

RETURN OF THE PASTOR: THE 'WICK' LIGHTS A FIRE

THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER'S



Intelligence Report

WINTER 2004 • ISSUE 116

As immigrants
pour into Georgia,
a backlash erupts

'EASY PREY'



EDITORIAL

The Immigration Backlash

BY MARK POTOK, EDITOR

Five years ago, the tale of Roger and Don Barnett was everywhere. Virtually every major news outlet, from network and cable television channels to the leading newspapers and newsmagazines, described

how the brothers, frustrated with illegal immigrants crossing their Arizona border ranchlands, rounded up thousands of men and women at gunpoint and turned them over to immigration authorities.

The coverage was sympathetic. The brothers were frequently depicted in downright heroic terms, as two men struggling against a human tide that was leaving fences cut and property littered. What was almost totally ignored in the national news reports were quiet but persistent complaints that the Barnetts and others like them were actually bigoted, dangerous vigilantes. Even the accounts of U.S. citizens, allegedly stopped at gunpoint on public roads, were forgotten.

In late November, a lawsuit was filed that threw a different light on the Barnetts. Five U.S. citizens, including three girls between 9 and 11, alleged that Roger Barnett, accompanied by his brother and wife, used racial slurs, pointed a loaded and cocked AR-15 rifle at them, and threatened to shoot. A deputy sheriff's report said that the group, a family of four and an 11-year-old friend, were hunting deer when they were confronted by Barnett on what they thought were public lands. Barnett cursed the family and was "extremely agitated and angry," it said.

The deputy cited Roger Barnett for eight felony counts of aggravated assault and 10 misdemeanor counts of disorderly conduct and intimidation. At press time, Cochise County officials were reviewing the case for possible prosecution. In the past, the county has seemed extremely reluctant to press similar charges.

From Arizona to Georgia

The Barnetts, of course, are innocent unless and until proven guilty. But their case is a stark reminder of a growing national problem: the often-violent backlash that has developed against immigrants, especially those with darker skin.

In this issue, the *Intelligence Report* takes a hard look at the immigration backlash on another front — Georgia, one of the Southeastern states that have seen unprecedented levels of demographic change in the last decade. Day laborers, in particular, have become the victims of a wave of

criminal violence in the northern part of the state, and the situation seems to be growing worse by the day.

"The kids who committed these crimes had grown up listening to people saying that Hispanic people were lower forms of life," Tisha Tillman, Southeast regional director of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, told *Report* writer Bob Moser. "We know what kind of effect that rhetoric has. Day laborers are the canaries in the coal mines for immigrant communities. ... When they're being targeted, you know there's something seriously wrong."

Nativist reaction to Hispanic immigration has not been limited to vigilantes. Ordinary Americans, often prodded by the ugly rhetoric of hate groups and their allies, are increasingly joining in the hue and cry.

Proposition 200 and Beyond

In early November, voters in Arizona passed a harsh referendum aimed at undocumented workers by a 56% margin — despite the nearly universal opposition of their political, business and opinion leaders. Even the revelation that the highest profile activist behind the referendum had brought in a known white supremacist to head her national advisory board didn't seem to bother voters.

Proposition 200 requires proof of citizenship to vote or to apply for any "state [or] local benefit" — a phrase that could mean everything from food stand permits to library cards to housing assistance. Most remarkably, it threatens state workers with fines and four months in jail if they fail to inform federal officials of any non-citizen applying for such benefits. As a practical matter, critics predict that the law will lead to singling out Hispanics for constant public challenges to their citizenship.

Proposition 200 was almost immediately stayed by a federal judge, who warned that it could have "a dramatic, chilling effect upon undocumented aliens who would otherwise be eligible for public benefits under federal law." But that didn't kill the thrill that referendum results sent through anti-immigration activists around the country. Already, efforts are under way in four states — California, Colorado, Idaho and Georgia — to pass legislation similar to that in Arizona.

Such laws will almost certainly exacerbate the "us and them" mentality that often leads to violence. And that could affect many people, including 9-year-old Angelique Morales, still terrified by her encounter with the Barnetts. "I feel angry, scared, shocked, worried and confused," said the little girl whose dad is a six-year U.S. Navy veteran. "I feel scared because I thought we were going to die." ▲

VALERIE DOWNES

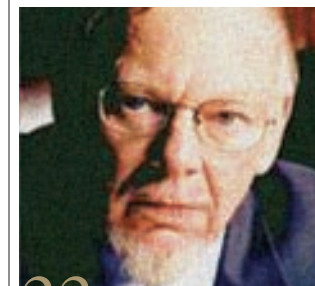


40 On The Cover With Hispanic immigrants flocking to the southeastern U.S. in record numbers, Georgia has added more than a half-million Hispanics to its population in the last decade. As their numbers grow, so do reports of racially motivated violence against them. The backlash in conservative North Georgia has been particularly fierce as neo-Nazis, Southern "heritage" activists and white-supremacist hate groups add fuel to the fire.

FRANKA BRUNS / POST-GAZETTE



8 Return of the Pastor Christian Identity preacher James Wickstrom has been preaching hate for decades. His new role with an Aryan Nations offshoot group could make the fire-breathing pastor one of the radical right's most influential figures.



22 Little Men The thinkers behind the neo-Confederate movement have a unique view of Southern history and tradition. In the process of pushing their unusual ideas, some academics end up offering what amounts to an apology for slavery and segregation.



32 Confederates in the Museum Four officials talk about pressure they've gotten from neo-Confederate activists and their sympathizers — from polite requests to death threats — to push a version of history that curators and historians agree is bunk.

JENNIFER WARDLUG

Intelligence Report

2 Intelligence Briefs

53 Legal Brief

54 For The Record

6 Alabama Getaway

What's left of Richard Butler's Aryan Nations heads south, hoping to breathe new life into a neo-Nazi group fraught with dissent in the wake of its leader's death.

17 They're Back

A new crop of extremist ex-cons resume civilian life fresh from a prison system that tends to foment rather than reform racist beliefs.

51 A Different Hero

Who is the man who has become the primary Civil War hero of the neo-Confederate movement? A fine biography details the life of Nathan Bedford Forrest.

57 Pants-demonium

"Unregistered" churches are at war with more than just Satan, the government and homosexuals. Now they've added women in pants to their naughty list.

INTELLIGENCE
PROJECT

Intelligence Project Director MARK POTOK • Deputy Director HEIDI BEIRICH • Staff Writers SUSY BUCHANAN, CAMILLE JACKSON, BOB MOSER • Design Director RUSSELL ESTES • Designers VALERIE DOWNES, CRYSTAL PHILLIPS • Production Manager BETTY RUFF • Chief Investigator JOSEPH ROY, SR. • Senior Intelligence Analyst LAURIE WOOD • Information Manager MICHELLE BRAMBLETT • Researcher NIA HIGHTOWER • Data Specialists ANGELA FREEMAN, KARMETRIYA JACKSON, CYNTHIA SIGLER • Technology Information CHRISTOPHER NORRIS • Administrative Assistant LATONYA PENN • Southern Poverty Law Center President RICHARD COHEN • Chief Trial Counsel MORRIS DEES • The *Intelligence Report* is compiled by the staff of the Intelligence Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center. It is published quarterly. ©2004 Southern Poverty Law Center. All rights reserved. Permission to reprint text and maps (but not photographs or illustrations) is granted to law enforcement and other government agencies as well as to schools and universities for educational and research purposes on the condition that the Southern Poverty Law Center's *Intelligence Report* is credited. Contact Mark Potok, *Intelligence Report* editor, with requests. The Southern Poverty Law Center is an organization supported entirely by private donations. No government funds are involved. Inquiries are welcome. Law enforcement inquiries should be sent to Joe Roy, Chief Investigator, at the following address: Southern Poverty Law Center, P.O. Box 548, Montgomery, AL 36104-0548. Printed in the USA.

WHITE SUPREMACISTS

Neo-Nazi Leader’s Past Resurfaces on Day of Triumph

For Jeff Schoep, uniform-clad commander of the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement (NSM), Sept. 25 was a big day — in more ways than he had anticipated. On the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, Schoep’s troops held a white-power rally at historic

200 members — says members should be gainfully employed and positively contributing to society. But as reporter Jon Tevlin discovered, the 30-year-old Schoep hardly fits that description himself, with a string of petty crimes on his record, including a felony arrest in 1998 for aiding and abetting a burglary.

According to court records, Schoep — who was unemployed at the time, and apparently still is — was arrested for accompanying the mother of his daughter when she stole \$4,000 worth of computer equipment. Four children were in the back seat of the car during the burglary. Schoep, who had become NSM commander four years before the incident, pleaded guilty and got off with probation — but not before District

Judge Sharon Hall took him to task for gross hypocrisy. The NSM, she pointed out, “does not condone fathering children around the countryside and taking no financial responsibility. And it does not condone the commission of crimes. I also know that your organization believes that there are various minority groups in this country that do that on a regular basis.”

Schoep told the *Star Tribune* his crimes were “in the past,” and claimed to be “taking care of my children.” In the NSM, he insisted, “We stress legality and we’re against people breaking the law” — though a registered sex offender, John Snyder, leads the Indiana chapter of the NSM, which puts a special emphasis on recruiting teenagers.



JENNIFER WARBURG

Valley Forge National Historical Park in Pennsylvania. More than 100 white supremacists, including members of the Ku Klux Klan and Aryan Nations, came to cheer the commander’s attack on Jews, whom he said were plotting “the destruction of all races through the evils of race-mixing.” When the public-address system went down 10 minutes into Schoep’s invective, his supporters shot out their arms and shouted “Sieg Heil!” repeatedly until the problem was repaired.

Schoep’s triumph was tarnished by an embarrassing exposé that appeared that same morning in the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*. Based in Minnesota, the National Socialist Movement — which claims to be the nation’s largest neo-Nazi organization, though it has only about



AP/WIDE WORLD

SELLING EXTREMISM

Wal-Mart Drops Protocols, But Controversy Lives On

Wal-Mart is notoriously vigilant about protecting consumers from products it deems offensive. The world’s largest retail chain refuses to sell any CD with a parental warning sticker. Wal-Mart even banned Sheryl Crow’s music because the singer/songwriter criticized its gun sales. The chain has also implemented policies against literature it deems offensive, stripping men’s magazines like *Maxim* and *Stuff* from the store’s racks along with gay publications like *The Advocate* and *Out*.

Wal-Mart’s standards of offensiveness became an issue last fall when customers and civil-rights groups complained about its Web site selling *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*. A notorious forgery that describes a vast Jewish conspiracy to rule the world, the *Protocols* are carried by other online booksellers such as Amazon.com, but with a disclaimer that describes it as a “pernicious fraud,” and “one of the most infa-

mous, and tragically influential, examples of racist propaganda ever written.” Wal-Mart’s site featured quite a different description of the controversial product: “If ... *The Protocols* are genuine (which can never be proven conclusively), it might cause some of us to keep a wary eye on world affairs,” said WalMart.com.

“It’s outrageous that they would sell it in the first place,” said Deborah Lipstadt, director of the Rabbi Donald A. Tam Institute for Jewish Studies at Emory University. “It’s unbelievable, but I’m glad they pulled it. It’s the equivalent of selling ‘Birth of a Nation’ in the film section.”

In fact, “Birth of a Nation,” a 1915 filmic ode to white supremacy based on the 1905 novel *The Clansman*, is still available on WalMart.com for \$17.28. The site also sells four different versions of *The Clansman*. The book and movie were largely responsible for the 20th-century rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan, introducing the tactic of cross-burnings to the new generation of racists the story inspired.

The Clansman isn’t the only example of such literature available on Wal-Mart.com. The Web site’s 700,000-book inventory includes *The South Was Right!* by James and Walter Kennedy, founding members of the League of the South hate group. Walmart.com, in a statement no competent historian would endorse, describes the book as the story of “how the South was an independent country invaded, captured, and still occupied by a vicious aggressor.” The site calls a similar exercise in pro-Confederate historical revisionism, *Myths of American Slavery*, “a sincere attempt to defeat the spread of misinterpretations and misrepresentations that continue to bedevil race relations and contaminate America’s political landscape.” WalMart.com also carries books like *Was Jefferson Davis Right?*, which alleges the Confederate president “was innocent of all of the heinous allegations made against him.”

Unlike those of other booksellers, Walmart.com’s product descriptions are lifted directly from materials provided by publishing houses, says spokeswoman Amy Colella. “We’re committed to our customers, and continue to focus on providing a wide range of books that appeal to our broad customer base,” she adds. The decision to include such products is based on the “various interests and preferences” of Walmart.com customers, Colella says.

Customers with a taste for *Maxim*, *Out* and Sheryl Crow, however, need not apply.

ANTI-IMMIGRATION

Cops, Neighbors Fire Back at Arizona’s Border Vigilantes

Things are heating up for anti-immigrant vigilante groups near Arizona’s southern border, where key figures found themselves jailed, shot and homeless this fall.

On Sept. 15, Casey Nethercott, 37, and associate Kalen Riddle, 22, were stopped by federal agents in the parking lot of a Safeway store near Douglas, Ariz. Authorities had a warrant for Nethercott’s arrest based on a tense stand-off with border patrol agents two weeks prior, but the arrest did not go smoothly. Riddle was shot and critically injured while being detained, while Nethercott ended up charged with assault on a federal officer.

Nethercott, a former associate of the paramilitary anti-immigrant group Ranch Rescue, had been running an armed border militia called Arizona Guard on ranch property he owned near Douglas. He was convicted on a weapons charge in June, and also awaits retrial for allegedly pistol-whipping a Salvadoran couple in Texas in 2003 during a Ranch Rescue operation. Nethercott had already been ordered to pay \$350,000 in damages as a result of a civil suit brought by the Southern Poverty Law Center on behalf of the Salvadoran immigrants.

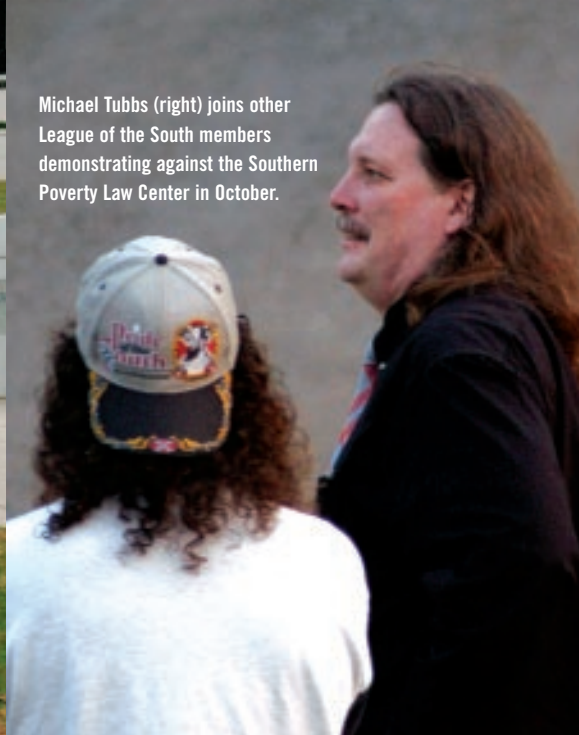
Several miles west of Douglas, another border vigilante came out on the losing end of a dispute with neighbors. American Border Patrol’s Glenn Spencer, a longtime anti-immigration rabble-rouser in California, moved to the border region in

August 2002, setting up operations in a columned ranch-style home in the upscale Pueblo del Sol subdivision as he built up his Web site and patrol operations in the area. Relations with his neighbors were soured by an August 2003 incident in which a jumpy Spencer repeatedly fired a .357 rifle, hitting a neighbor’s garage, after hearing what he described as “suspicious” noises in his back yard. In January 2004 Spencer pleaded guilty to a charge of endangerment, and was subsequently fined \$2,500 and sentenced to a year’s probation.

But it wasn’t just Spencer’s quick draw that irked neighbors. In Spencer’s neighborhood association, the operation of a home business is prohibited. The homeowners filed a complaint, and a preliminary injunction against Spencer was granted in September. Although Spencer maintained that most of his hate group’s business was conducted from rented office space in nearby Sierra Vista, he chose not to fight the injunction and announced through his attorney that he would be leaving the property by the end of October. Spencer says he’ll relocate to 10 acres near the Mexican border, and he’s been soliciting funds from supporters to put an airstrip and RV hookups on his new compound.



Michael Tubbs (right) joins other League of the South members demonstrating against the Southern Poverty Law Center in October.



NEO-CONFEDERATES

Despite Revelations, Heritage Groups Keep Convicted ‘Aryan’ Plotter in the Fold

Michael Tubbs, a prominent member of Florida’s chapter of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, resigned his post as chaplain of the state organization in October after his remarkable criminal past was brought to light in an *Intelligence Report* exposé. The Fall 2004 *Report* detailed Tubbs’ record, which includes a 1987 armed robbery that prosecutors say the former Green Beret committed in the name of the Ku Klux Klan. Authorities subsequently discovered that Tubbs had amassed a stockpile of weapons and explosives, stolen from military installations while Tubbs was in the service. The munitions were part of a plan to form a racist group targeting prominent black and Jewish targets. After pleading guilty to theft and conspiracy charges, Tubbs served four years in prison.

This was not the first time a scandal involving extremists in the Florida scv caused a ruckus. In 2002, John Adams, then commander of the state organization, was responsible for flooding an *Intelligence Report* writer’s inbox with some 250 pornographic e-mails. That incident was later made public by the magazine, much to the scv’s embarrassment. Adams, who was also Webmaster and adjutant-in-chief of the national scv, was stripped of those posts as a result.

Some scv members saw Tubbs’ prominence in the Florida chapter as a similar debacle, casting a group that professes to be peaceful, law-abiding and non-racist in a drastically different light. “I’m just praying it does not get circulated in the legislature like the porno episode did,” Florida scv First Commander Bob Mays wrote in an e-mail message circulated

to Florida division members. Florida’s second commander, David Hackel, was just plain outraged. “This type of news is just too much,” he wrote, demanding a full investigation of the charges and an emergency meeting of Florida’s remaining scv officers.

But not all scv members were disturbed. Two days after the story broke, Florida Division Commander David Dawson acknowledged Tubbs’ criminal past in a letter to members, but commended his contributions to the group. “That time was served some 15 years ago and his debt to society was paid in full when he was released,” Dawson wrote. His letter went on to say that while Tubbs had chosen to resign as chaplain, he would remain an scv member. As for disciplinary actions, Dawson said Tubbs’ local scv “camp” in Jacksonville “must be left to decide if his history meets any test requiring discipline of scv members.”

Apparently, Tubbs’ history suits members of an overtly racist neo-Confederate group, the League of the South (LOS), just fine. Days after his resignation as Florida scv chaplain was announced in October, Tubbs, who also is vice chairman of the LOS’ Northeast Florida chapter, appeared at the hate group’s annual national conference in Montgomery, Ala. Tubbs joined other LOS members in a demonstration outside the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), where a smattering of some 30 conference-goers placed Confederate flags and a pink toilet near the Center’s Civil Rights Memorial and held up signs saying, “Flush the SPLC.”

