

**SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER • FAITHFUL AMERICA
GAY & LESBIAN ALLIANCE AGAINST DEFAMATION • HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN
NATIONAL BLACK JUSTICE COALITION • NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA
PEOPLE FOR THE AMERICAN WAY FOUNDATION**

Sept. 7, 2012

Dear Values Voter Summit Speaker,

We understand that you've been invited to speak at the Values Voter Summit being held in Washington, D.C., from Sept. 14-16. The host of the event, the Family Research Council (FRC), has consistently spread demonizing lies about the LGBT community, and one of its co-sponsors, the American Family Association (AFA), has linked homosexuality to the Holocaust. Given the FRC's and AFA's public statements, we urge you not to lend the prestige of your office to the summit.

The FRC is far outside of the mainstream. It has engaged in repeated, groundless demonization — portraying LGBT people as sick, vile, incestuous, violent, perverted, and a danger to the nation. One of its officials has gone so far as to say homosexuality should be criminalized. (See www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-files/groups/family-research-council.)

Perhaps the FRC's ugliest lie is its claim that gay men molest children at a far higher rate than heterosexual men — that pedophilia “is a homosexual problem,” in the words of Tony Perkins, the FRC president. All credible scientific authorities, including the American Psychological Association, reject the claim. The FRC, on the other hand, has gone so far as to claim that “[o]ne of the primary goals of the homosexual rights movement is to abolish all age of consent laws and to eventually recognize pedophiles as the ‘prophets’ of a new sexual order.”

The FRC's extremism is vividly illustrated by the fact that it has invited the AFA to co-sponsor the Summit at which you have been invited to speak. Here is what Bryan Fischer, the AFA's Director of Issue Analysis, wrote in 2010: “Homosexuality gave us Adolph Hitler, and homosexuals in the military gave us the Brown Shirts, the Nazi war machine and 6 million dead Jews.” He once said that welfare rewards black people who “rut like rabbits.”

The FRC's extremism is also illustrated by its recent hiring of retired Lt. Gen. William “Jerry” Boykin, a radical anti-Muslim propagandist and conspiracy theorist, as its executive

vice president. Last year, Mr. Boykin stated that “Islam is not a religion and does not deserve First Amendment protections”— a statement that is antithetical to American ideals. In the Affordable Care Act, he literally sees a plot to create a shadow police force that he compares to Hitler’s “Brownshirts.” Yet, the FRC has not only hired Mr. Boykin, it has given him a prominent speaking slot at the Summit.

Because of their repeated defamation of the LGBT community — not because of their opposition to gay marriage or belief that homosexuality is a sin — the Southern Poverty Law Center has designated the FRC, as well as the AFA, a hate group. You may disagree with the SPLC’s characterization. But we find it hard to believe that you would stand with an organization that knowingly spreads demeaning and false propaganda about any group of people. FBI data demonstrate that gay men and lesbians are among the most likely group to be victimized by violent hate crimes. Defaming them publicly day after day — lying about them — only throws fuel on the fire.

We urge you to decline the FRC’s invitation and not share the stage with and lend your credibility to an organization that spreads demonizing falsehoods about other people.

Thank you for your consideration.

J. Richard Cohen, *President and CEO*,
Southern Poverty Law Center

Michael Sherrard, *Director*,
Faithful America

Herndon Graddick, *President*,
Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation

Chad Griffin, *President*,
Human Rights Campaign

Sharon J. Lettman-Hicks, *Executive Director and CEO*,
National Black Justice Coalition

Janet Murguía, *President and CEO*,
National Council of La Raza

Michael B. Keegan, *President*,
People For the American Way Foundation

Citations

1. FRC official Peter Sprigg calls for criminalization of homosexuality. Sprigg, FRC's senior fellow for policy studies, says that gay behavior should be outlawed and that "criminal sanctions against homosexual behavior" should be enforced.

Source: MSNBC's "Hardball with Chris Matthews," Feb. 2, 2010, www.msnbc.msn.com/id/35224225/

2. FRC President Tony Perkins writes that pedophilia is "a homosexual problem."

Source: Tony Perkins, "Cardinal Ruffles Gay Feathers," April 16, 2010, www.academia.org/cardinal-ruffles-gay-feathers/

3. The American Psychological Association concludes: "Despite a common myth, homosexual men are not more likely to sexually abuse children than heterosexual men are."

Source: American Psychological Association, "Understanding Child Sexual Abuse: Education, Prevention, and Recovery," <http://www.apa.org/pubs/info/brochures/sex-abuse.aspx#>

4. FRC claims that "[o]ne of the primary goals of the homosexual rights movement is to abolish all age of consent laws and to eventually recognize pedophiles as the 'prophets' of a new sexual order."

Source: 1999 FRC publication, *Homosexual Behavior and Pedophilia*

5. Bryan Fischer writes, "Homosexuality gave us Adolph Hitler, and homosexuals in the military gave us the Brown Shirts, the Nazi war machine and 6 million dead Jews." Source: Bryan Fischer, "Homosexuality, Hitler and 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,'" May 27, 2010, www.afa.net/Blogs/BlogPost.aspx?id=2147494882

6. Bryan Fischer writes that black people "rut like rabbits."

Source: www.rightwingwatch.org/content/fisher-goes-too-far-blog-post-changed-remove-rut-rabbits-comment

7. FRC's Lt. Gen. William Boykin says that "Islam is not a religion and does not deserve First Amendment protections"; says Affordable Care Act creates shadow police force that he compares to Hitler's "Brownshirts."

Source: Boykin on Focus on the Family radio program, February 2012, www.rightwingwatch.org/content/dobson-and-boykin-expose-muslim-conspiracy-take-over-world
www.rightwingwatch.org/content/boykin-exposes-obamas-health-care-conspiracy-build-his-brownshirt-army

8. FRC's Lt. Gen. William Boykin says U.S. fighting "Satan" in the Middle East.

Source: William R. Arkin, "The Pentagon Unleashes a Holy Warrior," *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 16, 2003, <http://articles.latimes.com/2003/oct/16/opinion/oe-arkin16>; also <http://mediamatters.org/blog/2012/04/04/islamophobic-general-forced-to-withdraw-from-we/185989>