

= Nick Griffin =

Nicholas John Griffin ( born 1 March 1959 ) is a British politician who represented North West England as a Member of the European Parliament ( MEP ) from 2009 to 2014 . He served as chairman and then president of the far @-@ right British National Party ( BNP ) from 1999 to 2014 , when he was expelled from the party .

Born in Barnet , Griffin was educated at Woodbridge School in Suffolk . He joined the National Front at the age of 14 and , following his graduation from the University of Cambridge , became a political worker for the party . In 1980 he became a member of its governing body , and later wrote articles for several right @-@ wing magazines . He was the National Front 's candidate for the seat of Croydon North West in 1981 and 1983 , but left the party in 1989 . In 1995 he joined the BNP and in 1999 became its leader . He stood as the party 's candidate in several elections and became a member of the European Parliament for North West England in the 2009 European elections .

In 1998 Griffin was convicted of distributing material likely to incite racial hatred , for which he received a suspended prison sentence . In 2006 he was acquitted of separate charges of inciting racial hatred . Griffin has been criticised for many of his comments on political , social , ethical and religious matters , but after becoming leader of the BNP he sought to distance himself from some of his previously held positions , which include Holocaust denial . In recent years , events where Griffin has been invited to participate in public debates or political discussions have proven controversial and often resulted in protests and cancellations .

= = Early life and education = =

The son of former Conservative councillor Edgar Griffin and his wife Jean , Nicholas John Griffin was born on 1 March 1959 in Barnet and moved to Southwold in Suffolk aged eight . He was educated at Woodbridge School before winning a sixth ? form scholarship to the independent Saint Felix School in Southwold , one of only two boys in the all @-@ girls school .

Griffin read Adolf Hitler 's Mein Kampf when he was 14 , and " found all but one chapter extremely boring " . He joined the National Front in 1974 , while he was still 14 , though he had to pretend he was 15 , and at the age of 16 is reported to have stayed at the home of National Front organiser Martin Webster . In a four @-@ page leaflet written in 1999 , Webster claimed to have had a homosexual relationship with Griffin , then the BNP 's publicity director . Griffin has denied any such relationship .

From 1977 , Griffin studied history , then law , at Downing College , Cambridge . His affiliation with the National Front was revealed during a Cambridge Union debate , and his photograph was published in a student newspaper . He later founded the Young National Front Student organisation . He graduated with a second @-@ class honours degree in law ( 2 : 2 ) , and a boxing blue , having taken up the sport following a brawl in Lewisham with a member of an anti @-@ fascist party . He boxed three times against Oxford in the annual Varsity match , winning twice and losing once . In an interview with The Independent , he said he gave it up because of a hand injury . He is a fan of Ricky Hatton and Joe Calzaghe , and an admirer of Amir Khan .

= = Political career = =

= = = 1970s ? 1990 = = =

Following his graduation , Griffin became a political worker at the National Front headquarters . As a teenager he had accompanied his father to a National Front meeting , and by 1978 , he was a national organiser for the party . He helped set up the White Noise Music Club in 1979 , and several years later worked with white power skinhead band , Skrewdriver . In 1980 , he became a member of the party 's governing body , the National Directorate , and in the same year launched Nationalism Today with the aid of Joe Pearce , then editor of the NF youth paper Bulldog . As a

National Front member , Griffin contested the seat of Croydon North West twice , in the 1981 by @-@ election and 1983 general election , securing 1 @. @ 2 % and 0 @. @ 9 % of the vote .

Membership of the National Front declined significantly following the election of the Conservatives under Margaret Thatcher . As a result , the party became more radicalised , and a dissatisfied Griffin , along with fellow NF activists Derek Holland and Patrick Harrington , began to embrace the ideals of Italian fascist Roberto Fiore , who had arrived in the UK in 1980 . By 1983 , the group had broken away to form the NF Political Soldier faction , which advocated a revival of country " values " and a return to feudalism with the establishment of nationalist communes . Writing for Bulldog in 1985 , Griffin praised the black separatist Louis Farrakhan , but his comments were unpopular with some members of the party . He also attempted to form alliances with Libya 's Muammar al @-@ Gaddafi and Iran 's Ayatollah Khomeini , and praised the efforts of Welsh nationalist movement Meibion Glyndŵr .