YOUTH RECRUITMENT

Neo-Nazi Label Woos Teens With Hate-Music Sampler

In one of the most ambitious efforts in recent memory to recruit young people to the white-power movement, neo-Nazi Panzerfaust Records began a mass distribution of 100,000 hate-music CDs in September. Dubbed “Project Schoolyard USA,” the campaign targets white teenagers with an inexpensive 20-song sampler of Panzerfaust bands. According to the Minnesota-based label, the aim is not only to “entertain racist kids,” but also to “create them.” Panzerfaust is offering the CDs for just 15 cents apiece, making it easy for neo-Nazis to order them in bulk and distribute them for free to middle-school and high-school kids.

The guitar-heavy CD features hard-driving tunes with lyrics like these from the Bully Boys: “Whiskey bottles/baseball bats/pickup trucks/and rebel flags/we’re going on the town tonight/hit and run/let’s have some fun/we’ve got jigaboos on the run.” In “Wrecking Ball,” a band called H8Machine advises kids to “destroy all

your enemies,” promising, “The best things come to those who hate.”

“Hopefully it will have a big impact on these kids who would otherwise get into rap,” wrote Panzerfaust’s Bryant Cecchini (a convicted felon who also goes by the alias of Byron Calvert) on the label’s Web site. “It’s the wigger kids [whites who emulate black street culture] that we are making this CD for.” Cecchini, formerly warehouse manager for neo-Nazi Resistance Records, claims to have purchased mailing lists of teens who subscribe to skateboard and heavy metal magazines.

When the first shipment of 20,000 CDs went out in September, Cecchini reported on his Project Schoolyard Web site, the entire batch was scarfed up in just two weeks. Cecchini said kids were telling him “our music blows away anything they hear on MTV,” and added, “[W]e know the impact that is possible when kids are introduced to white nationalism through the musical medium.”



In October, Panzerfaust’s scheme hit a roadblock — in Madison, W. Va., at least. Officials at Madison Middle School and Scott High School confiscated copies from about 40 students who said they’d been handed the CDs as they walked to school or boarded buses earlier in the week. That didn’t sit well with Cecchini, who called Scott Principal Leonard Bolton and threatened legal action against the school in a profanity-laced tirade that he taped and posted on the Panzerfaust Web site. Cecchini claimed he had been contacted by “several students” who said the principal told them they would “burn in hell” if they listened to the CDs. “You had no authority to confiscate those CDs,” Cecchini bellowed into the phone.

He was just getting warmed up. “I suggest you mind your fucking business and stop stealing CDs from your students before you get the shit sued out of you,” Cecchini told Principal Bolton. “I may not be able to force you to return the CDs to those kids, but since your students have contacted me and they like this music so much, I’m going to send them enough fucking CDs to give one to every goddamn kid in that school.”

EXTREMIST PLOTS

Ex-Guardsman Planned Slaughter of Jews, Police Say

Twenty-year-old Ivan Duane Braden, a discharged National Guard soldier with neo-Nazi leanings who’d taken to calling himself the “pimpin’ aryan assassin,” stuffed his backpack on Oct. 12 with large knives and materials for a homemade grenade, police say. Braden allegedly left his parents’ Knoxville, Tenn., home that day with a murderous plan in mind — until he decided, as he later told FBI agents, that “Jewish people were not worth dying for.”

Instead of driving to the local National Guard Armory, where police say Braden had a detailed plan to take hostages, murder them and set off explosives, Braden took himself to an outpatient mental health facility, where he told staff that he had “thoughts of killing people,” reportedly including the officer who’d discharged him from the Iraq-

bound 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment weeks earlier.

Federal authorities were contacted after a search of Braden’s home and vehicle turned up additional bomb-making materials and weapons, detailed sketches of the armory, and plans to suicide-bomb a local synagogue. The FBI says that Braden told agents he’d planned to wear a trench coat stuffed with explosives and get himself “as close to children and the rabbi as possible to cause the greatest amount of damage possible.”

Braden had neo-Nazi paraphernalia in his room, including a swastika flag and videos with such titles as “Nazi America” and “KKK History.” In the federal complaint against Braden, an FBI agent wrote that he “has held racist views since being a seventh-grader, and indicated that he hates Jews and blacks.”



The hatemeister's last hurrah

**Its founder dead, Aryan Nations heads south to a cloudy future.
The violence of its members, however, remains clear** By Bob Moser

ALABAMA GETAWAY

Twenty years ago, Richard Butler, white-haired founder of the neo-Nazi Aryan Nations, was perched atop the white supremacist heap. His 20-acre “Aryan World Headquarters” in North Idaho featured 24-hour armed guards, German shepherds and a chapel decorated with a bust of Hitler. Members in more than 30 states were spreading Butler’s Christian Identity message: Jews are Satan’s children and people of color are “muds,” while whites are God’s chosen people, given “divine permission to hate.” Butler’s annual Aryan World Congress had become a rare occasion for unity in the fractious world of right-wing extremism; at the huge cross burning that climaxed most congresses, uniformed neo-Nazis stood side-by-side with Skinheads, tax protesters, survivalists, Klansmen and militia organizers. And while Butler’s ultimate dream of founding an Aryan States of

America in the Pacific Northwest remained farfetched, the FBI was keeping a wary eye on Aryan Nations’ fond hope of taking over five Western states.

By the time Butler died on Sept. 8, he was an 86-year-old footnote in the annals of extremism, bankrupt and widowed and surrounded by the squabbling dregs of a once-fearsome movement. Butler’s Hitleresque vision of Aryan empire came crashing down after his guards fired at a passing car in 1998, forced it into a ditch and then assaulted its driver, Victoria Keenan, and her son. The Southern Poverty Law Center filed suit on behalf of the victims, winning a \$6.3 million verdict in 2000. The Aryan Nations compound had to be sold off, eventually becoming an empty clearing in the woods. In another bitter twist for Butler, the group that had promoted Aryan unity splintered into two bickering factions, one loyal

to him and another, much smaller, based in Pennsylvania. In the next couple of years, both of Butler’s chosen successors preceded him to the grave.

When a decrepit Butler presided over a parade that preceded his final Aryan Congress in northern Idaho this past July, only 40 extremists turned up. The patriarch of American hate was placed in a lawn chair on the bed of an old Ford pickup and paraded through downtown Coeur D’Alene, with a Confederate battle flag flapping in his face and locals taunting him with human-rights slogans. Maybe Butler knew it was his last, shabby hurrah. Undoubtedly he knew that when his heart finally gave out, which it did eight weeks later, he would leave behind only one thing of value: the Aryan Nations’ infamous name.

His body was barely cold in the ground when the tug-of-war broke out. The two rival factions hastily laid claim to Butler’s legacy — and his blessing.

First, a new four-person leadership council, supposedly chosen by Butler at the July Congress, made a surprising announcement. Former Klansman Clark “Laslo” Patterson of Talladega, Ala., one of the four, told reporters that Aryan Nations would now hold meetings in northeastern Alabama and receive its mail at a nearby post office. The Aryan Nations’ new “World Headquarters” would be P.O. Box 151, Lincoln, Ala.

Even though Butler had often vowed that Aryan Nations would never leave North Idaho, the new Alabama headquarters made sense. The bulk of the groups’ remaining members, including all four on the leadership council, live in the South. Jonathan Williams, Aryan Nations’ new communications director, conducts Christian Identity services just outside Atlanta, less than two hours from Alabama. In addition, the move to Alabama could give Aryan Nations a chance to revive its old role as a unifier. In Scottsboro, just up the road from Lincoln, a “White Heritage Day” rally on Sept. 17 turned into a memorial for Butler, attracting an encouraging crowd of 100 extremists from several different white-supremacist groups — many of which had teamed with Aryan Nations in 2003 for a protest outside the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery.

But wait — not so fast. The rival Pennsylvania-based faction that also calls itself Aryan Nations had something to say. On Oct. 11, longtime Christian Identity preacher James Wickstrom (see profile, p. 8) posted an “official announcement” on aryan-nations.org claiming that Butler’s *real* plan for Aryan Nations had been entirely different. After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, Wickstrom claimed, Butler had met with trusted lieutenants to concoct a “cloak and dagger” plan to rebuild Aryan Nations. Under a “charade of confusion,” the group would split into two factions — as it did in 2002, when former Posse Comitatus leader August Kreis and a few allies broke from Butler (who had briefly designated them his heirs, but then retracted his announcement) and began claiming they were the real Aryan Nations. After Butler’s death, according to Wickstrom, the ruse was to be revealed

and Butler’s true appointed leaders — Kreis, Wickstrom, and former Klan leader Charles Juba — would take the helm. “Under no circumstances from this day forward should there be any confusion as to who leads Aryan Nations,” Wickstrom wrote in his announcement.

There was, of course, confusion aplenty — until a week later, when Wickstrom’s claim was revealed to be a cloak-and-dagger charade of its own. On the other, “official” Aryan Nations Web site, twelvearyannations.com, Aryan stalwart Morris Gullet published E-mail messages he’d received from Juba shortly after Butler’s death. In them, Juba asked Gullet to join him, Kreis and Wickstrom in a scheme to convince their fellow neo-Nazis that “it was Butler’s idea for us to rebuild Nations.” It had all been “a falsehood, and a lie,” Gullet revealed.

With Wickstrom and Juba’s tiny faction looking bad, the Aryan Nations now officially based in Alabama seems poised to inherit most of what Butler left behind: around 150 members organized into some 17 chapters. Other than that, Aryan Nations’ future is cloudy. Only one thing seems certain: Its members will likely uphold a tradition of criminal violence that began decades ago.

Aryan Nations first made international news in the early 1980s when it helped spawn The Order, an underground group that committed a dizzying series of armored-car heists and murdered a Jewish radio-show host in Denver. Another Aryan Nations associate, Chevie Kehoe, committed three murders, including the torture-killing of a young girl. A former Aryan Nations security guard murdered a mail carrier in California and wounded three children as he shot up a Jewish community center there. All in all, according to Idaho human-rights activist Norm Gissel, Aryan Nations associates have committed at least 100 racially motivated felonies.

The group’s decline has not silenced the drumbeat of violence. Earlier this year, Aryan Nations member Sean Gillespie was charged with firebombing an Oklahoma City synagogue. A member in Washington state was arrested for shooting at police. A Montana member was arrested for attempting to murder a social worker. And just two weeks after Butler died, 40-year-old Steve Holten, leader of Aryan Nations’ Nevada chapter, was arrested on federal charges of E-mailing violent threats to dozens of newspaper reporters, law-enforcement officials, Jewish Defense League leaders and gay-rights groups, promising “a holocaust of our enemies.” Arrested on Sept. 22, Holten, who said he was taking drugs for HIV, admitted writing the rambling, almost incoherent missives. As this issue went to press, Holten was facing up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine at a trial slated to begin Nov. 30. His arrest delayed the announcement of the Aryan Nations’ new leadership council for a couple of weeks, and for good reason: Holten had been one of the four chosen to carry Butler’s legacy forward.

All of which left Idahoans like Norm Gissel with a simple message for the Aryan Nations’ new neighbors in Alabama: “As fellow Americans, we grieve for you.” ▲



FRANKA BRUNS / POST-GAZETTE

RETURN OF THE PASTOR

James Wickstrom, one of Christian Identity's most vicious firebrands, has been relatively quiet for years.

Now that may be changing

BY SUSY BUCHANAN

Posed before a backdrop of a Tennessee forest, Jim Wickstrom spews his life history into a camera. It's late June, and Wickstrom has just been a victim of another attack, one of the many he claims to have suffered at the hands of his enemies over the years.

The latest assault on the "preacher" came this June 21 when someone burned down a furniture store in Hampton Township, Mich., where Wickstrom has been preaching "Racial Covenant Christian Identity" for the past three years.

Many of the audio- and videotapes he peddles over the Internet, representing his life's work, were burned or damaged in the fire. Wickstrom quickly put out a call over the Internet to sympathizers, stumping for financial aid in order to continue his ministry.

And so it is not surprising that just days after the blaze, the prolific pastor already is taking steps to replenish his media inventory. After all, the man has a business to run, and preaching violence against Jews is his bread and butter.

At 62, Wickstrom is bloated and shifty-eyed. The oversized aviator glasses he wears magnify his jowl and the general downward slope of his features. For this video, Wickstrom has encased his sausage-like physique in a red polo shirt, eschewing the formal sports coat and tie he favors at racist rallies. The film is a relatively calm accounting of his life and views as he outlines his career as a racist with arms folded over his bright red belly. Under these sedate circumstances, Wickstrom looks more like the Snap-On Tools salesman he was in the early '70s, in the time before his anger found an outlet — and an accelerant — in the theology of Christian Identity.

But "Wickstrom Unplugged" doesn't last for long.

Almost on cue, a voice off camera asks Wickstrom what he thinks should be done with the Jews, a topic that invariably brings out the Hulk in him.

Wickstrom's hands begin to gesticulate, his face reddens, and he launches into a tirade that demonstrates what has made him one of Christian Identity's most popular and volatile speakers.

"I'd like to see these Jews all be brought to the va [Veterans Administration hospital] and wooden chairs be put down on the lawn. Tie the Jews in. Bring these veterans down who have been mutilated, physically mutilated, their lives ruined without the opportunity of a family or children, and give them baseball bats and let them beat these Jews to death! Every one of them!" he bellows.

“Take these chairs and Jews after they’re beaten to death, throw ’em in the wood chipper! And from the wood chipper let the remains go into a big incinerary truck, which is right behind the wood chipper, and give them the holocaust they rightly deserve!”

“Even the women and children?” he’s asked by his interviewer.

“Take ’em all,” he snarls. “Take ’em all and let none remain!”

Wickstrom Redux

Wickstrom’s an aging, old-school Christian Identity racist whose career has seen better days. For a time in the early ’80s, Wickstrom was one of the hottest haters in the country, preaching Yahweh’s word across the Great Plains and the upper Midwest and stirring up an army.

America’s farmers, in the grip of a devastating crisis, were a vulnerable audience. The government had urged them to expand their operations, then slapped them with a spike in interest rates. Banks called in loans. People lost farms, and Wickstrom’s hard-core combination of antigovernment teachings and Bible-based racism drew substantial crowds. The fervently anti-Semitic, antigovernment Posse Comitatus grew in strength.

Wickstrom told them their economic hardship was part of a plan to destroy God’s chosen people—the “White, Western Race”—and pointed to the Bible.

He told them debts and taxes were illegitimate and pointed to the Constitution. His conviction and passion were often mesmerizing.

But his message would start to decay.

Most of the legal advice he gave farmers created more problems than it solved. The “township” of Tigerton Dells that he and other Posse members dreamed up was seized by the very government its residents were plotting to overthrow.

Wickstrom and other Posse leaders would be arrested and incarcerated. The Posse began to fade, making way for the militia movement that would follow. The momentum it once had in its heyday, when Posse sympathizers numbered close to 50,000, came and went.



As a non-combat soldier in the ’60s, Wickstrom saw himself outranked by black men in a case of “reverse discrimination.” When he returned to America, he was repulsed by a white culture of “sex, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll.”

try’s most notorious neo-Nazi leaders, Wickstrom is one of the strongest candidates and most recognizable names the Christian Identity movement has. He may have only been drawing a few dozen disciples to his furniture-store sermons in recent years—but consider that quality can be just as important as quantity when building an army for Yahweh. Among Wickstrom’s converts are men like James Nichols, brother of Oklahoma City bomber Terry Nichols. When James devoted his life (and that of his incarcerated brother) to Aryan warriorhood on Oct. 5, 2003, Wickstrom was the first to shake his hand.

Still, some experts question Wickstrom’s relevance to the movement of today.

“Wickstrom has lost saliency,” says Leonard Zeskind, an expert on the Identity movement and the far right. “The terrain doesn’t exist for him anymore.”

Some of Wickstrom’s closest supporters have condemned him for a relationship he began in August 2003 with another man’s wife. So while Wickstrom’s name was intended to bring legitimacy to Juba’s faction of the Aryan Nations (which Zeskind dismisses as the “sewer end of the movement”), it’s possible that his presence will actually hurt Juba.

Other observers aren’t ready to count Wickstrom out just yet.

“Jim Wickstrom has a certain stature in the racist movement—one Juba doesn’t have—and especially among the more religious, the biggest ones that are really into the Christian Identity aspect,” says Floyd Cochran, a former Aryan Nations spokesman who now speaks out against racism. “With the

Despite his diminished presence in the movement today, Wickstrom’s influence over the past 30 years has been considerable. And by the look of things, “Wick,” as he is known, is not done yet.

Wickstrom is attempting to emerge from 15 relatively dormant years by very publicly aligning himself with one of two factions of the neo-Nazi Aryan Nations vying for control of Richard Butler’s leaderless followers. Since Butler’s death on Sept. 8, Charles Juba’s version of Aryan Nations, based in Pennsylvania and by far the weaker of the two, is clamoring for respect they hope an association with Wickstrom will bring and have named him their religious leader. Against most of the evidence, Wickstrom and Juba are now claiming that they are the anointed heirs of Butler and rightful owners of the well-known Aryan Nations name, even though Butler publicly excommunicated Juba (see story, p. 6) from his Idaho-based organization in January 2000 and never took him back.

“My work as World Chaplain is only beginning, and I look forward to being a part of the Aryan Nations of tomorrow,” Wickstrom wrote in an Oct. 11 press release in which he claims his appointment was part of a secret plan formulated years ago by Pastor Butler himself. In the statement, Wickstrom proclaims Juba’s group the legitimate successor to Butler, and blames the confusion over which faction was the true Aryan Nations on a clever “cloak and dagger” operation designed to confuse the enemy while the organization was rebuilt.

Although it’s doubtful he’ll succeed in filling the shoes of one of the coun-

death of Richard Butler, the Christian Identity aspect of the movement is now more focused on Wickstrom.”

Kerry Noble, a former Identity adherent who has also left the movement, knew Wickstrom in the ’80s agrees that Wickstrom’s new position may be more than just a coda to his career. “The movement is lacking true leadership, and Wickstrom is the closest thing that most groups have.”

Birth of a Salesman

Under different circumstances, Jim Wickstrom might have been making Chiquita banana stickers and Elmer’s Glue labels at a Kimberly-Clark paper mill for a living instead of talking about putting people in wood chippers.

Wickstrom was born in 1942 in Munising on Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. Although Wickstrom describes the town as Michigan’s “Naples on the lake,” the slogan is far grander than the dreary circumstances of the tiny, working-class town warrant. Times have always been tough in Munising, where the century-old paper mill on the lake’s eastern shore looms large in the life of residents, and the annual average income is less than \$13,000.

Wickstrom was the second of three sons. His father worked as a foreman at a sawmill. His mother was a homemaker. Wickstrom graduated from high school in 1960 and worked various jobs before joining the military in 1964. He served

two years (not six, as he often claims), mostly as a warehouseman stationed in Fort Lewis, Wash., and in Okinawa, and never saw combat.

