people reported being worse off financially than a year ago and only 4 percent were better off. Official unemployment hit 5.6 percent in June, the highest in 11 years. Among young people aged 15 to 24, 13.8 percent are not in employment, education or training.

Nearly half of people aged 18 to 25 are not enrolled to vote, reflecting profound alienation from all the capitalist parties. Workers and youth are being driven to the left; they are disgusted by the criminal US-Israeli war on Iran and the genocide in Gaza, which the NZ government supports, as well as the destruction of jobs and living standards and the elevation of the far right.

Anger by itself, however, is not enough. To oppose imperialist war and fascism, the working class must build a socialist and internationalist party that fights to put an end to the capitalist system, which is plunging the world into barbarism.

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact

© World Socialist Web Site