Following a disagreement with Harrington ( who subsequently formed the Third Way ) , and objections over the direction the party was heading , in 1989 , Griffin left the National Front . Along with Holland and Fiore , he helped form the International Third Position ( ITP ) , a development of the Political Soldier movement , but left the organisation in 1990 . In the same year , he lost his left eye when a discarded shotgun cartridge exploded in a pile of burning wood , since when he has worn a glass eye . The accident left him unable to work , and owing to other financial problems he subsequently petitioned for bankruptcy ( the accident occurred in France , where he later lost money in a failed business project ) . For several years thereafter , he abstained from politics and was supported financially by his parents . He later stewarded a public Holocaust denial meeting hosted by David Irving .

== = 1993 ? 1999 == =

Griffin re @-@ entered politics in 1993 and , in 1995 , at the behest of John Tyndall , joined the British National Party ( BNP ) . He also became editor of two right @-@ wing magazines owned by Tyndall , Spearhead and The Rune . Referring to the election of the BNP 's first councillor , Derek Beackon , at a 1993 council by @-@ election in Millwall , he wrote :

The electors of Millwall did not back a post modernist rightist party , but what they perceived to be a strong , disciplined organisation with the ability to back up its slogan " Defend Rights for Whites " with well @-@ directed boots and fists .

Tyndall , also previously in the National Front , had founded the BNP in 1982 , but his " brutal , streetfighting background " and admiration for Hitler and the Nazis had made any kind of respectability impossible . In his 1999 leadership campaign , Griffin embarked on a strategy to make the party electable , by taking it away from Tyndall 's extremist image . He was helped by Tyndall 's lack of familiarity with the mainstream media , and in the party 's September election he defeated Tyndall to become head of the BNP . One of Griffin 's changes included moderating the party 's emphasis on the removal of multiculturalism , a policy it claims has a destructive influence on both immigrant and British cultures . This realignment was designed to position the BNP alongside successful European far @-@ right groups , such as the French Front National . Street protests were replaced by electoral campaigning , and some policies were moderated ( the compulsory repatriation of ethnic minorities was instead made voluntary ) . Other policies included the introduction of capital punishment for paedophiles , rapists , drug dealers and some murderers , and corporal punishment for less serious crimes such as juvenile delinquency . Griffin 's image as a Cambridge @-@ educated family man was in contrast to the extremist image presented by the BNP under Tyndall 's leadership . In October 1999 , Nick Griffin , supported by Tony Lecomber stood against Tyndall for leadership of the BNP . John Tyndall received just 411 ( 30 % ) of the votes , while Griffin the majority , 70 % .

== = 2000 ? present == =

Griffin has stood as his party 's candidate in several English elections since joining the BNP . In

2000 , he stood in West Bromwich West , in a by @-@ election triggered by the resignation of Betty Boothroyd . He came fourth , with 794 votes ( 4 @.@ 21 % of those cast ) . Following the Oldham race riots he ran in Oldham West and Royton in the 2001 general election . He received 6 @,@ 552 votes ( 16 % ) , coming third ahead of the Liberal Democrats , but closely behind the second place Conservatives , who received 7 @,@ 076 votes . He again stood for election in the 2003 Oldham Council election , for a seat representing the Chadderton North ward . He came second to the Labour candidate , receiving 993 votes ( 28 % ) . In the 2004 European Parliament election , when he was the BNP candidate for the North West England constituency , the party received 134 @,@ 959 votes ( 6 @.@ 4 % of those cast ) , but won no seats . In the 2005 general election he contested Keighley in West Yorkshire , and polled 4 @,@ 240 votes ( 9 @.@ 2 % ) , finishing in fourth place .