But Wickstrom did see black men surpass him in rank left and right. He was outraged at what he calls blatant “reverse discrimination,” and it was the first time he remembers feeling racially aware.

Wickstrom was discharged as a private first class in 1966 and returned to an America he didn’t understand. The sex, drugs and foul language of the ’60s repulsed him, and he saw it as a sign America’s character was weakening.

In 1970, he married the first of his four wives, Dianne, whom he met while working for Johnson Wax. In 1973, he ran a service station in Racine, Wis., without success, and then gave it up to go sell tools.

Soon after he left the service station, Wickstrom was hired by Snap-On Tools and began traveling as a salesman. The position suited him for a time, but Wickstrom was soon to discover tools weren’t the only things he could sell.

Assuming Identity

It was 1975 when Wickstrom met tax protestor Thomas Stockheimer, a man who would introduce Wickstrom to the Posse Comitatus (Stockheimer founded the Wisconsin Posse Comitatus in 1970) and Christian Identity.

Wickstrom remembers that day well. His sales route took him past Stock-



heimer’s “Little People’s Tax Party” office each week. One day Stockheimer called out to him and posed a troubling question. “Do you know who you are? Do you really know who you are?” Stockheimer queried. “Do you know that you’re an Israelite?”

Wickstrom was initially offended. He had little use for Jews and didn’t much like being called one. But after hearing Stockheimer out, Wickstrom ended up leaving with two tapes in his pocket, William Potter Gale sermons entitled “Jacob the Double Blessed” and “Jews are of Cain.”

The tapes were the first of many that told Wickstrom he was more than a pasty, pudgy salesman.

Christian Identity teachings told him he was one of God’s chosen people and a member of the Israelite tribe.

They explained Jews were the demonic offspring of a sexual union between Eve and Satan.

They told him blacks were subhuman because they couldn’t blush, no better than beasts of the field and mere tools of the Jews in their fight to destroy White Western man.

To Wickstrom, it made perfect sense.

He and Stockheimer set up a Bible study group in Wickstrom’s basement which they gradually built up, studying Scripture and listening to tapes of Gale,



THE DAY CITY (MICH.) TIMES

one of Identity's great teachers and a founder of the Posse Comitatus, and other ministers. Soon, Wickstrom says, they were drawing 45 members each week.

Wickstrom had to go it alone without Stockheimer's aid after a short while. Stockheimer had assaulted an IRS agent in 1974. When his appeal failed in July 1976, Stockheimer skipped town and spent the next four months on the lam.

Not long after Stockheimer's hasty departure, Wickstrom quit his job and moved his family to Schell City, Mo.

"I wanted to be with like-minded people," he explains.

Wickstrom bought land near fellow Identity minister Dan Gayman's property and taught history and geography at a small school operated by Gayman and another minister, Loren Kallstrom. He formed his own church in 1977, Mission of Jesus the Christ Church, and lived off tithes and donations.

But he would soon have a falling out with Dan Gayman. Wickstrom claims he discovered that the property Gayman was living on, which was supposed to have been deeded to the Life Science Church Gayman had established, in fact remained in Gayman's name. In late 1978, Wickstrom packed up his family and moved to Wisconsin.

The Farmers and the Dells

Wickstrom came at the invitation of Donald Minniecheske, who had formed a chapter of the Posse Comitatus and was beginning to create a Posse compound out of a tavern and several mobile homes located on 570 acres on the shores of the Embarrass River.

Wickstrom constructed a church out of two side-by-side mobile homes, and began what he calls his "rejuvenation" of the Posse Comitatus by naming himself "National Director of Counter Insurgency."

Wickstrom and Minniecheske formed their own make-believe town out of a bar and a few trailers. They

called it the Constitutional Township of Tigerton Dells. Minniecheske had lost his liquor license for the tavern and dance hall he ran two years earlier. Wickstrom, who had decided he was to be the town's judge and municipal clerk, used his position to grant Minniecheske a new one.

He also began traveling throughout the farm belt, appearing at meeting halls, in basements, and at farm shows. "I knew that something had to be done. I knew that the ranchers and the farmers were being meticulously destroyed by the Jew banking system in America," Wickstrom says.

What he offered was an attractive, if somewhat fanciful, solution to their problems. Wickstrom told them that both taxes and the federal government were illegitimate. He told them they were sovereign citizens and that debt could be paid with fictitious money orders.

He called zip codes and driver's licenses examples of government tyranny that were to be abandoned.

He said it was up to the people to regain their power through direct action. He told them Jews, tax collectors, and other enemies of the people were to be lynched.

Floyd Cochran grew up on a dairy farm and heard of Wickstrom's work early on.

"In the '70s and '80s farming went through a drastic change. A lot of people I'd known a good part of my life went

out of business," Cochran says. "Wickstrom was organizing farmers out West, appearing at farm shows and things of that nature telling farmers you are losing your place not because of something you did but because the Jews want to take away your farms."

Posse Power Peaks

The next three years would see a surge of support for Wickstrom's beliefs. Paramilitary training began at Tigerton Dells in 1980, and Wickstrom claimed that Posse seminars drew thousands of participants who were taught survival skills and covert military operations by high-ranking Vietnam vets.

That same year Wickstrom ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. Senate on the far-right Constitution Party ticket and managed to garner 16,000 votes. In 1982, a local radio station began broadcasting his speeches and Wickstrom ran for governor. He boasted improbably that his Posse was more than 2 million strong. He continued speaking all over the country and met with great success. Soon, events would introduce the fiery preacher to an even wider audience.

When Gordon Kahl went to war with the government, it was Jim Wickstrom's big break.

On Feb. 13, 1983, the Posse became national news when law enforcement agents tried to arrest North Dakota Posse member Gordon Kahl on a probation violation. Kahl opened fire, kill-



AP WIDE WORLD PHOTO

The pastor salutes a photographer (opposite). Wickstrom hit his high-water mark when he "completely snookered [Phil] Donahue" on the popular talk show in 1983.

ing two officers and injuring several others. Kahl escaped in the confusion and eluded law enforcement until June, when a standoff in Arkansas resulted in the death of Kahl and a sheriff.

Wickstrom loudly proclaimed Kahl the Posse's first martyr and, suddenly, the media was listening.

Wickstrom appeared on "20/20" with Geraldo Rivera, and on a memorable broadcast of "The Phil Donahue Show."

"The highpoint for Wickstrom was his appearance on 'Phil Donahue.' He completely snookered Donahue," says Daniel Levitas, author of *The Terrorist Next Door* and an expert on the Posse, adding that Wickstrom used Kahl as a rallying cry. "Wickstrom turned Kahl into a media megaphone."

Wickstrom toned down his racist rhetoric for the broadcast, and instead tailored his message to address the frustrations of the working class, emphasizing his love for country and strong Christian beliefs. Far from discrediting Wickstrom as a violent racist, the appearance was nearly an infomercial for Wickstrom's Posse.

But Wickstrom's turn as a television star was short-lived. Soon after Donahue, Wickstrom was charged with two counts of impersonating a public official relating to his activities in Tigerton Dells.

During the proceedings, prosecutor Douglas Haag successfully argued that "the question is whether or not a man with even marginal intelligence who can read and write the English language believes that he can put a fence around his back yard, set up a separate government and call himself a public official." Haag added that "if [Wickstrom] has a sincere belief that he is a public officer within the laws of the State of Wisconsin, I'm the Easter Bunny."

Wickstrom was convicted and received the maximum sentence, 13 1/2 months. But even with Wickstrom behind bars, the seeds he had planted in 1982 would take root in an unemployed trucker in Nebraska.

The results would prove to be deadly.

Hate Takes Root

Dennis Ryan, now 35, speaks in a gruff, gravelly voice that seems to suit the topic at hand — Dennis' childhood.

Dennis was 12 years old when his dad, Michael Ryan, told him to put down his football and pick up a rifle. That was the year his father met James Wickstrom, who told him Armageddon was coming and to prepare for battle.

Three years later, Dennis helped his father kill a man in Rulo, Neb.

In 1985, Dennis shot James Thimm



Five-year-old Luke Stice was the first to die at the hands of Michael Ryan, Jim Wickstrom's "main man" in Nebraska.

in the face. When Thimm, who had fallen out of favor with Mike Ryan, didn't immediately die, Mike had him chained inside a hog shed, kicked, beaten, and forced to have sex with a goat. At his father's request, 15-year-old Dennis shot off the man's fingers and partially skinned him. Thimm was anally raped with a shovel before Mike Ryan finally kicked him to death. The ordeal lasted two weeks.

Mike Ryan, a devotee of Wickstrom's teachings, had dutifully carried out his pastor's violent ideology, killing in the name of Yahweh. While Wickstrom has never lifted a finger to begin the race war he preaches is inevitable, in Ryan he found an apt pupil.

"I don't hold Wickstrom responsible for the crime I committed. I hold him responsible for getting my dad into it," Dennis tells the *Intelligence Report*. "Wickstrom didn't make my dad kill anybody, but he planted the seed. He planted it in my dad and then he helped it grow."

Daniel Levitas agrees. "There could not have been the tragedy in Rulo if there was not a James Wickstrom."

Mike Ryan had driven a truck for years until he broke his back, lost his job, and his family's luck took a turn for the worse. Out of work and in dire financial straits, Ryan began to cart his family around to different churches, never finding the message he sought until he heard Wickstrom speak in 1982.

"He was looking for something to believe in," recalls Dennis. "He didn't like blacks to begin with. I don't think he was ever a popular person growing up. I think that it was the right time for the wrong thing. He was weak and you don't let someone indoctrinate you into something like that unless you are weak-minded. He was all screwed up."

Some of the same frustrations Wickstrom had felt as a young man were mirrored in Ryan, and he too jumped into Identity with both feet.

"Wickstrom is dangerous to the extent of provoking others," says Kerry Noble. "He is typical of leaders. They won't do violent stuff, yet that's all they'll preach. They'll push buttons, but they are extremely cowardly."

Mike Ryan immediately took to Wickstrom's assurances that the end times and the battle of Armageddon were fast approaching. Wickstrom treated Ryan like a protégé, and soon steered several other of his supporters Ryan's way. Ryan, who through his association with Wickstrom was elevated to a position of power, gradually built up his own cultish following and began preparing them for battle.

"Jim Wickstrom was the reason Dad got into this stuff. He's the one who showed Dad how to talk to Yahweh, the reason

we started getting guns and preparing for Armageddon," says Dennis. "He was always so amazed at all the weaponry and how well Jim Wickstrom and his followers in Tigerton Dells were armed."

Ryan moved his family farm from Whiting, Kan., to the farm in Rulo. He ordered them to steal farm equipment, livestock and weapons in the name of Yahweh.

The plan was simple and based on Wickstrom's teachings: "We were supposed to kill all Satan's people. Dad was supposed to be the King of Israel, and I was the Prince. He was supposed to die before the New Jerusalem was brought



Zabawa warned that Ryan and his group were both capable of and willing to kill Jews and other perceived enemies of God.

Dennis says that Wickstrom was very much a part of those times, even after his father stopped going to hear him speak or attend paramilitary training sessions.

"Wickstrom wasn't physically a constant presence in our lives, he wasn't over all the time at the house or always on the phone with my dad, but he was there in that he was Dad's teacher," Dennis says. "We had all of his fliers and cassettes. Dad would even listen to Wickstrom



sexual abuse. The boy survived until late March, when Ryan broke his neck in a fit of rage. Rick Stice helped bury his own son.

Months later, James Thimm would be buried nearby.

Dennis Ryan served 12 years on a second-degree murder conviction for his role in the death of James Thimm. Today, Dennis has been out of prison for eight years, has a family and works as a carpenter. He has no contact with his father, who remains on death row.

Dennis says his father's influence has left him cautious, slow to trust, and with



"I have a dream! If that goddamn nigger can have a dream, I can have a dream, too. I have a dream that in the days to come there won't be anyone who isn't white that's gonna be in America!"

down from Yahweh, and then I'd be the king," recalls Dennis, incredulous at the scenario he once put his faith in. "I believed it 110%. All the way. Hell, I helped kill a man for it, and I never once questioned it."

Before Thimm's murder, in 1984, Donald Zabawa, a former member of the Covenant, the Sword, and the Arm of the Lord, gave a confession to law enforcement as part of a plea deal. Zabawa's statement, a warning of what was to come, included what would prove to be an accurate assessment of Mike Ryan's activities and plans. Zabawa said it was well known that Ryan was considered "Wickstrom's main man in Kansas," and detailed the group's thefts and stockpiling of weapons.

while he was taking the garbage out."

Ryan ruled his flock through strict discipline and an atmosphere of fear. He had managed to convince them that Yahweh spoke to him and that Satan would soon be at their door. They obeyed without question.

But by January 1985, Ryan's religious fervor was consuming him. He became more and more violent, convinced that others were plotting against him. He began lashing out physically and inexplicably focused the bulk of his wrath and paranoia on Luke, the 5-year-old son of follower Rick Stice.

Ryan declared the child a spawn of Satan and convinced the boy's father to help inflict horrendous physical and

little regard for organized religion. "I look at the Bible and it scares me because I know how people twist it and use it for their own benefit," he says. "I don't want some man up there telling me what God expects of me. I was told that before, and I killed someone."

Dennis takes a breath and continues. "So many people interpret the Bible so many different ways. I mean, take 9/11. That's their religious beliefs. They're no different than what my dad did except they actually carried it out. As far as killing thousands of people — that was his goal, too."

Levitas says that although Wickstrom had no direct role in the murders, "certainly the blood of the victims of Rulo is

Charles Juba leads Wickstrom's Aryan Nations faction, whose new slogan is "No Jew left alive in 2005."

very much on his hands as a result of his recruitment of Mike Ryan." In his view, the events at Rulo are "a case in point that the speech of those on the far right often results in deadly action."

End Times

While Wickstrom was in jail for impersonating a public official, the government shut down the Tigerton compound for zoning violations. When he was released in the spring of 1985, Wickstrom moved to Pennsylvania. The terms of his probation forbade him from involving himself with the Posse Comitatus or any kind of political group for two years. But the irrepressible Wickstrom couldn't stay away for long.

Five years later, in 1990, Wickstrom would be sentenced to 38 months in prison for his role in a plot to print \$100,00 in counterfeit bills to be distributed at the 1988 Aryan Nations World Congress and used to fund paramilitary activities. By the time he was released, the Posse had all but disappeared.

"Wickstrom's light has been fading ever since the compound at Tigerton Dells shut down. Wickstrom's heyday was in the period from 1978 to 1985. That was his period of peak influence," says Levitas. "Since then he's hopped around and been able to gather small groups of people around him, but he'll never return to his former stature in the movement."

In the 10 years since his release from prison, Wickstrom has been relatively low key. He has continued speaking to small groups across the country, selling speeches through the mail and the Internet, and also produced a weekly radio show for seven years. Wickstrom abandoned radio earlier this year, citing a desire to explore different directions.

But he has also kept busy exploring other men's wives. Rumors of womanizing have besieged the portly pastor for years, but no dalliance has been as flagrant and as divisive as the scandal he is currently embroiled in, which may



AP WIDE WORLD PHOTO

be politically damaging for a preacher trying to make a comeback.

In the summer of 2003, Wickstrom took up with Kathleen Kallstrom, the wife of Identity minister Keith Kallstrom, who along with his father Loren Kallstrom had worked with Wickstrom during the heyday of Tigerton Dells.

Keith says Wickstrom secretly called his wife of 31 years for months. Then, on Aug. 15, 2003, Kathy made a trip to Wal-Mart and never came home. She made her way to Michigan and moved in with Wickstrom.

Keith Kallstrom was enraged, and the situation became so volatile that a council of Identity ministers, including Eli James, Dan Johns and Gary Blackwell, was convened in order to resolve the dispute between the men. In February 2004, Wickstrom refused to attend and lashed out at his peers, who Kallstrom says condemned Wickstrom's relationship with his wife.

"There are things that Jim Wickstrom teaches very well," Kallstrom says bitterly of his former friend. "But it's not just a matter of what you say and what you do, but how you lead your life. You do not stand behind the pulpit and preach the tenth commandment, 'thou shall not covet,' and then take another man's wife. You do not twist the word of God. You do not covet other people's blessings."

Although Wickstrom may have lost face with some of his peers, others have enthusiastically embraced him.

Charles Juba's Pennsylvania faction of the Aryan Nations hopes to capitalize on Wickstrom's stature. Days after Butler's death, Juba announced he was appointing Wickstrom "Chaplin" [sic]. An obvious choice for a group whose slogan for the coming year is "No Jew left alive in 2005," Wickstrom offers a message that after 30 years has neither mellowed nor strayed from its core — in fact, it appears to have intensified. Age may have turned Wickstrom from a vicious dog into a rabid one.

Wickstrom may not have the power of the Posse behind him these days, but he definitely has a vision for America that still draws a crowd, three generations later. One can only hope another Mike Ryan is not in the mix.

As he told a group of racist Skinheads last spring: "I have a dream! If that goddamn nigger can have a dream, I can have a dream, too. I have a dream that in the days to come there won't be anyone who isn't white that's gonna be in America!"

In response, a new generation of racists punched the air with their fists, crying "White Power!" and "Preach it!" as swastikas fluttered in the breeze. ▲

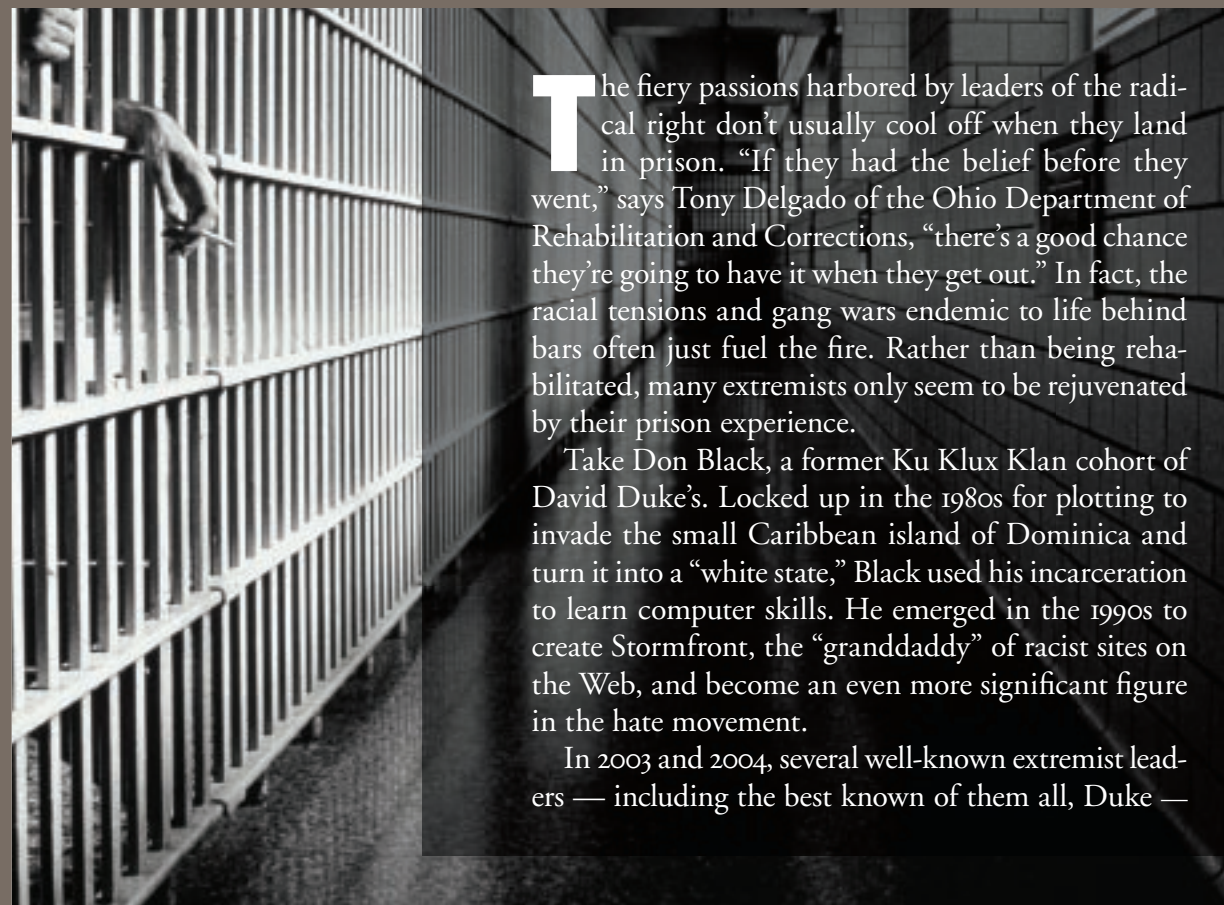


GETTY IMAGES

THEY'RE BACK

A FRESH BATCH OF EXTREMIST EX-CONS HITS THE STREETS

BY CAMILLE JACKSON



The fiery passions harbored by leaders of the radical right don't usually cool off when they land in prison. "If they had the belief before they went," says Tony Delgado of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, "there's a good chance they're going to have it when they get out." In fact, the racial tensions and gang wars endemic to life behind bars often just fuel the fire. Rather than being rehabilitated, many extremists only seem to be rejuvenated by their prison experience.

Take Don Black, a former Ku Klux Klan cohort of David Duke's. Locked up in the 1980s for plotting to invade the small Caribbean island of Dominica and turn it into a "white state," Black used his incarceration to learn computer skills. He emerged in the 1990s to create Stormfront, the "granddaddy" of racist sites on the Web, and become an even more significant figure in the hate movement.

In 2003 and 2004, several well-known extremist leaders — including the best known of them all, Duke —

were released from prison. Whether all these ex-cons will seek to re-establish themselves in the hate movement is uncertain, though a couple of them have already begun their comebacks. But if they choose to rejoin the world of organized extremism, these men

will have little problem picking up where they left off. Hate groups rarely hesitate to welcome racist avatars back into the fold — even those who’ve ratted out fellow extremists or gone to prison, like David Duke, for ripping off their comrades.

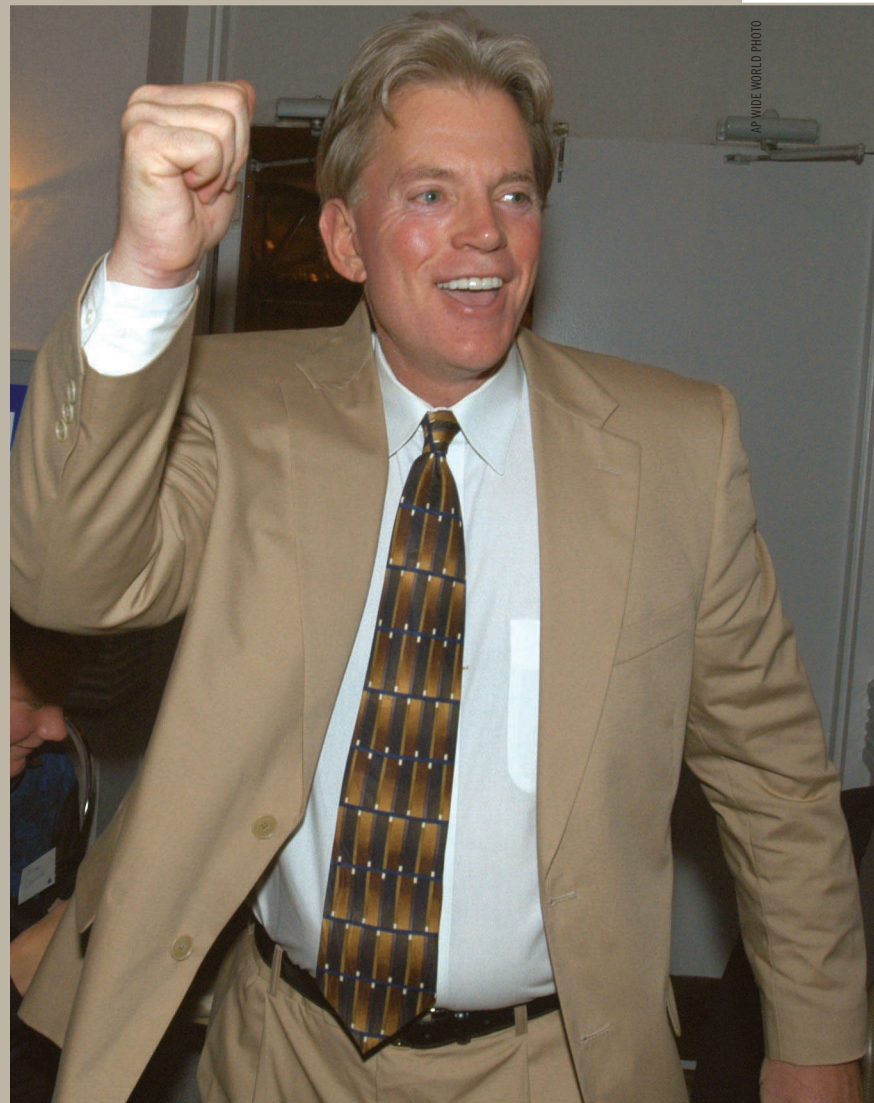
Following are brief profiles of six extremist leaders recently released from prison — along with another one, Frazier Glenn Miller, who had been out for years before he began a surprising resurrection of his racist career in 2004.

DAVID DUKE

When America’s most famous neo-Nazi pleaded guilty in 2003 to charges that included defrauding his own supporters, he was dispatched to a medium-security facility in Texas, bunking in an open space with 72 other prisoners, many of them Hispanic and African-American. “They weren’t that thrilled to see me,” Duke told the New Orleans *Times-Picayune*.

But when Duke went free this past May, the movers and shakers of the white supremacist world were thrilled indeed. Duke was welcomed back with a well-attended racist unity conference in Louisiana, co-sponsored by Duke’s own hate group, the European-American Unity and Rights Organization (EURO), along with several other hate groups including the neo-Nazi National Alliance, the white-supremacist Council of Conservative Citizens and the Holocaust-denying Barnes Review. Several white-supremacist leaders signed Duke’s “New Orleans Protocol,” a set of principles “pledging adherents to a pan-European outlook” — and, ironically enough, to “honorable and ethical behavior.” An estimated 67,000 racists logged onto EURO’s Web site for a simulcast of the main festivities.

While Duke works on a new book tentatively titled *For Love of My People*, speculation is rampant about whether he will step into a more exalted leadership position in the hate movement — or perhaps make another run at public office. The ex-Klan grand wizard was elected to one term as a Louisiana state representative in the late 1980s, but lost bids for governor, U.S. senator and president. “Of course I’m contemplating a return to public office,” he told the *Times-Picayune*.



DENNIS MCGIFFEN



Once grand dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Illinois, 42-year-old Dennis McGiffen quit the KKK because he found it “too wimpy” and started a racist gang with seriously violent aims. Patterned after The Order, a band of underground revolutionaries that murdered a Jewish radio host in 1984 and robbed armored cars to the tune of \$4 million, McGiffen’s New Order planned bold acts — assassinations, bombings, even poisoning a public water supply — which would again be financed by bank robberies and armored-car heists. Investigators found a hit list including filmmaker Steven Spielberg, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, and Southern Poverty Law Center co-founder Morris Dees.

The New Order didn’t get nearly as far as the old Order; its plans were foiled when a government informant told authorities the group was stockpiling automatic weapons, even a “light anti-tank rocket system,” to ignite a race war against blacks and Jews. McGiffen claimed that his murderous plans were nothing more than drunken ramblings he never intended to carry out. “If getting drunk and running your mouth can get you guilty of conspiracy,” he told the judge, “it’s a sad day for America.” But in September 1998, he pleaded guilty to weapons charges. This past July, after serving almost six years in prison, the 42-year-old McGiffen was let out on parole.

JOSHUA CALEB SUTTER

Twenty-two-year-old Joshua Caleb Sutter and his Aryan Nations mentor, August Kreis, have been called the “dumb and dumber” of the neo-Nazi movement by a local newspaper editor. Sutter, who held the curious title “minister for Islamic liaison,” sat on the “high council” of Kreis’ Aryan Nations faction until he was arrested last February for illegally purchasing an unmarked pistol from an undercover agent in a Philadelphia parking lot. Sutter drew the FBI’s attention by trying to form alliances with anti-American Islamist groups after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, posting a “message of solidarity and support” to Saddam Hussein on the Aryan Nations Web site, and expressing his hope that “the evil regime of the United States ... shall be utterly wiped off the face of the earth.” Sutter told a reporter he was in contact with Islamic extremists “by phone and Internet, because it’s difficult to get to places like Iran.”

As this issue went to press, Sutter, who has boasted that he “cannot be broken by any institution,” was scheduled for release from a Georgia federal prison on Nov. 9.





FRAZIER GLENN MILLER

One of the first white supremacists to use paramilitary tactics with his North Carolina-based hate group — the Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, which later morphed into the White Patriot Party — Glenn Miller went on the lam in 1986 after mailing a letter to 5,000 people calling for “total war” against the feds, blacks and Jews. Miller had also violated a court order, stemming from a lawsuit filed by the Southern Poverty Law Center, prohibiting him from continuing to operate a paramilitary organization. After a nationwide manhunt, authorities tear-gassed him out of a mobile home in Ozark, Mo. But Miller served only three years in prison, largely because he testified against 14 leading white supremacists in a 1988 Arkansas sedition trial. Among other things, Miller told the court that the late Order founder Robert Mathews had given him \$200,000 in stolen money to finance the White Patriot Party.

Upon his release, Miller laid low for a while, driving a truck and writing his autobiography, *A White Man Speaks Out*. But by early 2002, settled in Aurora, Mo., Miller had retired from trucking to pursue his interest in publishing and distributing racist literature. This past February, he announced he would be putting out a new four-page racist tabloid. “Since my prison release, I’ve worked for the Cause in the most effective way I know how,” Miller wrote on the neo-Nazi Vanguard News Network (vnn), where he vowed to “unite, organize, educate, recruit” against the Jews until “death or victory.” Reaction in the movement has been mixed, with vnn honcho Alex Linder supporting Miller, while others posted Miller’s photo with a stark message to unsuspecting white supremacists: “Warning: Federal Informant, White Race Traitor.”

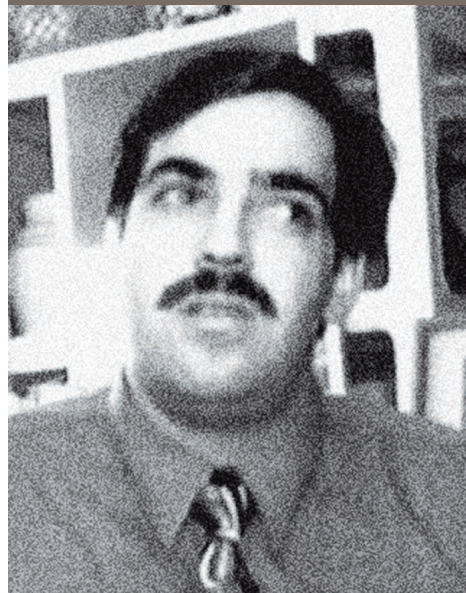
DONALD BEAUREGARD

Hailed by one of his followers as “sane, sober, [and] sensible,” young militia leader Donald Beauregard came to public attention in 1995, when members of his 77th Regiment Militia in Pinellas County, Fla., announced they had found the holy grail of America’s antigovernment movement: a United Nations takeover map of the U.S., printed by mistake on a box of Trix cereal. A year later, during the Montana Freemen standoff, Beauregard’s 77th Regiment distributed a document called “Project Worst Nightmare,” detailing guerilla action against the U.S. government if the siege came to a violent end. Even though the standoff ended peacefully, Beauregard continued to pursue his “nightmare.” In 1997, he became regional commander and brigadier general of the Southeastern States Alliance (ssa), a coalition of militia groups in eight Southern states. Beauregard spearheaded a plan to steal explosives, electric transformers and weapons from National Guard armories. The loot would be used to blow up key power lines and power stations, along with the nuclear power plant in Crystal River, Fla.

The plans were foiled by Richard Ganey, a Florida policeman who went under-

cover with Beauregard’s militia. After a lengthy federal investigation, Beauregard, now 36, was sentenced in 2000 to serve five years for conspiracy to commit an offense against the United States. This past April, he was released to a halfway house for three years of supervised release. His sentence was reduced after Beauregard told authorities that his former roommate, 43-year-old James Diver, had “figured out” how to blow up Buford

Dam, northeast of Atlanta, to aid the ssa’s plans. Diver emerged from prison in 2003.



WALLACE WEICHERDING

The oldest member of the New Order (see Dennis McGiffen, above), Wallace Weicherding first made news in 1993 when he was fired as a sergeant in the Illinois Department of Corrections after going on local television to promote a Ku Klux Klan rally held on his property. Weicherding, a former great titan of the Illinois branch of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, sued the correctional system for violating his First Amendment rights and lost. Five years later, in August 1998, he was convicted on charges including conspiracy to possess and make illegal firearms and destructive devices, and possession of a machine gun. Weicherding had traveled at least once to Montgomery, Ala., to case the Southern

Poverty Law Center for bombing; another time, metal detectors foiled a gun-toting Weicherding’s plans to confront the SPLC’s Morris Dees during a speech at Southern Illinois University.

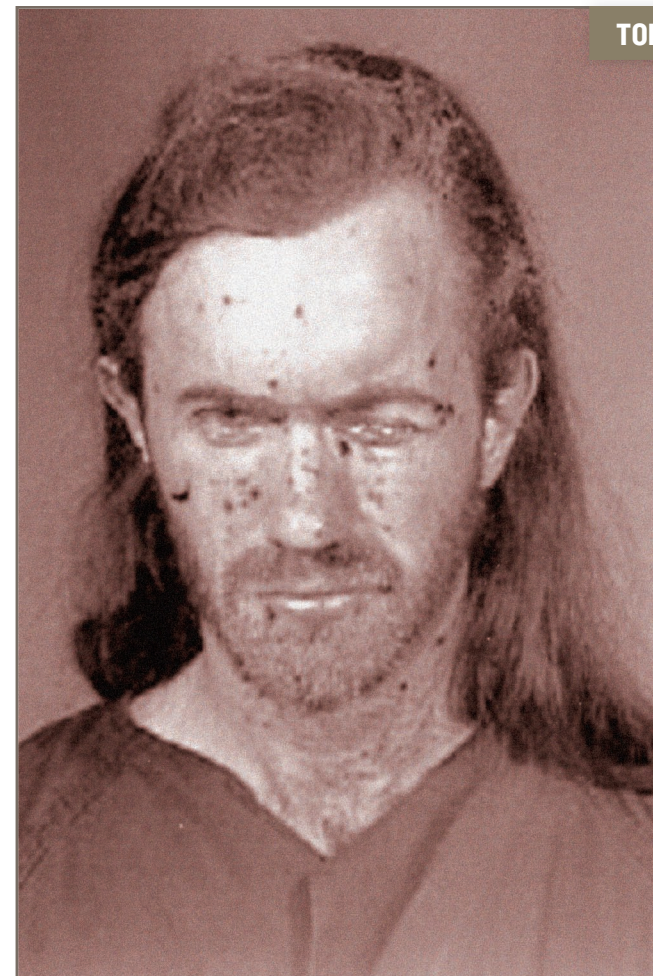
A government informant reported Weicherding had been New Order honcho Dennis McGiffen’s “right-hand man,” and the two men had similar defense strategies, claiming their violent plans were nothing more than drunken “macho talk” designed to impress other members of the group. “I just wanted to be wanted,” he testified, adding that he was an alcoholic and didn’t remember “crazy” New Order conversations. Now 70, he was released from prison in July 2003.

TODD VANBIBER

Authorities caught Todd Vanbiber just in time. In April 1997, Vanbiber, a member of the neo-Nazi National Alliance, was planning to detonate 14 pipe bombs on major routes in Orlando, Fla. The explosives were designed to divert attention from two bank robberies Vanbiber and his comrades were planning in Orlando. But as Vanbiber was tinkering in his storage shed with the bombs, one exploded in his face. When police responded, Vanbiber was arrested on explosive charges.

Vanbiber initially claimed the bomb-making was merely a hobby, but he later pleaded guilty. Sentenced to more than 60 years, Vanbiber drastically reduced his prison time by testifying against his accomplices, including another National Alliance member, Brian Donald Pickett, a security guard who’d committed robberies with Vanbiber before. After one of the earlier robberies, Vanbiber told authorities that he and Pickett stopped at the National Alliance headquarters in West Virginia, purchased \$700 worth of books, and donated \$1,000 to the organization.

Since his release in March 2002, Vanbiber has regularly offered advice on stocks and other topics on the neo-Nazi vnn Forum. Commenting on the schoolhouse terrorism in Russia in September, Vanbiber made it clear that his neo-Nazi ardor has not dissipated: “At least now people are hip to muslim terrorism and will start to target muslims no matter what side they are on. They need to be killed. All of them. After that the jew will have no one to blame and we can start on them.” ▲





ROB BARBER ILLUSTRATION

LITTLE MEN

Today's neo-Confederate ideologues are the latest in a long line of highly conservative Southern intellectuals. Or are they?

BY HEIDI BEIRICH AND MARK POTOK

Most Americans think they know a thing or two about the Civil War. It was fought over slavery, sparked by the insistence of Southern leaders on an extension of the “peculiar institution” into the Western territories. Black Southerners secretly cheered the Yankees, seeing them as liberators and friends. As bloody as it was, the war ultimately resulted in a more perfect union, a nation that more fully embraced democracy.

But there is a surprising crowd that sees it altogether differently.