Griffin was the BNP candidate in the 2007 Welsh National Assembly Elections , in the South Wales West region . The BNP received 8 @,@ 993 votes ( 5 @.@ 5 % of those cast ) , behind the Labour party 's 58 @,@ 347 votes ( 35 @.@ 8 % ) . In October 2007 , he was an unsuccessful candidate in the Thurrock Council election . In November 2008 , the entire membership list of the BNP was posted on the Internet ( though the list may have included lapsed members of the party and people who had expressed an interest in joining the party , but had not signed up ) . Griffin claimed that he knew the identity of the individual responsible , describing him as a hard @-@ line senior employee who had left the party in the previous year . He welcomed the publicity that the story generated , using it to describe the common perception of the average BNP member as a " skinhead oik " as untrue .

He was elected as a member of the European Parliament for North West England in the 2009 European Elections . The BNP polled 943 @,@ 598 votes ( 6 @.@ 2 % ) , gaining two MEPs . Griffin and fellow MEP Andrew Brons were subsequently pelted with eggs as they attempted to stage a celebratory press conference outside the Houses of Parliament . A second venue ? a public house near Manchester ? was chosen the following day . A line of police blocked a large group of protesters , who chanted " No platform for Nazi Nick " and " Nazi scum off our streets " . Griffin viewed the election as an important victory , claiming that his party had been demonised and blocked from holding public meetings . " In Oldham alone there have been hundreds of thousands of pounds spent on employing bogus community workers to keep us out . To triumph against that level of pressure as a political party has never been done before . "

In May 2009 , he was invited by the BNP representative on the London Assembly , Richard Barnbrook , to accompany him to a Buckingham Palace garden party hosted by Queen Elizabeth II . The invitation prompted objections from several organisations and public figures , including the Mayor of London Boris Johnson , and the anti @-@ fascist organisation Searchlight . Griffin declined this first invitation , but when invited personally in 2010 he accepted :

This event shows just how far this party has come in the last few years but I won 't be at the Palace for myself or my family . No ! I will be there to represent the patriots who made this possible ; I 'll be there for you . I 'll be there for all the stout @-@ hearted men and women who down through the turbulent years tramped the streets with me in all weathers knocking doors , and those who ran the gauntlets of hate wherever we went .

The Palace later decided to deny Griffin entry to the event , claiming that he had used his invitation " for party political purpose through the media " , and citing security concerns . Griffin claimed the decision was an " absolute scandal " , and appeared to be " a rule invented for me . "

In September 2009 , he appealed to party activists for £ 150 @,@ 000 of extra funding for the BNP . In the letter , he said that the party 's ailing fortunes were a direct result of " attacks on the party " . He also defended questions by the Electoral Commission about the transparency of BNP funding . In November 2009 , Griffin was a witness at the trial of an Asian man , Tauriq Khalid , at Preston Crown Court . The prosecution claimed that in November 2008 Khalid repeatedly drove past a demonstration that Griffin was attending , and on the second occasion shouted " white bastards " . Khalid admitted shouting derisory comments at Griffin and other demonstrators , telling the jury he shouted " Nick Griffin , you fucking wanker " and " Get the fuck out of Burnley , you 're not welcome here " , but denied shouting " white bastard " . Griffin gave evidence against Khalid , and affirmed

that Khalid had shouted " white bastard " at him . Griffin said the man " leaned out of the car and pointed at me and made a gun and gang gesture " , and that he threatened him by shouting " I 'm going to ... " . Griffin said he had left the demonstration early , fearing for his safety . The 23 @-@ year @-@ old defendant denied his comments had any racial intent , and was found not guilty . Griffin later commented " I think it 's unfortunate and I think it 's wrong , but that 's the jury 's right . They saw all the evidence , I accept their decision . I 'm not going to lose any sleep over it . "

In the 2010 general election he contested the Barking constituency polling 6 @,@ 620 votes and finishing in third place . In 2011 , following the loss of many of the council seats the BNP held in England , Griffin narrowly survived a leadership challenge .