From one end of the South to the other, thinkers of the burgeoning neo-Confederate movement have been for more than a decade plugging a heterodox view of the Civil War and Southern history in general. In universities, colleges and academic institutes, a group of Southern intellectuals,

many of them boasting Ph.D.s and other impressive credentials, are vigorously promoting their unusual ideas.

The situation is “profoundly depressing,” says Mark Malvasi, a professor at Randolph-Macon College in Virginia who participated in several early seminars of the League of the South (LOS), the primary organization in the neo-Confederate movement and one to which most of these Southern thinkers have belonged. “They seem to have abandoned the careful and honest scholarly exposition of Southern history and culture. Perhaps, though, scholarship was never the intent, but provided a veneer of respectability to cover social and political ambitions.”

What do today's neo-Confederates believe?

As a general matter, they don't think the Civil War was fought over slavery — it was really about tariffs, or imposing a newly powerful federal government on the South, or spreading the industrial system of the North. They say that the South was “invaded,” even if Southerners fired the first shots at Fort Sumter, S.C. Most don't think slavery was all that bad, and some believe that segregation was a perfectly fine policy meant to protect the integrity of both races, black and white alike.

They think that Lincoln was an evil man, bent on destroying the South and willing to use any excuse to do so. They typically see the North as godless, and determined to wreck the Southerner's natural religiosity. They believe the core population of the South and the

bearer of its culture is “Anglo-Celtic,” meaning white. Many support theocracy, oppose interracial marriage and reject the notion of equality.

“I consider them cranks,” said Eric Foner, a Columbia University history professor and author of *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution*. “Their views on the Civil War era, Reconstruction and slavery are not in tune with modern scholarship. They live in their own little world with their own little ideas.”

Looking Backward

The little ideas of the neo-Confederates are being taught in classrooms from the deep South to Oklahoma, Baltimore and beyond. They are discussed in the halls of prestigious teaching institutions like Emory University in Atlanta. They issue from right-wing foundations like Illinois' Rockford Institute. They are delivered in pop form in the pages of futuristic novels like *Heiland*. And they are being sown among the young by institutes set up for the single purpose of promoting the cause.

LOS, for instance, has since the mid-1990s run the League of the South Institute for the Study of Southern History and Culture, “the educational arm of the Southern independence movement,” dedicated to fighting “the demonisation of the South.” The institute, which holds seminars and summer schools in Abbeville, S.C., boasts that its 33 teachers are “the South's finest unreconstructed scholars.”

A similar effort, called the Abbeville Institute but located in Georgia, is led by former LOS board member Donald Livingston, an Emory philosophy professor. Its Web site describes it as devoted to the “Southern tradition,” including the allegedly ignored “achievements of white people in the South.” About 30 people are listed as institute scholars, a staff that overlaps heavily with the LOS institute’s staff.

What these institutes teach is commonly portrayed as the fruit of an intellectual tradition that goes back to the 19th century and even, at the earliest, the colonial era — the line of thought known as “the Southern conservative tradition.”

The Southern conservative tradition stretches all the way back to Thomas Jefferson’s belief in the superiority of an agriculture-based society to one built on commerce. Its giants include men like John Calhoun, the preeminent

Cracker Culture has been harshly criticized for ignoring the contributions to Southern culture of African slaves, Native Americans and other minorities. Nevertheless, it was the first in what would become a flood of modern “pro-South” writing.

In 1994, two brothers, Walter Donald Kennedy (see profile, p. 29) and James Ronald Kennedy, published what has become the bible of the neo-Confederate movement. *The South Was Right!* passionately argues for a second Southern secession. It defends antebellum slavery, describing relations between slaves and their masters as “very close and mutually respectful.” It pillories what it describes as the “Yankee myth of history.”

That same year saw the organization of the League of the South (originally known as the Southern League) by a group of some 40 men, many of them Southern professors.

“I feared years ago that with the death of M.E. Bradford the Southern conservative tradition would turn out this way.”



antebellum theorizer in favor of states’ rights. To many, the tradition includes palpably racist thinkers such as Robert Lewis Dabney, who was chaplain to Civil War Gen. Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, and Thomas Dixon, whose 1905 novel *The Clansman* helped spark the 20th century rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan. The tradition also boasts of the Nashville Agrarians, a dozen Vanderbilt University-connected essayists who wrote *I’ll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition* in the 1930s.

Essentially, this intellectual tradition celebrates Southern agricultural life as Edenic, and contrasts its religious and tradition-bound ways with what is seen as the vulgar materialism of the industrializing North. It is, in the view of many, hopelessly romantic, tied more to an imagined golden age of Southern culture than to an honest appraisal of rural 19th century life as it really was. Be that as it may, strains of racism have been intertwined with this tradition almost from the start. In the South, a defense of “tradition” has a habit of ending up as an apologia for slavery.

Getting Organized

In a sense, the contemporary neo-Confederate movement was heralded by the 1988 publication of *Cracker Culture: Celtic Ways in the Old South*. The book, by University of Alabama historian Grady McWhiney (see profile, p. 30) but also including a foreword by McWhiney’s colleague and long-time collaborator Forrest McDonald, argued that Southerners and Northerners were of different immigrant stock that explained their different natures. Once again, Northerners were depicted as commerce-minded, while white Southerners, descended from freedom-starved Celts from the far reaches of the British Isles, were described as don’t-tread-on-me Jeffersonians.

It was led by Michael Hill (see profile, p. 28), who was then a history professor at Stillman College, a historically black school. (Hill remains LOS president today.)

Initially, LOS seemed to concentrate on a cultural defense of the South, complaining bitterly of the treatment Southerners received in the mainstream media. But it wasn’t long before it began seriously advocating a second secession, calling for an essentially theocratic form of government, and openly advocating a return to “general European cultural hegemony” in the South. The group officially came out against interracial marriage. Hill defended antebellum slavery as “God-ordained” and another LOS leader described segregation as necessary to racial “integrity.” Hill called for a hierarchal society composed of “superiors, equals and inferiors, each protected in their legal privileges” and attacked egalitarianism as a “fatal heresy.” By 2000, the Southern Poverty Law Center was listing LOS as a hate group.

LOS grew quickly, swollen by white Southerners attracted by the group’s academic veneer — a veneer that provided some shelter against accusations of racism. In 2000, it claimed 9,000 members, the majority in the deep South.

That same year, the revisionist views of LOS intellectuals and their fellow travelers received their first serious public attention. On March 31, in the midst of a major political brouhaha over the Confederate battle flag that flew above the South Carolina statehouse, a group of about 100 history professors put out a statement saying that the state had seceded to protect slavery and calling for the flag to come down. “The historical record clearly shows that the cause for which the South seceded and fought a devastating war was slavery,” Charles Joyner, a history professor at Coastal Carolina University and the

chief author of the statement, told the *Intelligence Report* recently. “That’s not an interpretation. That’s a fact.”

The statement provoked an immediate reaction from LOS. Clyde Wilson (see profile, p. 31), a professor of Southern history at the University of South Carolina at Columbia and a founding board member of LOS, led a group of 41 academics who claimed “slavery did not cause the war.” The North invaded the South, the group alleged, because of its “resentment that Southern society provided skilled and determined opposition to the desire to turn the United States into a centralized pro-business state.”

The Heavyweights

Many of those who signed Wilson’s statement looked with particular reverence on Grady McWhiney and Forrest McDonald. Together, the two had built one of the most conservative history departments in the U.S. at the University of Alabama. Well-known exponents of the Southern conservative tradition, the men shepherded LOS President Michael Hill through his doctoral program — a fact that probably explains Hill’s view of the South as fundamentally “Anglo-Celtic,” an idea at the core of *Cracker Culture*.

But Hill’s mentors aren’t thrilled with their former student.

McWhiney did serve on the LOS board for a few years at the start, said Donald Frazier, executive director of the Grady McWhiney Research Foundation in Abilene, Texas. But, Frazier said, McWhiney began to suffer from dementia just as the LOS “took a turn” toward racism. Frazier said that LOS “stole Grady’s identity,” using him as a selling point for LOS even as McWhiney’s Alzheimer’s advanced. After Frazier convinced McWhiney to quit the LOS, Clyde Wilson sent Frazier a letter accusing him of bowing to “political correctness,” Frazier said.

Wilson said he did not remember writing such a letter and anyway, he added angrily, “The McWhiney Foundation is not so important or admirable a thing.”

Forrest McDonald, too, denounced LOS. “I was at the organizing meeting and there was an undercurrent of racism,” McDonald told the *Intelligence Report*. “A bunch of us said, ‘We don’t want to be a part of that,’ and got out of there.”

Clyde Wilson’s reply? He claimed that McDonald donated \$300 to LOS at its first meeting. McDonald’s change of heart, Wilson suggested, was due to “Mrs. McDonald,” a woman he said “generally makes the decisions for the family.”

But perhaps the most remarkable criticism of LOS and the neo-Confederate movement comes from Eugene Genovese, a historian of slavery and the South who is certainly the best-known academic associated with neo-Confederate ideas.

Death of the Southern Tradition?

Genovese was for decades a Marxist academic best known for his 1974 study of Southern slavery, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made*. The book was remarkable both for its meticulous scholarship and for

refusing to treat slaves as nothing more than victims. Genovese’s full-bodied treatment showed that slaves had constructed a genuine culture.

But then there came a turning. In 1985, Genovese told *Southern Partisan*, a strident neo-Confederate journal, that his research was increasingly focusing on Southern whites. In 1993, he gave a lecture at Harvard University that described “the media and an academic elite” as working to strip white Southerners of their heritage and identity — “a cultural and political atrocity,” as he described it at the time. The following year, just as the contemporary neo-Confederate movement was getting organized in the form of LOS, Genovese published a major attack on Communism in *Dissent*, a left-wing journal. Two years later, he converted to Catholicism.

Genovese now argued from a palpably pro-South position. He saw the Yankee North as representing a kind of soulless capitalism, a materialistic society without constraint or regard for people. He lamented the loss of “national purpose and moral consensus” in America, even as a sprawling federal government grew increasingly bureaucratic, impersonal and mindlessly pro-business. He identified himself with a Southern conservative tradition that lauded family, religion and community.

But Genovese also understood the dangers of his position. Ending his 1994 book *The Southern Tradition: The Achievement and Limitations of an American Conservatism*, he dwelled on “a few grim thoughts” on its penultimate page. He described how Southern conservative intellectuals had been “imprisoned by racism” during the civil rights movement and warned starkly against “those anything-but-conservative politicians” who play to “the worst instincts of white people.” The best aspects of Southern conservatism, he worried, could be drowned by race hate.

Now, Genovese says, that seems to have happened. “I’ve worried about this possibility for a long time,” Genovese told the *Intelligence Report*. “I feared years ago that with the death of M.E. Bradford [a key Southern thinker] the Southern conservative tradition would turn out this way.”

Now retired from the Georgia University Center, Genovese referred the *Report* to Mark Malvasi, whose doctoral thesis he had supervised and who, he said, was far better acquainted with the neo-Confederate movement than he. Malvasi not only attended early LOS seminars, but also interned under Clyde Wilson.

The Southern tradition, Malvasi says, is finished. “If the best Mike Hill et al can do is mock black people and denounce interracial dating and marriage, then there is no Southern conservative tradition left to preserve.” Malvasi is still listed by the League of the South Institute for the Study of Southern History and Culture as an affiliated scholar, but says he has not been associated with the institute for years.

In fact, Malvasi says that LOS pushes “bad history” and “propaganda” that should be rebutted by “serious scholars.” “They are just breeding more and more hatred,” the professor says. “Let’s just hope they don’t get any more power.”

THE IDEOLOGUES

Who are the intellectuals who form the core of the modern neo-Confederate movement? And what exactly do they think?

The contemporary neo-Confederate movement grew largely out of the ideas of a very specific set of Southern intellectuals, many of them professors at Southern universities and colleges. Even before the movement began to take organizational shape with the 1994 formation of the League of the South (LOS), several members of this group of mainly white men were well along in an attempt to dramatically revise mainstream historical thinking about the culture and politics of the South, the nature of slavery, the causes of the Civil War, and the role of the federal government. As a general matter, most of the thinkers profiled below support the South's right to secede; believe the North started the Civil War over tariff issues or states' rights, not slavery; say that President Lincoln always secretly intended the war as a way to rob the states of their power and create a federal behemoth, and only used the slavery question as an excuse; and, in at least some cases, see the civil rights era as an evil because it had the effect of increasing federal power relative to that of the states. The 10 people described here are key ideologues in the neo-Confederate pantheon, but they are scarcely alone. In fact, more than 30 professors work with the Institute for the Study of Southern Culture and History run by the LOS, which the Southern Poverty Law Center has listed as a hate group since 2000. Forty-one professors, many of them already teachers at the LOS institute, signed the "Statement of College and University Professors in Support of the Confederate Battle Flag Atop the South Carolina Statehouse" in 2000. And another 30-plus professors are associated with the Georgia-based Abbeville Institute, a teaching facility very similar to the LOS institute that also shares many of its professors.

Thomas DiLorenzo

Economics professor, Loyola College
Baltimore, Md.

The earliest apologists for the Lost Cause of the South, writing in the first years of the 20th century, described Abraham Lincoln as a good and even great man, sorely misled by evil advisers who pushed a harsh Reconstruction policy. No more. Thanks to Thomas DiLorenzo and others of his ilk, the 16th president is now viewed in neo-Confederate circles as a paragon of wickedness, a man secretly intent on destroying states' rights and building a massive federal government. "It was not to end slavery that Lincoln initiated an invasion of the South," DiLorenzo writes in his 2002 attack on Lincoln, *The Real Lincoln: A New Look at Abraham Lincoln, His Agenda, and an Unnecessary War*. "A war was not necessary to free the slaves, but it was necessary to destroy the most significant check on the powers of the central government: the right of secession." DiLorenzo is not a historian. With a doctorate from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, he has been since 1992 an economics professor at Baltimore's Loyola College. And most of his work has not been about history, focusing instead on libertarian and antigovernment themes. His 10 books include *Official Lies: How Washington Misleads Us*, and, with writer James T. Bennett, *The Food and Drink Police: America's Nannies, Busybodies and Petty Tyrants* (attacking organizations such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving) and *Unhealthy*



Charities: Hazardous to Your Health and Wealth and Cancer Scam: Diversion of Federal Cancer Funds to Politics (both of which accuse nonprofits like the American Cancer Society of using public money to fund leftist "political machines"). DiLorenzo is also a senior faculty member of the Ludwig von Mises Institute, a hard-right libertarian foundation in Alabama, and teaches at the League of the South Institute for the Study of Southern Culture and History, a South Carolina school established by the League of the South to teach its unusual views of history (see also story, p. 22). In 2003, LewRockwell.com, a Web site run by Von Mises Institute President Llewellyn Rockwell that includes a "King Lincoln" section, hosted a "Lincoln Reconsidered" conference in Richmond, Va., starring DiLorenzo. The conference has since become a bit of a road show, reappearing around the South and headlined by DiLorenzo.



Thomas Fleming

President, Rockford Institute
Rockford, Ill.

Thomas Fleming came to neo-Confederate ideas early, co-founding and editing the first few issues of *Southern Partisan*, a hard-line "pro-South" magazine started in 1979. Holding a Ph.D. in classics from the University of North Carolina, Fleming today is president of The Rockford Institute, a right-wing organization that says its aim is "the defense of fundamental institutions of our civilization" and "the renewal of Christendom." In that post, Fleming edits the institute's *Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture*, where he argued in a 1990 article that "government-imposed civil rights" had been "an unmitigated disaster for everyone." Elsewhere that same year, he defended arch-segregationist Alabama Gov. George Wallace as having been "clearly on

the right track," even if he was "mean-spirited," in resisting the federal government. In the 15 years since then, Fleming's magazine has repeatedly returned to neo-Confederate themes, including a 1991 cover story on secession that featured his interviews with leaders of the immigrant-bashing Northern League in Italy. In 1994, Fleming became a founding member, and later served on the board, of the League of the South (the name was inspired by the Northern League), which has been listed since 2000 by the Southern Poverty Law Center as a hate group. The Rockford Institute distributes "The Regnery Lectures," named in honor of the late right-wing publisher, Alfred Regnery, who sat for many years on the institute's board. As president, Fleming also emcees the institute's annual gatherings of the John Randolph Club, a highly conservative group that increasingly seems concerned with racial matters.

Michael Andrew Grissom

Free-lance writer
Wynnewood, Okla.

Although Michael Grissom holds only a master's degree from the University of Oklahoma, his books have become key texts of the neo-Confederate movement. His first, *Southern by the Grace of God*, was published in 1988 and, Grissom claims, "is credited with starting the Southern resistance movement." The book actually lauds the role of Ku Klux Klan in rolling back Reconstruction, arguing, "Without it, we might

never have shaken off the curse of the carpet-bag/scalawag government which bound us hand and foot after the war." In a picture caption, he adds that the terrorist group "played a vital role in ridding the post-war South of brutal carpetbag rule." In 1994, Grissom became a founding member of the neo-secessionist League of the South, and he would later become a board member of the

white supremacist Council of Conservative Citizens (which has described blacks as "a retrograde species of humanity"). Grissom has published books including *When the South Was Southern, Can the South Survive?*, *The Southern Book of Quotes* and *The Last Rebel Yell*. That last, published in 1994, argued, among other things, that "cultural and physiological difference[s]" between blacks and whites are "real." Saying he had learned much about "negro character," the book also defended the break-up of slave families: "I suspect that such family separations did not really trouble them as much as I once supposed. The old-fashioned plantation negroes did not take much trouble to themselves about anything." Grissom has also attacked the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision that ended segregated schools, complaining it "forc[ed] the white Southerner to send his children into a school, the traditional institution that produces boyfriend-girlfriend relationships, now burdened with the added complication of the black factor." With the help of the Council of Conservative Citizens and other groups, Grissom is now raising money for a pro-Confederate statue in his hometown of Wynnewood.



JENNIFER WARBURG



J. Michael Hill

Former history professor, Stillman College
Killen, Ala.

A native Alabamian, Michael Hill studied under two extremely conservative history professors at the University of Alabama, Grady McWhiney (see p. 30) and Forrest McDonald (see story, p. 22). His mentors wrote *Cracker Culture*, a book that argued that the South was settled primarily by "Anglo-Celts" while in the North it was British Protestants who predominated. Hill took this idea further, authoring a total of three books on the Celts. Hill taught British history for years at historically black Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Ala., while also teaching part-time at his alma mater. In 1994, while still at Stillman, Hill initiated the creation of the League of the South, a group that has become increasingly racist under his leadership. Today, LOS envisions a seceded South that would be run, basically, as a theocratic state marked by medieval legal distinctions between different types of citizens. In 1996, Hill told columnist Diane Roberts that his black students adored him; what he didn't say was that he apparently did not share their warmth. In a 2000 posting to the AlaReb e-list, Hill mocked Stillman students and workers. "A quote," he wrote, "from a recent affirmative action hire: 'Yesta-day I could not spell "secretary." Today I is one.'" He continued: "One of few benefits I got on a regular basis from having taught for 18 years at Stillman College was reading the class rolls on the first day of class." He went on to list several "humorous" names of his black students, ending, "Where do these people get such names?" Hill had left Stillman by then, resigning in 1999. Although school officials never said so publicly, *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* reported that Hill had become "an embarrassment" to the administration.

James Everett Kibler

English professor, University of Georgia
Athens, Ga.

A founding member of the League of the South (LOS) and the current associate director of the League of the South Institute for the Study of Southern Culture and History, James Kibler is a kind of literary neo-Confederate, celebrating and defending Southern literature and its traditions. His main contribution to the neo-Confederate movement, however, has been in persuading many of its leaders to adopt British orthography, or spelling, to reflect the "Anglo-Celtic" origins of white Southerners. In practice, this is seen in the way people like LOS President Michael Hill (see p. 28) spell labor as "labour," honor as "honour," and so on. Kibler, who earned his doctorate at the University of South Carolina, has published several books on the early 19th century Southern poet William Gilmore Simms and also edits *The Simms Review*, an academic journal. Simms is widely admired by neo-Confederates for his staunch endorsement of Southern upper-class rule and his defense of slavery, in particular as editor of the proslavery *Southern Quarterly Review*. In addition to Kibler, the editorial board of *The Simms Review* is filled with LOS members, including David Aiken, a teacher at the League of the South Institute for the Study of Southern Culture and History who is also a College of Charleston professor, and James Meriwether, another institute scholar who recently retired from the University of South Carolina at Columbia, where he founded that school's Institute for Southern Studies. Kibler has published three novels, several volumes of poetry, and LOS' *Knowing Who We Are: Southern Literary Tradition and the Voice in the Whirlwind*. Another book, in which he recounts his restoration of a South Carolina plantation home, won the nonfiction award from the Fellowship of Southern Writers in 1999. Like many of his friends in LOS, Kibler is fond of Nathan Bedford Forrest, a Civil War general who also was the first national leader of the Ku Klux Klan (see story, p. 51). In a poem, Kibler celebrates Forrest's legendary bravery and also depicts him as a kind and idealistic man.



Walter Donald "Donnie" Kennedy

Free-lance writer
Simsboro, La.

An anesthesia nurse, Walter Kennedy has been a member of the hard core of the neo-Confederate movement for many years. In 1994, he co-authored *The South Was*



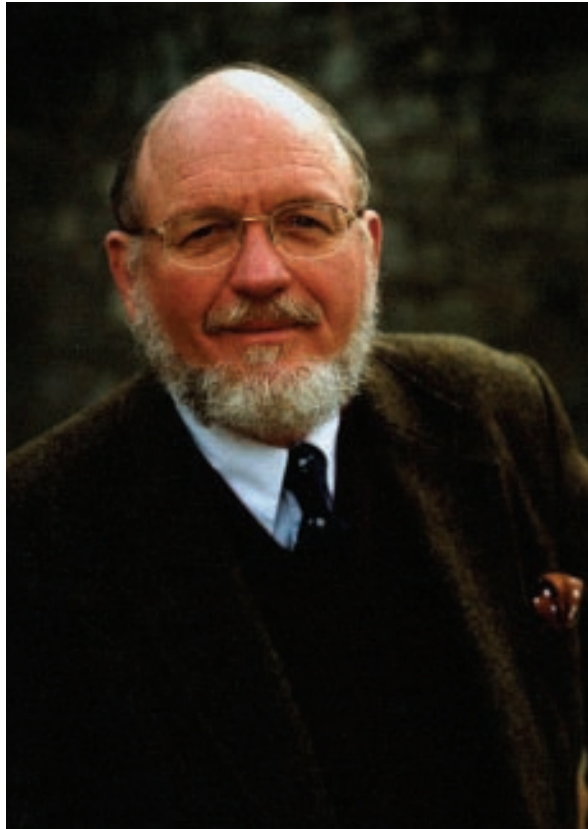
Right!, an angry defense of the South during the Civil War, with his twin brother, James Ronald Kennedy. The book, now ubiquitous in neo-Confederate circles, also called for a new Southern secession to escape the "overgrown and unresponsive" federal government.

For this and other books they co-authored, including *Myths of American Slavery*, *Why Not Freedom!* and *Was Jefferson Davis Right?*, the twins are known in the movement as the "Good Kennedys," as opposed, naturally, to the bad ones. In 1994, Walter Kennedy became a founding member of the League of the South, and he remains on its national board today. For years, Kennedy also was the commander of the Louisiana division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (scv), a conservative Southern heritage group, as well as a member of its national executive council. But he quit his post on the council in 1996, after the group's moderate then-commander in chief banned all discussion of secession from the scv's main e-mail discussion list. "If it was 'Right' in 1861," Kennedy wrote of secession in his angry resignation letter, "why is it 'Wrong' today?" Books by the Kennedys are routinely donated to libraries by members of the SCV and other Southern heritage groups.

Donald Livingston

Philosophy professor, Emory University
Atlanta, Ga.

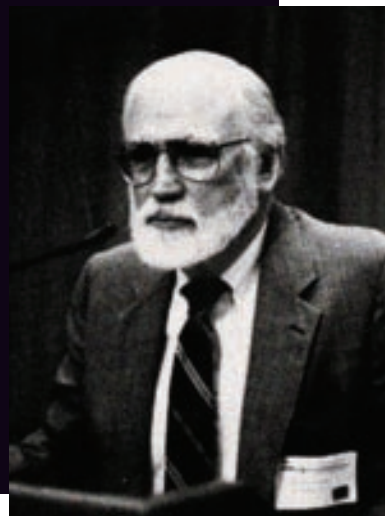
After earning his doctorate in philosophy from Washington University in St. Louis, Mo., Donald Livingston made his reputation as a student of 18th-century Scottish philosopher David Hume. Livingston wrote several books on Hume and is today a member of the editorial board of *Hume Studies*. Shortly after the formation of the League of the South in 1994, Livingston became the first director of the League of the South Institute for the Study of Southern Culture and History, which was organized to further the group's revisionist takes on American history. For the past few years, Livingston has focused on what he calls the "philosophical meaning of secession." In practice, that has meant that he has fiercely defended the right of the antebellum South to secede and has written that Lincoln started the Civil War in order to establish a centralized state. In his forward to *A Constitutional History of Secession*, Livingston said "Lincoln's war" had led to "a French Revolutionary style unitary state," which he further described as always leading to a "centralizing totalitarianism." In 2001, he told the *Intelligence Report* that "the North created segregation" and that Southerners fought during the Civil War only "because they were invaded." The next year, he established the Abbeville Institute, based in Atlanta, along the lines of the LOS institute. At a 2003 "Lincoln Reconsidered" conference (see also Thomas DiLorenzo, p. 27), he said that "evil is habit-forming" and no habit is as evil as believing that Lincoln acted out of good motives. Today, Livingston is also an adjunct faculty member at the libertarian Ludwig Von Mises Institute in Auburn, Ala.



Grady McWhiney

Retired history professor, University of Alabama
Abilene, Texas

Grady McWhiney is in many ways the intellectual grandfather of the neo-Confederate movement, although officials at the foundation he established in Texas now say that he rejects the racism inherent in much of that world (see story, p. 22). McWhiney served for several years on the board of the League of the South, the leading neo-Confederate organization and largely a creation of McWhiney's one-time graduate student, Michael Hill (see p. 28). Now reportedly in failing health, McWhiney still nominally heads up the Grady McWhiney Research Foundation, which is hosted by McMurry University in Abilene, Texas. McWhiney headed the Southern History Institute at the University of Alabama for many years, but later became the Lyndon Baines Johnson Professor of American History at Texas Christian University, where he is now a professor emeritus. In 1988, McWhiney, with an introduction from UA colleague Forrest McDonald, wrote *Cracker Culture*, a book that described North and South as being different because of their differing immigrant stocks. (Its central thesis has now been criticized by many mainstream academics.) Another important McWhiney book was 1982's *Attack and Die*, which his foundation describes as examining "Confederate strategy in the War for Southern Independence and advanc[ing] the theory that Southerners were reacting to cultural forces when they continually took the costly tactical offensive in their battles with Union forces." Senior fellows serving at his Abilene foundation include McDonald and the renowned scholar of Southern slavery Eugene Genovese.



Clyde Wilson

History professor, University of South Carolina
Columbia, S.C.

Outside of Eugene Genovese (see story, p. 22), Clyde Wilson is certainly the biggest intellectual heavyweight associated with the neo-Confederate scene. With a doctorate from the University of North Carolina, Wilson went on to a distinguished career as



the editor of *The Papers of John C. Calhoun*, the preeminent states' rights theorist before the Civil War, and has published 18 volumes of that series so far. He has also edited two volumes of the *Dictionary of Literary Biography* that deal with American historians, and written entries for several encyclopedias.

In 1994, Wilson became a founding member of the League of the South, and he has served on its national board ever since. He also teaches at the League of the South Institute for the Study of Southern Culture and History, and is an adjunct faculty member at the libertarian-minded Ludwig Von Mises Institute. Through it all, Wilson is an unreconstructed neo-Confederate. In 1998, he told *Gentleman's Quarterly* that Southerners "don't want women in the armed forces. We don't want the federal government telling us what to do, pushing integration down our throats, saying we can't pray in school. We don't want abortion or gay rights. We're tired of carpetbagging professionals coming to our campuses and teaching that the South is a cultural wasteland." In another interview, with the *Houston Press*, Wilson said he wished for a South where "we won't have a bit of difficulty telling the difference between a citizen and an illegal alien." Writing about "The Birth of a Nation," a 1915 film that describes the Ku Klux Klan in heroic terms, Wilson said its main problem was being too sympathetic to Lincoln. In 2000, he led an attempt to keep the Confederate battle flag flying over the South Carolina Capitol. And in his 2002 book, *From Union to Empire: Essays in the Jeffersonian Tradition*, Wilson rages against what he calls "messianic democratic universalism."

Franklin Sanders

Free-lance writer
Westpoint, Tenn.

Franklin Sanders is a peculiar mix of neo-Confederate fantasist and seasoned tax protester. Boasting of the nickname of "most dangerous man in the mid-South" that he says a federal prosecutor gave him, Sanders describes his encounters with the tax authorities on his Web site. According to the site, Sanders decided that dollars were backed by nothing at all after reading a book by current Federal Reserve chief Alan Greenspan, leading to his establishing a business selling gold and silver in 1980. His site goes on to detail how state tax officials in Arkansas, where he was living at the time, found him liable for \$30,000 in unpaid sales taxes, causing him to flee to Tennessee. In his new home, however, he ran afoul of



both federal and state tax officials, and he eventually served time on state charges. In 1989, Sanders published *Heiland*, a novel whose title means "savior" in German. It was an overheated story that sounded a lot like neo-Confederate views of the South and the North, although it takes place in the year 2020. In it, America is divided into two: the "Insiders" are the urban, pro-federal government population, while the "Freemen" are rural folks who refuse to pay taxes and live happily off the land. In the end, the Freemen realize they cannot live with the Insiders and decide to establish "the rule of Immanuel" by, in part, destroying Nashville with a laser freeze ray. Sanders was a charter member of the League of the South and has served on its national board for about two years. He still publishes *The Moneychanger*, a financial newsletter, from his Westpoint farm, and, every Labor Day, he hosts the League of the South's "Bodacious Hoedown." ▲

ACTIVISTS FROM RADICAL 'PRO-SOUTH' GROUPS ARE PRESSURING HISTORY PROFESSIONALS TO ADOPT DISTORTED VIEWS OF AMERICAN HISTORY

CONFEDERATES IN THE MUSEUM

In Gettysburg, Pa., a black artist's exhibit entitled "The Proper Way to Hang a Confederate Flag" so infuriated neo-Confederate activists that the FBI and other law enforcement officials had to be called in.

This August, the executive director of the Alabama Historical Commission, which owns and oversees major historic sites in the state, was forced to resign his position after what were described as conflicts with commissioners and Gov. Bob Riley over the director's support for civil rights preservation projects. The episode was only the latest of the last several years in which museum professionals and preservation officials from around the South have come under sometimes severe pressure from neo-Confederate activists and their sympathizers, occasionally including harassment and various kinds of threats. In case after case, members of groups like the League of the South and the Sons of Confederate Veterans have agitated against these professionals in a bid to push versions of history that mainstream curators and historians agree are bunk. In North Carolina, the League of the South hate group attacked the Charlotte Museum of History because it was displaying a copy of the Declaration of Independence owned by television producer Norman Lear, saying that Lear had turned the declaration into "an instrument for liberal activism." In Richmond, Va., a member of the board of the Museum of the Confederacy personally cut down a U.S. flag in the museum shop. And in Alabama, Lee Warner, the former Alabama Historical Commission executive director, told a reporter that many of Riley's appointees to the commission had opposed his plans to create a museum at the old Greyhound bus station, where Freedom Riders were badly beaten in 1961, and to memorialize the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery civil rights march. What follows are similar accounts from four others who have faced neo-Confederate activism.

BILL DOWLING



MOLLY HUTTON

Director of Schmucker Art Gallery
GETTYSBURG COLLEGE • GETTYSBURG, PA.

A planned 2004 art show, featuring criticism of the Confederate battle flag by a black artist, brought a deluge of neo-Confederate attacks on a small college gallery in Gettysburg, scene of a major Civil War battle. In the end, the show went forward, but not before the FBI and local police were called in because of death threats.

My situation was at least a year in the making. Late last year, I was planning an exhibition called “Art of the African Diaspora in the Age of Globalization,” and my research led me to the artist John Sims. Although his work was not appropriate to a show on globalization, I showed John’s work to the chairs of the college’s Visual Arts and African-American Studies departments. As I talked to more people about it, particularly the African-American community, it became clear that the Confederate [battle] flag was an issue for many people here. Faculty members told me about being confronted by that flag when interviewing for their jobs — Gettysburg has tons of both Confederate



flags and American flags. There are many, many tourist shops that sell memorabilia from both sides [in the Civil War]. The college does not have many students of color, and we’re just north of the Mason-Dixon line. It seemed like a really interesting environment to initiate a dialogue about some of the problematic issues that the Confederate flag brings up. And I still think that’s important.

John Sims had an interesting story. He was a Detroit native, an artist and a filmmaker who took a job teaching in Sarasota [Fla.] and was struck by the ubiquity of the flag there. That’s how he came up with the idea for the show we wanted to put on, called “Recoloration Proclamation: The

Gettysburg Redress: A John Sims Project.” It involved recoloring the Confederate flag and enacting what he called “The Proper Way to Hang a Confederate Flag” — on a set of gallows. His idea was not so much about reconciliation as an exploration of the fact that this symbol is one of fear and oppression for many people.

As summer approached, John visited the campus and met with the PR department. In August, the department sent out a press release with a headline that said something like “Artist to Lynch Confederate Flag.” Both the artist and I were a little worried that this was stressing this one piece in the exhibit too much. He called me right after that and said, “What are they trying to do, get me killed?”

Very quickly, groups like the scv and others started responding. The Southern

Poverty Law Center e-mailed me to give me a heads up on the widespread anger the exhibition was causing in neo-Confederate groups, including one e-mail that suggested blowing the gallery up. We had just started to get e-mail on the show, and soon we were inundated. They got to everybody, the president, the provost, the PR department, John Sims, myself. They e-mailed the Gettysburg Chamber of Commerce and the merchants’ organizations. And we got phone calls.

Ultimately, the scv threatened to boycott the town of Gettysburg for a year. It was kind of misguided — the town had nothing to do with the gallery’s decision to do this exhibition. Interestingly, early on we met with representatives of government and local merchants, and they seemed very supportive. But once the boycott was threatened, we started hearing other things. From there, it just snowballed.

The pressure from the neo-Confederate groups was strong and threatening enough to make the college administration wonder if we should go ahead with it. The faculty for the most part was really supportive, and we got lots of letters of support. But the threats did become more serious. Apparently, there were a couple of death threats against the col-

lege president, Katherine Will, and she has not even been inaugurated yet. As our security became more and more involved, and then the FBI and the Borough of Gettysburg police, it became more and more clear that we potentially could have a major problem here. We heard about protests planned by the Council of Conservative Citizens [a white supremacist hate group], a Klan group, something called the Rebel Bikers and individuals, too. It was very scary. Multiple consulting firms were brought in, security and PR firms. Ultimately, they suggested bringing what they called the “flash point” — the gallows — inside the gallery. But the artist said no. He had already agreed to leave the gallows up only for a few hours, rather than the three-week run of the exhibition that we’d planned. He did create an alternative piece that was an adaptation of the outdoor piece, and that was still quite effective. But he chose not to come to Gettysburg in protest.

This was all before the exhibition even opened. It was almost conceptual art in the making. On opening night, we had over 900 people in a 1,600-square-foot gallery. It was a huge crowd, an amazing crowd, of both locals and students. It was daily news in the local

newspapers, and it spread to the Pittsburgh paper, Harrisburg — even the *Washington Post* did a story. It was quite a to-do. The day before the opening there was a protest by about 30 people. On opening night, we were expecting hundreds, but only six or seven scv members showed up. And for the most part, the people who have showed up have been very peaceful. That was a very different tone from the e-mails. It’s wearing to be called basically a piece of shit for two weeks straight. John got radically racist e-mails.

I collected all those e-mails and filled two huge binders with them. I thought part of this is about dialogue on the subject, and people should be able to read what was being said. Interestingly, the binders have really been the draw of the exhibition. The text that’s been generated is almost like another work of art.

I came away surprised at the level of racism we’d seen in the e-mail responses. We know we live in a country with a history of racism, and that it’s alive and well in many homes. But to see it and have it come directly at you was very surprising, as were the numbers. It was a shock to people. It was much more widespread than we had thought.



JENNIFER WARBURG

JOHN HALEY

Professor Emeritus
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT WILMINGTON
Former Vice Chairman
CAPE FEAR MUSEUM BOARD OF TRUSTEES • WILMINGTON, N.C.

John Haley, who served seven years on the Cape Fear Museum board, was the only professional historian on that body when it came under the sway of neo-Confederate activists or their sympathizers led by Bernhard Thuersam. Thuersam, a native New Yorker who later rose to board chairman, joined the League of the South (LOS) hate group in 2001, becoming a local LOS leader and growing increasingly vocal on the board. Thuersam moderated a 2001 Lincoln-bashing forum at the museum that was addressed by LOS North Carolina chapter head Mike Tuggle; helped win board approval for a 2003 forum where a top LOS “scholar,” Donald Livingston, spoke; and criticized efforts to investigate an 1898 race riot. In the end, stymied by a move to rein in his board, Thuersam left. But so did a frustrated John Haley.