In 2010 Griffin announced that by 2013 he would stand down as leader , to focus on his European Parliament election campaign . He lost his seat in Europe in the May 2014 European election and stepped down as BNP leader on 19 July 2014 , becoming the organisation 's president . But on 1 October , the party announced that it had expelled Griffin , who , it claimed , was " deliberately fabricating a crisis " and leaking " damaging and defamatory allegations " . Following his departure from the BNP , he founded the British Unity Party , which has been described as a " non @-@ membership organisation with around two thousand followers on Facebook " .

= = Criminal charges = =

= = = 1998 = = =

In 1998 , Griffin was convicted of violating section 19 of the Public Order Act 1986 , relating to the offence of ' publishing or distributing racially inflammatory written material ' in issue 12 of The Rune , published in 1996 . Griffin 's comments in the magazine were reported to the police by Alex Carlile , then the Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Montgomeryshire . Following a police raid at Griffin 's home , he was charged with distributing material likely to incite racial hatred . Fellow BNP member Paul Ballard was also charged , but entered a guilty plea and did not stand trial . Griffin pleaded not guilty , and was tried at Harrow Crown Court . He called the French Holocaust denier Robert Faurisson and the nationalist Osiris Akkebala as witnesses , was found guilty and given a nine @-@ month sentence , suspended for two years , and a £ 2 @,@ 300 fine . Ballard was given a six @-@ month sentence , also suspended for two years . He said :

I am well aware that the orthodox opinion is that six million Jews were gassed and cremated and turned into lampshades . Orthodox opinion also once held that the world is flat .

Griffin claimed that the law under which he was convicted was an unjust law and he therefore had no obligation to follow it . He was secretly recorded by the ITV programme The Cook Report in 1997 describing Carlile as " this bloody Jew ... whose only claim is that his grandparents died in the Holocaust " .

= = = 2004 ? 2006 = = =

On 14 December 2004 , Griffin was arrested at his home in Wales , on suspicion of incitement to racial hatred , over remarks he made about Islam in an undercover BBC documentary titled The Secret Agent . He was questioned at a police station in Halifax , West Yorkshire , before being freed on police bail . He said that the arrest was " an electoral scam to get the Muslim block vote back to the Labour party " and that the Labour government was attempting to influence the results of the following year 's general election .

Griffin 's arrest was made two days after those of John Tyndall and several other people , over remarks they had made in the same programme . Following its broadcast on 15 July 2004 , the police began an investigation into the programme 's contents . The following April he was charged with four offences of using words or behaviour intended or likely to stir up racial hatred . The trial began in January 2006 . Griffin stood alongside fellow party activist Mark Collett , who faced similar charges . Prosecuting , Rodney Jameson QC told the jury of six speeches that the accused had

made in the Reservoir Tavern in Keighley on 19 January 2004 . Reading excerpts from them , he claimed that they included threatening , abusive and insulting words directed at " people of Asian ethnicity " , with the intention of " stirring up racial hatred " .

Griffin was also accused of calling murdered black teenager Stephen Lawrence a drug dealer and bully who stole younger pupils ' dinner money . In the witness box he defended himself by quoting passages from the Qur 'an , saying that his comments describing Islam as a " vicious , wicked faith " were attacking not a race , but a religion . During the two @-@ week trial he used a laptop to post daily updates on a blog on the BNP 's website . In his closing address , defence barrister Timothy King QC said :

The British National Party is a legal , political entity . It has a right in a democratic society to put forward ideas and policies which some might find uncomfortable and some might find even offensive . There has been a tendency in this case to over @-@ analyse speeches , to take one line here and one line there . You have got to look at the overall impact of these speeches ? remember the context of each speech .