At the time that I was a member of the Cape Fear Museum Board of Trustees, there was a very vocal part of the board who were members of the Sons of Confederate Veterans,

the League of the South, and even the United Daughters of the Confederacy. It seemed to me that there was an agenda to try to make the museum, a county-funded public museum, into an arm of these organizations, and also to make the museum's programming conform to the Southern version of the so-called Lost Cause.

While I was on the board [in 2001], there was an effort to actually erect a Confederate flag as part of a museum flag exhibit. It was supposed to go outside the building, on the main thoroughfare in Wilmington. This was in the aftermath of the flag struggle in South Carolina [where the NAACP boycotted the state because it flew the Confederate battle flag over its Capitol dome]. My question was, why did we as museum trustees want to use public money to erect something that obviously was going to be the source of controversy? After the debate, I was the subject of several letters to the editor demanding that I apologize. But I decided not to get into a public debate. There were a lot of people who called expressing support, and I told them that the best thing to do was to quietly send letters or E-mails to the county commissioners [who, unlike the board, had managerial authority over the museum].

At around that time, somehow or other, a lot of museum "associates" — basically, financial supporters of the museum — were put on the E-mail list advertising activities and events of the League of the South, which was kind of strange. Evidently, someone on the board had taken it upon themselves to disseminate this information. A number of associates complained to me that they were going to withdraw their support from the museum entirely after reading this material. Another incident occurred when the [Civil War] movie "Gods and Generals" was showing here in Wilmington. According to the local newspaper, the chairman of the board of trustees, Bernie Thuersam, was putting stickers on car windshields in the theater parking lot. Basically, they said if you want the real story, come to some of [the League of the South's] lectures and symposiums. They have regular lectures. Of course, these people pass themselves off as historians, but I don't think any of them are really trained professionally. Basically, their tack is that the South went to war over values — not slavery

— and to preserve a system of culture that the South felt was threatened. Their history is grounded in the writings of the first wave of Southern historians after the war, who essentially said that the Civil War could be justified, that it was fought valiantly, that Reconstruction was an unacceptable thing. It's a history that among other things portrays all blacks in Reconstruction as crooks and incompetents. That's the version of history that they're frozen in.

There was another occasion where three members of the board, Bernie among them, made a trip to Raleigh to try to prevent the naming of a parkway here in Wilmington after Martin Luther King Jr. They announced in Raleigh that they were members of the board of trustees, which was right, but they also tried to lead some to believe that that was the museum's position. Of course, that was wrong.

It's hard to identify these people, but I think members of the League of the South have wormed their way into local government, boards and commissions, and I wouldn't be surprised if they're running for public office. Here in Wilmington, I think those on the museum board were recognized as a potential problem for the county commissioners. Eventually, the commissioners changed the charter so that the board of trustees was reconstituted as a

board of advisors, which is the right way. Under the old system, the board wanted almost complete censorship over what was programmed and displayed at the museum. While technically it could not hire and fire, it could do almost everything else. And if it wasn't about the Civil War, they were not enthused. They had to have major programming during Confederate History Month. And they used museum staff to work on these things. Now, since the charter change, Bernie has resigned — I guess the board could no longer be a platform for him.

As a professional historian, I have absolutely nothing against groups and individuals remembering history and heritage, as long as it's factual. The greatest problem I had with the Sons of Confederate Veterans and the League of the South while on the museum board is they embraced a skewed and flawed version of history and they were attempting to use public facilities and public money to propagate the old Lost Cause. In the end, I got tired of coming to meetings and not getting beyond the Civil War, or listening to Bernie giving some report about a Civil War museum he'd visited. It was like spinning my wheels. I felt I couldn't accomplish anything, and I decided not to continue. But now, the museum is doing great things. It's really beginning to realize its potential as a great county-owned museum.

JEAN MARTIN

Curator of Old Depot Museum
MEMBER, CITY COUNCIL · SELMA, ALA.

At age 81, long-time Selma resident Jean Martin was overwhelmingly reelected to the City Council this September. The vote was a moral victory for Martin, a white woman who came under bitter attack from neo-Confederate activists for providing the 2001 swing vote that resulted in moving a bust of Nathan Bedford Forrest — a slave trader and Confederate cavalry general who later became the first national leader of the Ku Klux Klan — away from the courtyard of a public building, where it had been erected by a group called Friends of Forrest a short time before, to a city cemetery. Two white and two black council members voted against her.



The first I recall hearing about the Forrest statue was at City Council. I was under the impression that it was going to be a finely done bust that would go on a pedestal inside the Smitherman Museum [a former Confederate hospital named after a long-time



VALERIE DOWNES PHOTOS

Selma mayor], which was all right with me. I'm no admirer of Forrest's, but it is a museum and, of course, he was a part of Selma's history. [In 1865, Forrest led an unsuccessful defense of Selma, which was partly sacked.]

I really didn't think any more about it until the week [in October 2000] that Selma's first black mayor was to take office, when we learned that it would be placed outside the Smitherman building, which is in a predominantly black neighborhood. I felt that was wrong. There was a lot of discussion at council meetings. It made all the newspapers. At one time, the council voted to leave the statue alone. But then all the disturbance began. There were attempts to topple it, attempts to protect it, and constant newspaper coverage, negative for the most part. And truly, Selma needs no negative newspaper coverage. It's had enough.

I began to think very deeply about it, because this is my town and I love it. I talked to a businessman I know very well, and he said, "Jeannie, put it in Old Live Oak Cemetery. If he has to be here,

that's where he belongs." Our cemetery is beautiful, a National Trust, and we have a Confederate Circle there. I thought that made sense. I contacted other people and began to talk to them about it.

During this time, my youngest sister died in Houston and I flew out for the funeral. And bless me if the headlines in the Houston papers were not all about that statue. Pat would have been so angry about all that mess! I prayed about it, and I thought, "All right, no matter what it takes, this is what I have to do because it is the right thing to do." And I caught hell, although my mother would not have liked me to say that!

It took almost no time for Mrs. [Pat] Godwin and the Friends of Forrest to start. [Friends of Forrest, in which Godwin is a principal, owns the bust.] They came to council meetings. They wrote letters to the paper. She conducted an E-mail campaign, and I don't need to tell you what she said. I was shocked at the E-mails. It was very unpleasant. I received ugly phone calls — you know how they act. I received anonymous let-

ters at home, too. I also heard frequently from [neo-Confederate activist] Ellen Williams. It was mean, mean, I don't have to tell you. Still, I thought what's happening to me is nothing compared to what happened to the families of my Jewish friends.

But it got to me, and I talked to my rector several times. Sometimes, you begin to think you've lost your mind. To make such a fuss over the man who founded the Klan! We have his portrait here in this museum [Martin is the curator of Selma's Old Depot Museum] and I will not deny that he had his place in history. But history is past. You don't try to live in the middle of it, at least I don't think you do. This so-called romantic view of the Old South — if these people were suddenly picked up and placed in the Old South, they wouldn't find it so romantic. It [the Civil War] was a war that shouldn't have happened. But it did, and parts of the South have never recovered economically from that.

I also received an E-mail from someone I had grown up with, who was a very

close friend in the years after my husband died. His e-mail said simply, “What are you going to do with your thirty pieces of silver?” I think that was the angriest I felt during the whole episode. Also, after we moved the statue and we were being sued by Friends of Forrest, a complaint was made to the ethics commission saying that I received a pay raise from the city of Selma at the museum because I had helped the mayor move the statue. Now, that’s ridiculous.

Some things got to be funny. For instance, I received a good deal of criticism because we had not placed the general facing north — so he could combat his enemies! That one got to me. I mean, really.

Pretty soon, it finally began to calm down. I had been assured that if and when he was placed in the cemetery, there would be no vandalism, and there has not been, not one bit. Life went on, and the old boy’s still in the cemetery.

Now, I’ve just been reelected to the City Council. But on the weekend prior to the election I received a phone call from someone who told me that yard signs had been placed all over my ward saying, “Remember Forrest, Martin’s Got To Go.” There was a funny sidebar. I later had an anonymous phone call from someone who said more than 40 signs had just disappeared from my ward. I said, “You mean my signs?” He said, “No, no, they were the signs saying ‘Martin’s Got To Go.’” I don’t who it was, but wasn’t that wonderful? I also received endorsements from ADC [Alabama Democratic Conference] and the New South Coalition [the state’s two largest black political groups].

I am so delighted to tell you that in the end, I won by a very large margin, which tells you that a lot of people are finally beginning to grow up. I hope so. We need to all go together.

GEORGE EWERT

Director of Museum Of Mobile
MOBILE, ALA.

For several years, Mobile has been roiled by a small but very active group of neo-Confederate activists who have managed to push city officials into accepting a number of their demands. The conflict came to a head in 2003, when museum director George Ewert was attacked by these activists and threatened with firing.

In the last five years or so, there has been in Mobile, as in other parts of the South, an increase in political activism by the so-called heritage and neo-Confederate movements. Locally, it’s revolved around two issues. The first was the question of which of the Confederate flags was the appropriate one to fly on city property in Mobile. The second came about as a consequence of my writing a negative review of the movie “Gods and Generals.”

Since the early 20th century, Mobile has used “the city of five flags” as one of its slogans and has flown flags including what is typically called the Confederate battle flag. A few years ago, after a complaint from an African-American gentleman about that flag, the mayor of Mobile, Michael Dow, appointed a blue-ribbon committee of concerned people and public and academic historians. The committee ended up recommending that we fly the first national flag of the Confederacy. But members of the Sons of Confederate Veterans [scv] and other activists took grave exception to that and recommended the third national flag instead, since it has a small battle flag in one corner and so would still be present. After a stirring debate on the City Council, it was that flag that was adopted.

This episode encouraged and emboldened the local scv and neo-Confederates and helped to show them that they had political clout in the city of Mobile. That realization helped them decide to mount a political campaign against me last year, after I wrote a review of

“Gods and Generals” [a major feature film about the Civil War] that was published in the *Intelligence Report* of the Southern Poverty Law Center. It was a very negative review and pointed out the fact that the movie was a rehashed version of praise for the myth of the Lost Cause, a view that is very well documented as a myth, but that is nonetheless very near and dear to these heritage organizations.

Their campaign took a variety of forms, including a great many e-mails to the mayor and council members and personal meetings with these officials as well. They wanted me terminated as a “cultural bigot” against Southern history and said that I was disqualified as caretaker of the city’s history. They asked for time

to denounce me in public City Council meetings, as well as before the Museum Board, which operates the Museum of Mobile. There were also a variety of postings on neo-Confederate Web sites and blogs that very strongly denounced me and mischaracterized what I had done, primarily by claiming that I wrote the review as director of the museum, not as a private individual.

At the conclusion of one of the City Council meetings where I was denounced, the chairman of the council, Reggie

Copeland, demanded that the mayor make me apologize. That afternoon, in a closed-door session, Mayor Dow asked me to write a formal apology or receive a written reprimand, and I was threatened with termination if I wrote similar articles. Naturally, I was distressed about this. I felt it was a violation of my rights and an unwarranted intrusion of politics into my personal and professional life, and also into what I did as director of the museum. I began to communicate with a variety of my colleagues, historians and museum

professionals, who began an ardent campaign in support of me, sending e-mails and letters to the mayor and council defending my right to speak freely on a matter of history. The mayor then changed his approach and asked that anything I might write personally that would be controversial be reviewed before

publication by him or the chairman of the Museum Board for their pre-approval. This effort at political censorship was as egregious as the threat to terminate me if I didn’t cease writing “controversial” articles. When this was communicated to my colleagues, an even greater flood of letters and e-mails began to flow in.

At this point, the mayor did not communicate with me any further for a number of weeks, nor did I hear anything from any City Council people. In the interim, I attended the Southern Historical Association’s annual meeting in November of 2003 and was asked to give an impromptu session along with some other historians on the growing influence of the neo-Confederate movement. I was very gratified to receive an enormous amount of support from my colleagues.

Since that time, the mayor has acknowledged to me, no doubt as a result of the e-mails and other comments from historians from all across the United States and as far away as Japan, that had he the opportunity to do this all over again, he would do it very differently. Apparently, he felt the incident had been poorly managed, and I agree.

The whole affair reflected the fact that a small, energetic group of individuals can unduly influence political decisions. This movement is far more widespread than the public knows. It currently operates below the radar of national attention. And you never know what you might say that will be seen as a neo-Confederate “heritage violation” that will bring you under attack and may quickly escalate into something that threatens your whole life.

Here in Mobile, some on the council and the mayor initially gave in to the “heritage violation” accusation because they sought, in part, to minimize a local controversy — it was seen as a distraction from other pressing matters. But this effort to silence or punish me for my views fortunately failed. Until public officials, educators, and others in authority realize that efforts to hurt people for criticizing the myth of the Lost Cause are wrong, and that that myth does not represent mainstream scholarly history or broad public opinion, others will likely repeat the kind of episode I experienced. ▲

VALERIE DOWNES



THE BATTLE OF 'GEORGIAFORNIA'

IN GEORGIA, WHERE NEARLY
1 MILLION HISPANIC IMMIGRANTS
HAVE ARRIVED SINCE 1990,
XENOPHOBIC HATRED AND
VIOLENCE ARE ON THE RISE

BY BOB MOSER

Day laborers in Canton, Ga., surge toward a contractor's truck, clamoring for work.

CANTON, Ga. — On a frigid afternoon last February, Domingo Lopez Vargas decided to call it a day. A diminutive 54-year-old with bowl-cut hair and a gold tooth that gleams when he smiles, Lopez had left his dirt-poor Guatemalan farm village 15 years before, determined to earn some decent money for his wife and nine children. After picking oranges in Tampa, Fla. — “too hot!” Lopez says — he’d joined a mid-1990s wave of immigrants heading for the piney hills and exploding exurbs of North Georgia. Lopez settled in Canton, a former mill village 35 miles north of Atlanta. With the construction boom spreading ever northward

from Atlanta, the area was fast becoming one of the most popular — and lucrative — U.S. destinations for immigrant workers.

Unlike many of his compadres, Lopez had legal status, which helped him find steady work hanging doors and windows. But last February, the work dried up and Lopez joined the more than 100,000 *jornaleros* — day laborers — who wait for landscaping and construction jobs on street corners and in front of 7-Elevens and other tiendas all across North Georgia. Usually there are plenty of

want to work?” Lopez hasn’t picked up much English in 15 years, but he knew what that meant. “I said, yes, how much? They said nine dollars an hour. I didn’t ask what kind of job. I just wanted to work, so I said yes.”

Until that afternoon, Lopez says, “Americans had always been very nice to me.” Which might explain why he wasn’t concerned that the guys in the green pickup — all four of them — looked awfully young to be contractors. Or why he didn’t think twice about being picked up so close to sunset. “I took the offer because I know sometimes

people don’t stop working until 9 at night,” he says.

The four young men, all students at Cherokee High School, drove Lopez to a remote spot strewn with trash. “They told me to pick up some plastic bags that were on the ground. I thought that was my job, to clean up the trash. But when I bent over to pick it up, I felt somebody hit me from behind with a piece of wood, on my back.” It was just the start of a 30-minute pummeling that left Lopez bruised and blooded from his thighs to his neck. “I thought I was dying,” he says. “I tried to stand up but I couldn’t. I couldn’t understand

what they were saying.” Finally, after he handed over all the cash in his wallet, \$260, along with his Virgin Mary pendant, the teenagers sped away.

Hotbed of Hate

Lopez, it turned out, was only the latest victim in a series of robberies and assaults on Hispanic day laborers in Canton. The first report had come on Nov. 15, 2003, when 22-year-old immigrant Elias Tíu was jumped, robbed and

VALERIE DOWNES



Calm reigns inside Canton’s La Luna Panadería. But outside, just blocks away, at least three day laborers have been badly beaten.

FOR THE FIRST TIME since the African slave trade closed down, the South experienced large-scale immigration by a “non-traditional” population in the 1990s. Six of the seven states with the nation’s fastest-growing Hispanic populations from 1990 to 2000 were in the South — including Georgia, where the number of legal Hispanic immigrants swelled by 300%. And demographers estimate that the total number of Hispanic immigrants, including those who are undocumented, is one and a half to two times that number. A telling statistic: Hispanic babies now account for 12.6% of all births in Georgia, where the official percentage of Hispanics was 5.3% in 2000. The growth is only accelerating. In the first few years of the new millennium, Georgia’s Hispanic population grew faster than any other state’s, and U.S. Census figures indicate that 102 Hispanics are moving there legally every day.

pickup trucks that swing by, offering \$8 to \$12 an hour for digging, planting, painting or hammering. But this day, *nada*. By late afternoon, Lopez had had enough of standing on Main Street waiting with others in the cold. He gave up and walked up the street to McFarland’s, a grocery store in a beat-up shopping center.

“I got milk, shampoo and toothpaste,” he recalls through an interpreter. “When I was leaving the store, this truck stopped right in front of me and said, ‘Do you

beaten near the old mills in downtown Canton. The most recent had been just one day before Lopez landed in the hospital, when 22-year-old Carlos Perez had been offered work by three teenagers — including two of those accused of assaulting Lopez. The script was much the same: Perez had been driven to an abandoned house, punched with fists and clobbered with a metal pipe. He threw his wallet at the teenagers during the beating; they extracted his \$300 in cash and tossed it back at him.

After reports of Lopez and Perez’ assaults hit the news, it was just a matter of days before seven Cherokee High School students were under arrest. “At least one of them was going around school bragging about robbing and beating up Mexicans,” says Canton’s assistant police chief, Jeff Lance. “They were looking for easy prey.”

Police can’t say how much “easy prey” the Cherokee students might have found between November and February. According to Lance, “a number” of day laborers reported similar robberies and assaults — highly unusual, he notes, because immigrants normally “don’t want to deal with us.” Tíu was the only previous victim detectives were able to locate. “They tend to move from one house to another,” Lance says, “so it’s hard to find the victims.”

Three solved cases were enough to send a jolt through Cherokee County. True, like most of North Georgia, Cherokee is about as conservative as it gets. Conservative

enough that not one single Democrat ran for election this year in the entire county. Conservative enough that a paper copy of the Ten Commandments was recently displayed on the second floor of Canton’s Cherokee Justice Center. Conservative enough that in 2002, when Cherokee High School Principal Bill Sebring banned t-shirts with rebel-flag imagery after black students complained, 150 white students showed up the next day defiantly clad in Dixie Outfitters shirt and caps with rebel flags and cheered on by adult protesters from the Sons of Confederate Veterans and other “heritage” groups.

But hate crimes? That’s a different story. “It just floored everybody,” says Lance. “These good old boys from Cherokee High School doing this?” It’s not clear whether these “good old boys” were involved in the rebel-flag protests, which forced the high school to close down for an entire day. (Principal Sebring declined to be interviewed for this story.) But one of those charged with armed robbery, aggravated assault and abduction was 18-year-old Ben Cagle, an heir to one of the county’s most powerful families; his grandparents founded the Cherokee Republican Party, which so dominates local politics that not a single Democrat ran for office this year in the county. Cagle was president of Cherokee High’s agricultural club. Eighteen-year-old Devin Wheeling, the only teenager charged in all three incidents, was a JROTC cadet. Another

of the alleged perpetrators was an Explorer Scout planning to become a firefighter. They'd known each other since middle school, played Dizzy Dean baseball and gone to church together.