Griffin and Collett were cleared of half the charges against them ? the jury remained divided on the other charges , and a retrial was ordered . On 10 November 2006 , after five hours of deliberations , the jury cleared them of all charges . They were met outside the court by about 200 supporters , who Griffin addressed with a megaphone . He attacked Tony Blair and the BBC , and defended the BNP 's right to freedom of speech . BNP Deputy Chairman Simon Darby later claimed that had Griffin been convicted , the BNP leader planned to go on hunger strike .

= = Public debates = =

Following his election as BNP leader , Griffin was invited to participate in debates at several universities . In November 2002 , the Cambridge Union Society invited him to take part in a debate the following January . Titled " This house believes that Islam is a threat to the west " , the resolution was controversial ; alongside more moderate speakers , one of those invited was Abu Hamza al @-@ Masri , a fundamentalist Muslim cleric . Some participants threatened to withdraw , and several official bodies criticised the invitations . The two had met earlier in the year , in a debate chaired by Rod Liddle , then editor of BBC Radio 4 's Today programme . He was also invited by the Cambridge Forum to a debate on extremism in December 2002 , with Liberal Democrat MP Lembit Öpik . The venue was changed twice after protests from property owners , but the threat of a violent confrontation between the Anti @-@ Nazi League and BNP supporters forced the president of the Cambridge Forum , Chris Paley , to cancel the event . Paley called the decision an " own goal " for the values of free speech , and Öpik criticised it , emphasising his belief in " people 's right to make their own decisions in a democracy " .

In February 2005 , Griffin was asked to take part in a debate on multiculturalism at the University of St Andrews in Scotland . He was invited by the president of the students ' debating society , who said " We believe that the only way to get the truth of what the BNP are saying and to combat them is to do it in public in a debate . " The move was attacked by anti @-@ racist groups , some of whom refused to participate in the discussion . Griffin said " I am coming up because I was invited by the students at the university because they have a debate on an intelligent subject on which I have something to say . The people against it are the usual bunch of people who cannot win the argument and refuse to stand on a platform . " The society withdrew the invitation before the event was to take place .

In May 2007 , Griffin was invited to address a meeting at the University of Bath by politics student and BNP youth leader Danny Lake . Lake wanted Griffin to visit the university and explain the BNP 's policies to lecturers and students . The invitation was viewed by some as an attempt by the party to establish a foothold on the university campus . Eleven union general secretaries wrote to the university 's vice @-@ chancellor and asked her to reconsider the decision to allow the meeting . A large protest was planned , and following students ' concerns over their personal safety , the University cancelled the invitation .

Several months later , the Oxford Union invited Griffin to speak at a forum on the limits of free

speech , along with other speakers including David Irving . The invitation was condemned by the Equality and Human Rights Commission head Trevor Phillips and the president of the Oxford Students ' Union . The Conservative MP Dr Julian Lewis resigned his membership of the Union . A rally against the invitation was held at Oxford Town Hall on 20 November , and included the Oxford Students ' Union president , the National Union of Students black students ' officer , and the Trades Union Congress south east regional secretary . Representatives of Unite Against Fascism also attended , as well as the University of Oxford 's Jewish student chaplain . Several Holocaust survivors spoke at the rally . Stephen Altmann @-@ Richer , co @-@ president of the Oxford University Jewish Society , said " I don 't think these people should be invited to the Oxford Union , by having them speak , it legitimises their views ... " On the night of the debate , about 50 protesters forced their way into the venue , and a crowd of hundreds gathered outside carrying banners bearing anti @-@ racist slogans and voicing anti @-@ BNP chants . Police blocked the entrances to the building , and removed the protesters encamped inside . Griffin was accompanied into the premises by security guards . The event was eventually split between two rooms , with Griffin speaking in one , and Irving in the other ; many Union Society members were unable to gain access . Although many present found the debate objectionable , some were supportive of both Griffin and Irving 's right to freedom of speech . The Oxford Union later endorsed the debate as a success .

Griffin travelled to the United States and spoke at Clemson University and Texas A & M University , but the reception he received in October 2007 at Michigan State University was markedly different from that in the other venues . Intending to address the " overpopulation of Islamists in Europe " , he was repeatedly interrupted , to the point where the event became a question and answer session . He was heckled by hostile elements of the audience , and at one point the fire alarm was activated .

= = = 2009 appearance on Question Time = = =

On 22 October 2009 , Griffin took part in the BBC 's topical debate programme , Question Time , as a representative of the BNP . He appeared alongside Bonnie Greer , Jack Straw , Baroness Warsi and Chris Huhne . He was challenged by members of the studio audience , and questioned by host David Dimbleby on comments he had previously made on the Holocaust . He was also critical of Islam . His invitation followed the election of two BNP MEPs to the European Parliament , and led to significant debate over the merits of the BBC 's decision . The appearance sparked a protest outside the BBC Television Centre prior to the recording of the programme , in which an estimated 500 people picketed the front entrance of the complex , many chanting anti @-@ Nazi slogans and others trying to break into the building to stop the programme being filmed . Some got past the police and security , but were expelled . Six protesters were arrested , and three police officers were injured , one needing hospital treatment .

The programme was watched by an estimated 8 @.@ 2 million viewers , more than three times the average figure for Question Time , and on a comparable level with prime time entertainment shows . Griffin 's appearance dominated the following day 's media ; a follow @-@ up report in the New York Times said that " the early reading by many of Britain 's major newspapers was that Mr. Griffin lost heavily on points . "

In a press conference held on 23 October , Griffin stated that he would make a formal complaint about the format of the programme , which he said was " ... not a genuine Question Time ; that was a lynch mob " . He suggested that he should appear again , but that " ... [ we ] should do it properly , and talk about the issues of the day " , and added : " That audience was taken from a city that is no longer British ... That was not my country any more . Why not come down and do it in Thurrock , do it in Stoke , do it in Burnley ? Do it somewhere where there are still significant numbers of English and British people , and they haven 't been ethnically cleansed from their own country . "

= = Policies and views = =

Griffin describes himself as a " moderniser " , and " new nationalist " , and after his election as leader of the BNP , according to The Guardian contributor Francis Wheen , was " contemptuous " of

the party 's traditional supporters . He has changed the BNP 's traditional focus on immigration and race , to a defence of what it sees as " our traditional principles against the politically correct agenda " espoused by mainstream politicians . He has portrayed himself as a defender of free speech , and has repeatedly spoken out against multiculturalism . During 2000 , he attempted to further the BNP 's popular appeal by targeting specific groups , including lorry drivers ? some of whom were at the time engaged in mass protests against fuel prices ? and farmers . The BNP also produced a journal devoted to rural matters .

The BNP 's constitution grants its chairman full executive power over all party affairs , and Griffin thus carried sole responsibility for the party 's legal and financial liabilities , and had the final say in all decisions affecting the party . The BNP 's policies include a halt to all immigration , the forced repatriation of all illegal immigrants , and the deportation of criminals whose original nationality was not British . It supports British withdrawal from the European Union ( EU ) .

Upon his election to the European Parliament Griffin unsuccessfully tried to form an alliance with right @-@ wing parties , which would have entitled the group members to extra funding . He also held talks with other far @-@ right European parties , such as Vlaams Belang and Jobbik . The BNP maintains ties with Roberto Fiore and fascist groups across Europe . Griffin criticised Gordon Brown 's Labour government for its attitude toward the BNP , accusing it of treating elected representatives of the BNP as " second @-@ class citizens " . Following his election , in a press conference held at a public house in Manchester , he criticised the privatisation of national industries , such as the railway network , and accused MPs generally of being involved in this " ... giant looting of Britain " . He accused private corporations and the " ruling elite " in Britain of building a " Eurocratic state " , a process he called " Mussolini fascism ... under Gordon Brown . " He supported the Gurkhas , stating that the BNP would allow them and their families entry to the country for medical treatment " for as long as they needed treatment , or for as long as they lived . " He also suggested the removal of 100 @, @ 000 Muslims " disloyal to Britain " and their replacement with the Gurkhas .

Griffin has frequently expressed views on Judaism , Islam and homosexuality . His comments on the Holocaust ( which he once referred to as " the Holohoax " ) made as an editor of The Rune demonstrate revisionism . He criticised Holocaust denier David Irving for admitting that up to four million Jews might have died in the Holocaust ; he wrote " True Revisionists will not be fooled by this new twist to the sorry tale of The Hoax of the Twentieth Century . " In 1997 , he told an undercover journalist that he had updated Richard Verrall 's booklet Did Six Million Really Die ? and , in the same year , he wrote Who are the Mindbenders ? , about a perceived domination of the media by Jewish figures . Despite this , the BNP had a Jewish councillor , Patricia Richardson , and spokesman Phil Edwards has stated that the party also has Jewish members . The BNP has stated that it does not deny the Holocaust , and that " Dredging up quotes from 10 , 15 , 20 years ago is really pathetic and , in a sense , rather fascist . " In an interview with the BNP deputy leader Simon Darby , Griffin claimed that the English Defence League was a " Zionist false flag operation " , and added that the organisation is " a neo @-@ con operation " . He also claimed that the EDL 's activities are an attempt to provoke civil war .

After assuming control of the party , Griffin sought to move it away from its historic identity , although on the BBC 's Newsnight on 26 June 2001 he stated that Hindus and whites had both been targeted in the " Muslim " riots of 2001 , and in the August 2001 issue of Identity ( a BNP publication ) he claimed that radical Muslim clerics wanted " ... militant Muslims to take over British cities with AK @-@ 47 rifles " . When interviewed in August 2009 for RT , he distanced himself from the present @-@ day National Front , which he claimed is " ... a group of skinheads running around with no political direction , other than that we suspect which their masters give them . " On The Politics Show on 9 March 2003 , he appeared to accept ethnic minorities who were already legally living in the country , and , on 6 March 2008 , he was again interviewed on Newsnight ; when told of a poll that demonstrated that most working @-@ class Britons were more concerned about drugs and alcohol than immigration , he linked the UK 's drug problem with Islam , specifically Pakistani immigrants . His inclusion on the programme was criticised by contributor and radio presenter Jon Gaunt , who branded the decision as " pathetic " . When asked by The Times about concerns that his recent success was presaged in Enoch Powell 's Rivers of Blood speech , Griffin replied :

The divisions are already there . They were created by that monstrous experiment : the multi @-@ cultural destruction of old Britain . There is no clash between the indigenous population and , for instance , settled West Indians , Sikhs and Hindus . There is , however , an enormous correlation between high BNP votes and nearby Islamic populations . The reason for that is nothing to do with Islamophobia ; it is issues such as the grooming of young English girls for sex by a criminal minority of the Muslim population ... I am now there to give political articulation to the concerns of the mainly indigenous population . The ethnic populations have always had Labour to speak up for them . Finally their neighbours have got someone who speaks up for them .

In a June 2009 interview with Channel 4 News , Griffin claimed that " There 's no such thing as a black Welshman " , which was criticised by Vaughan Gething , the first black president of the Welsh NUS and the Welsh TUC , and the first black candidate for the Welsh assembly . Commenting on Griffin 's claim , he said " On that basis , most white people wouldn 't qualify . It 's quite clear that Nick Griffin just doesn 't accept that black British people or black Welsh people are entitled to call themselves proper , full citizens of the country . " Griffin 's interview with Channel 4 News was in response to a decision by the Equality and Human Rights Commission to investigate the BNP 's membership criteria , which , it stated , " appeared to discriminate on the grounds of race and colour , contrary to the Race Relations Act . " He rejected claims that the BNP was " acting unlawfully " and said " ... because we are here , as it was pointed out , for specific ethnic groups ? it 's nothing to do with colour , your reporter there said that we 'll only lift a finger for white people ? that 's a simple lie . " In an interview with the BBC on 8 July 2009 , during a discussion on European immigration , he proposed that the EU should sink boats carrying illegal immigrants , to prevent them from entering Europe . Although the interviewer , BBC correspondent Shirin Wheeler , implied that Griffin may have wished the EU to " murder people at sea " , he quickly corrected her by saying " I didn 't say anyone should be murdered at sea ? I say boats should be sunk , they can throw them a life raft and they can go back to Libya " ( a staging post for migrants from Egypt and sub @-@ Saharan Africa ) .

Following the Admiral Duncan pub bombing by former BNP member David Copeland , Griffin stated " The TV footage of dozens of ' gay ' demonstrators flaunting their perversion in front of the world 's journalists showed just why so many ordinary people find these creatures so repulsive . " The BNP states that , privately , homosexuality should be tolerated , but that it " should not be promoted or encouraged " . It opposed the introduction of civil partnerships and wishes to ban what it perceives as the promotion of homosexuality in schools and the media . A series of messages he posted in October 2012 on the social network Twitter , regarding a discrimination claim won by a gay couple , sparked widespread opprobrium . Cambridgeshire police investigated the tweets , which included the couple 's address and a suggestion that a " British Justice team " would give them " a bit of drama " , but took no further action . In 2012 , although he denied being " anti @-@ gay " , he claimed that civil partnerships undermined " the institution of marriage , and as a result of that , children will die over the next few years , because they ? ll be brought up in homes which aren 't married " . In 2009 he also said that : " a lot of people find the sight of two grown men kissing in public really creepy . I understand that homosexuals don 't understand that but that 's how a lot of us [ Christians ] feel . " He also suggests that gay pride marches " [ verge ] on heterophobia which , like its twin Christianophobia , is on the rise . "

Writing for The Rune , Griffin praised the wartime Waffen SS and attacked the Royal Air Force for its bombing of Nazi Germany . At Coventry Cathedral he distributed leaflets that referred to " mass murder " during the Second World War bombing of Dresden . Although unconnected , on 9 June 2009 the Royal British Legion wrote an open letter to Griffin asking him not to wear a poppy lapel badge .

In a BBC interview on 8 June 2009 , Griffin claimed that " global warming is essentially a hoax " and that it " is being exploited by the liberal elite as a means of taxing and controlling us and the real crisis is peak oil " . He was a representative of the European Parliament at the 2009 UN Climate Change Conference , where he repeated his claim that global warming is a hoax , and called advocates of action on climate change such as Al Gore " mass murderers " by supporting biofuels , claiming that their use would lead to the " third and the greatest famine of the modern era " . A



Greenpeace spokesman said , " In reality the environmental and development groups he has been disparaging have been in the forefront of concerns about biofuels . Griffin 's claims that climate change is a hoax is one of many curious things going on between his ears . "

= = Family and personal life = =

= = = Parents = = =

Griffin 's father , Edgar Griffin ( born 1921 , Brighton , East Sussex ) was previously a long @-@ standing Conservative Party member and from 1959 to 1965 a councillor for the Metropolitan Borough of St Marylebone . He also served as a councillor on Waveney District Council during the 1980s . Griffin 's mother , Jean ( née Thomas ) , whom Edgar married in 1950 , was an unsuccessful BNP candidate for Enfield North in the 1997 general election , in Chingford & Woodford Green for the 2001 general election and for London in the 1999 European elections .

= = = Personal life = = =

Griffin lives with his family in a farmhouse in Llanerfyl , near Welshpool , in Wales . He is married to Jackie Griffin , a former nurse who also acts as his assistant and a BNP administrator . He has four children , some of whom are actively involved with the party , and a sister . He was declared bankrupt in January 2014 .

= = Elections contested = =

UK Parliament elections

Welsh Assembly elections ( Additional members region ; party list )

European Parliament elections ( Multi @-@ member constituency ; party list )