Nobody was more floored than Lopez, of course. His injuries kept him out of work for four months, and left him with more than \$4,500 in medical bills. Sometimes he still puzzles over his attackers' motives. "They were young," he speculates, "and maybe they didn't have enough education. Or maybe their families are murderers who taught them to kill people, and that is what they have learned."

Or maybe they grew up in America's latest hotbed of anti-immigrant hate.

Coming to America

Day laborers are the most visible — and vulnerable — faces of a phenomenon that is rapidly transforming North Georgia into a diverse, multilingual place that one anti-immigration activist calls "Georgiafornia." Hispanic immigrants started arriving here in big numbers in the early 1990s, many helping to build venues for the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta. Others headed north for Dalton's carpet factories and Gainesville's poultry plants. Some took to the street corners and started working day labor in Atlanta's booming suburbs, where cheap landscaping and construction help was — and is — in



For high-school students hunting for "easy prey," Domingo Lopez Vargas fit the description. He was robbed and assaulted amid the debris in the background.

tering — and old-fashioned racial rhetoric. In the formerly homogenous town of Chamblee, just north of Atlanta, white residents began complaining as early as 1992 about the "terrible, filthy people" standing on their street corners. At a town council meeting, one official infamously suggested that residents set bear traps in their yards to keep the Hispanics at bay. Another councilman wondered

aloud whether Chamblee whites should form a vigilante group to scare off the immigrants.

Familiarity seems only to have bred contempt. Nine years after the infamous council meeting in Chamblee, Police Commander Wayne Kennedy, just down the road in Marietta, told a reporter his department had cracked down on day laborers because of residents' complaints about trash and urine in their yards. "I guess it's a cultural thing," Kennedy said. "Probably in Mexico urinating on the

sidewalk is perfectly normal."

The culture clash was predictable enough, says Remedios Gomez Arnau, Atlanta's consul general of Mexico. "We're talking about a very new migration wave into Georgia," she says. "These are mostly people who have not been involved in traditional migrant work in the past. They're from the poorest, most rural and impoverished places in Mexico and Guatemala. And they are coming to a place where people are not familiar with migrant laborers, or with Hispanics." A place where, in the words of Republican state Rep. Chip Rogers, "Everybody had a Southern accent when I was growing up. We were part of the Old South, for better or worse. We were all the same."

During the days of Jim Crow, some North Georgia towns enforced that sameness with a heavy hand. Signs warning black people to be out of town by sunset, some erected by local officials and others by Ku Klux Klan klaverns and White Citizens Councils, were familiar fixtures in the hills stretching north from Atlanta to the Blue Ridge Mountains. Those signs are long gone, but the mindset lingers. "Prejudice is an old, old habit to break in Georgia," says Pilar Verdes, local news editor for Atlanta's *Mundo Hispánico* newspaper.

In every part of the U.S. where large numbers of Hispanic immigrants have moved, anti-immigration groups have sprung up in protest. But the backlash in Georgia has been fueled not only by these "mainstream" groups, but also by hardcore neo-Nazis, Southern "heritage" activists

The neo-Nazi National Alliance organized a thriving chapter in North Georgia around opposition to immigrants, holding two fiery rallies in Gainesville.



and white-supremacist hate groups — all of them saying strikingly similar things about the "Mexican invasion."

To immigrant-rights activists like Tisha Tillman, Southeast regional director for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), the hate crimes in Canton show just how deep a chord these groups' messages are striking. "The kids who committed these crimes had grown up listening to people saying that Hispanic people were lower forms of life," she says. "We know what kind of effect that rhetoric has. Day laborers are the canaries in the coal mines for immigrant communities — they're out there, exposed, as visible symbols of the community. When they're being targeted, you know there's something seriously wrong."

Stage Right: Enter the Klan

One of the first signs that Georgians' anti-Hispanic prejudice was hardening into hate came in 1998, courtesy of the Klan. In Gainesville, the self-proclaimed "poultry capital of the world," the American Knights of the KKK held a Halloween rally on the steps of the Hall County Courthouse, followed by a cross-burning in nearby

Winder. As in much of North Georgia, the sight of angry men in white hoods was old news in Hall County. But the message was new. "They screamed their disapproval of the recent Hispanic influx into the Gainesville community," wrote Kathleen Cole, who photographed the rally for *Flagpole*, an alternative paper based in Athens. Blacks, Jews, Catholics, homosexuals — the Klan's traditional targets seemed forgotten. Now, Cole said, "preaching against illegal immigrants" was the topic of the day.

After a turbulent backlash against the African-American civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, Gainesville's white and black communities had settled into an uneasy, largely segregated coexistence before their new Hispanic neighbors began to arrive. But remnants of the old white resistance had lingered all along. Like everywhere else, the Klan has shrunk in size over the years. But the white-supremacist Council of Conservative Citizens — successor to the old White Citizens Councils — has a thriving chapter in Hall County, spreading the CCC's message that "the United States is not only ceasing to be a majority white nation but is also ceasing to be a nation that is culturally part of Western civilization." Gainesville is also home to



Like most of North Georgia, Cherokee County is about as conservative as it gets. The sign at bottom left refers to Gov. Sonny Perdue, who won election, in part, by promising a flag referendum.

VALERIE DOWNES PHOTOS

warmed up. Three months after the rally, fliers began showing up on windshields in Metro Atlanta proclaiming, “Missing: A Future for White Children.” Doles told the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* his group would “blanket” the state to “raise awareness of the immigration issue.”

A year later, the National Alliance held another rally in Gainesville to protest what it called “the brown tide ... turning Hall County into just another Third World cesspool.” Despite a drizzling rain, the neo-Nazis drew twice as many supporters as they had in 2001. Doles led a march around the blooming crepe myrtles of Gainesville’s town square, bellowing: “What do we want?”

“Mexicans out!” came the answer.

“When do we want it?”

“Now!”

The neo-Nazis’ momentum was slowed last year when Doles landed in prison on firearms charges. But to Greg Bautista, who runs El Puente Community Action in Gainesville, their fiery rhetoric had already done its work. “Those rallies were when people really started to profess their hate openly,” he says. “They created a public space for that kind of message, that kind of talk.”

Organizing the Resistance

Nobody has talked more about the perils of immigration in Georgia than D.A. King. An ex-Marine from Marietta, a white-flight suburb just outside of Atlanta, King regularly contributes dispatches from “Georgia-fornia” to the anti-immigration Web hate site, VDARE.com. In the late 1990s, he worked with the Georgia Coalition for Immigration Reduction. Allied with the nation’s largest anti-immigration group, the Federation for Immigration Reform (FAIR), the coalition has organized protests and filled its Web site with facts and figures about the impact of immigration on Georgia taxpayers. Last fall, King decided that wasn’t cutting it. He took early retirement from his insurance agency to launch a far more ambitious effort: American Resistance, a national “coalition of immigration crime fighters.”

“Immigration reform is a dead issue to me,” says King. “I don’t want to talk about cutting the numbers of legal immigrants. I want to put a stop to the crime of illegal immigration.”

Three days after he announced American Resistance on VDARE and www.michnews.com, King says he’d already gotten 630 e-mails from folks interested in paying the \$39 membership fee. Almost a year later, he’ll only say that he has “fewer than 5,000” paying members nationally and “fewer than 1,000 in Georgia.” But King vows that he “won’t stop until I have 1 million members” — hopefully in time for the 2006 elections — and offices with full-time staff in all 50 states. “The NRA is an excellent business model,” he says, referring to the powerful National Rifle Association, and his goal is to exert the same kind of influence on American politics.

Other than that, King is a bit vague about the kind of “resistance” he aims to spread. He urges members to report illegal immigrants to Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (BICE) offices when they see them — something King did in September 2003, after spotting a photograph of three illegal immigrants on the front page of the Marietta newspaper. King took their names and addresses to the BICE agents in Atlanta. Two months later, he was furious to discover two of them still free on the streets of Marietta, walking “symbols of the anarchy that is destroying the American nation.” His conclusion: “Adios, law — *hola*, anarchy.”

This September, when a rally supporting driver’s licenses for immigrants took place at the state capitol, King encouraged BICE agents to arrest those carrying signs, explaining to a local paper, “If I hold up a sign that says I want to rob banks legally, I think it’s safe to say I’m a bank robber.” In the absence of *la migra*, King organizes counter-protests. About 50 American Resisters showed up to protest the driver’s license rally. They carried signs like “Gringos for America” and chanted such slogans as “You Cannot Have My Country!” and “Enforce the Law!” — despite often



“Everybody had a Southern accent when I was growing up. We were part of the Old South. We were all the same.”

the Georgia Heritage Coalition, which — when it’s not defending the Confederate battle flag — spreads the word that “Immigration is out of control — and you are being LIED to.” And in 2001, the nation’s largest neo-Nazi organization, the National Alliance, announced its presence in Hall County with a rally organized to protest a proposed work center for local day laborers.

Fearing violence, immigrants and their allies steered clear of the rally, where between 30 and 40 National Alliance members carried signs with messages like “The u.s. is the world’s septic tank” and “Full!” But Pilar Verdes of *Mundo Hispánico* decided to see what the neo-Nazis had to say. She got an earful — especially after she attended a private rally held afterward at the Dahlonega home of National Alliance organizer Chester Doles, a former Klan grand dragon himself.

“This has nothing to do with hate,” Doles told Verdes, who immigrated from Venezuela in 1989. “Hispanics are going to take America. We are going to be the minority.”

Thomas Chittum, ex-mercenary in Croatia and Rhodesia and author of an anti-immigration tome called *Civil War II: the Coming Breakup of America*, picked up on Doles’ theme. “The Southeast is going to be occupied by Mexicans, and this is going to create the beginning of a second Civil War here,” he said. “This is going to be an ethnic war.”

“I was having an out-of-body experience,” Verdes says. “I kept having to pinch myself. I never thought they would be so stupid to say those things. I was not hiding my tape recorder. They’re very exhibitionist. And scary.”

“This nation was founded by white men,” Steven Barry, editor of the neo-Nazi *Resister* magazine and then an Alliance principal, told Verdes. “We don’t need colors.” Barry went on to talk about his models for resisting the Hispanic influx. “Three of my heroes are Pinochet, Franco and the *junta militar*” — the notorious military board of Argentina. “Pinochet should come to the U.S. and solve our problems,” Barry told Verdes. “It’s good to torture people who deserve it.”

Verdes was finally chased off — as fast as she could run — by a neo-Nazi who didn’t like her questions. But Doles’ National Alliance chapter, one of the nation’s first organized around immigration issues, was just getting



Waiting for work — or worse — at Canton’s Tienda Guatemalteca.

being drowned out by what King described as “a crowd of 800-1500 screaming illegal aliens and their enablers.”

Those “enablers” — groups like MALDEF and the National Council of La Raza — are the real bigots in this debate, King insists. “The racist forces that would take our country have made their intentions clear,” he declares on the American Resistance Web site. “The days of illegal aliens threatening and intimidating American citizens who show the courage to protest their national dispossession must, and will, end.”

‘I Want You to Suffer’

D.A. King’s white-victimhood theme was memorably expressed after he protested the Freedom Ride for Immigrant Workers when it rolled through the Atlanta suburb of Doraville in the fall of 2003. Seeing upwards of 2,000 Hispanics marching through the formerly homogenous

little town, King wrote on VDARE, “I got the sense that I

schools. One study showed that the state of Georgia spent \$260 million to educate illegal immigrants last year.”

Rogers acknowledges that “some people are beginning to target people for hatred,” but he lays the blame largely on the immigrants themselves. “I truly believe that if it weren’t for the high levels of illegal immigration, we wouldn’t have the targeting, the prejudice, even if there were still high numbers of Hispanic people in Georgia. With so many people illegal, people tend to assume they are all illegal, and it becomes, ‘Yeah, I couldn’t get into the emergency room because of all those illegals there.’ It feeds the prejudice.”

Rogers admires King’s efforts with American Resistance, which he believes produces “great research.” But he keeps a distance, he says, because, “some of his associates are on the radical side.”

Even though they’re usually on opposite ends of legislative issues, Rogers wouldn’t get any argument from Democratic state Sen. Sam Zamarripa about that. “If American Resistance was really genuine about immigration reduction, they’d be protesting the big employers in America,” says Zamarripa, one of the state’s most outspoken proponents of immigrants’ rights. “The big companies are the ones who want cheap labor, and real enforcement of immigration laws would have to start with workplace enforcement. But they won’t call for that, because that’s not what their issue is. Their issue is ethnic. Their issue is that they don’t want America to have any more color. They represent the worst of this anti-immigration theme that outsiders destroy America.”

Zamarripa has paid a price for talking back to anti-immigration activists, and for sponsoring bills like the drivers’ license proposal in the state Senate. “I’m watched and I’m tracked,” says Zamarripa, who indeed is the subject of a “Zamarripa Watch” on American Border Patrol, an anti-immigrant hate site that often runs King’s dispatches from Georgia. American Border Patrol has called Zamarripa a “Mexican agent” and “Reconquista” (meaning that he’s a part of the Mexican government’s supposed plot to “reconquer” parts of the U.S.). Every time he’s featured on VDARE or American Border Patrol, Zamarripa says, he starts getting E-mail messages — “love letters,” he calls them — from anti-immigration zealots. On the heels of King’s “Zamarripa Watch” story about the drivers-license issue this summer, the senator received an E-mail message that particularly disturbed him. “My hope is that when the next terrorist act takes place in the United States ... your children will be the recipients of that terror. Yes, your children. I want you to suffer.”

“These messages are directly correlated to the attention I get from American Resistance,” says Zamarripa. “I think these people are operating just barely north of vigilante.



PLAYVERDES



“It’s good to torture people who deserve it,” says neo-Nazi Steven Barry (left), who joined the National Alliance’s anti-immigration rally in 2001. “My first act on a safe return home was to take a shower,” American Resistance founder D.A. King (right) wrote after protesting an immigrants’ rights march through Doraville.

had left the country of my birth and been transported to some Mexican village, completely taken over by an angry, barely restrained mob. ... My first act on a safe return home was to take a shower.”

Asked what percentage of Georgia citizens agree with his sentiments, King doesn’t hesitate. “Probably 95,” he says. Certainly, he has some powerful political allies. Three North Georgia congressmen, Republicans Charlie Norwood, Nathan Deal and Phil Gingrey, belong to the controversial Congressional Immigration Reform Caucus, led by anti-immigration rabble-rouser Tom Tancredo, a Colorado congressman. In the Georgia General Assembly, State Rep. Chip Rogers of Cherokee County has sponsored three anti-immigration bills, one of which would cut off all state services to illegal immigrants. “I don’t think these folks are coming to America so they can make use of our social services, our schools and hospitals,” Rogers says. “They’re coming for work. But we can’t fail to recognize what it’s doing to our health-care system, our prisons and our

VALERIE DOWNES PHOTOS



“Their issue is they don’t want America to have any more color,” state Sen. Sam Zamarripa says of his anti-immigration antagonists.

They might not be traditional ‘hate’ groups, like the Klan, but that’s part of the appeal. They provide a safe, so-called respectable haven for hatred and bigotry.”

Official Bigotry

In the charged atmosphere of North Georgia, bigotry tends to bubble up in surprising settings — like city council chambers. This September, 12 years after a Chamblee councilman recommended catching immigrants in bear traps, a verbal melee broke out at what was supposed to be a routine city council meeting in neighboring Doraville. Once an overwhelmingly white suburb of 10,000, celebrated in pop song by the Atlanta Rhythm Section as “a touch of country in the city,” Doraville is now 43% Hispanic officially — and perhaps 60% unofficially. The city has seen some “white flight” in response, but not by its elected officials: Until this January, Doraville’s mayor and six council members were all white men between the ages of 60 and 73 who’d been in office for more than two decades. The council now has a Hispanic member and a woman. But the old regime made itself heard on Sept. 20.

Doraville had decided to charge sponsors of an Oct. 12 “Festival de la Raza” (raza means “race”) march \$2,000 for police security — an unprecedented fee with no basis in local law. When members of the march’s sponsoring

group, the Coordinating Council of Latino Community Leaders of Atlanta, decided to attend the Sept. 20 council meeting to protest, state Sen. Vincent Fort of Atlanta went with them. Fort, a history professor at Morris Brown College who represents a predominantly African-American district in the city, believed that charging for security “was a violation of free speech. It was clear to me that they were being treated differently because of who they are.” As a civil-rights activist and a student of civil-rights history, Fort felt compelled to stand with the protesters. In fact, he was the first to speak. But almost as soon as he began, Lamar Lang, a former Doraville mayor who now sits on the council, interrupted to question Fort’s right to address the council. “Being a senator doesn’t cut any ice with me,” Lang said. “I’m going to call a spade a spade.”

After a brief but heated exchange, Fort resumed reading his statement in support of the marchers. And then Lang got really cranked up. “Latinos are freeloaders,” he declared. “The city doesn’t have to pay for charges incurred by the undocumented.”

A couple of weeks later, Lang issued an apology of sorts, saying, “Maybe I shouldn’t have made that statement.” After some negotiations with the Doraville police chief, the Festival de la Raza went off without a hitch. Of course, D.A. King and a band of American Resistance members were part of the crowd.



Every morning on Canton's Main Street, dozens of *jornaleros* line up for work and shrug off the dangers of day labor.

VALERIE DOWNES PHOTOS

In the wake of the city council meeting, Fort couldn't help being struck by the parallels between the backlash against black civil rights and the current anti-immigration movement. "Ultimately, Lang was saying what many people in Doraville — and this whole area — believe. As their numbers increase, you're going to see more and more resentment against Latinos in Georgia, not less. And especially as they start to assert themselves and defend their rights, it won't be pleasant. We know that from the civil-rights movement. Take the hate crimes in Canton. People usually don't report those kinds of incidents, because many of them are undocumented and fear the police. If one or two are reported, you know there are a lot more of those crimes happening. And we won't see an end of them any time soon."

Life and Death in Georgia

While Georgia's immigration debate heats to a boiling point, Domingo Lopez Vargas waits for justice — justice, and a ticket home. Having sworn off day labor, he works night shifts now, cutting up chickens at the nearby Tyson plant, wincing through the pain that shoots up his right arm when he lowers the boom on a bird. But it's only temporary, he says. "I called my wife and told her what happened. She told me to move back to Guatemala. I wanted to, but I didn't have enough money to go back and the police officers told me not to go out of the country because they will still need me to work on the case. After the case is finished, I want to go back to my family."

It could take a while. At press time, no trial date had been set for Lopez' assailants. The delay is not particularly surprising, since Cherokee County's district attorney and both its Superior Court judges removed themselves from the case, citing their ties to defendant Ben Cagle's prominent Republican family. The prosecution had to be shifted to neighboring Cobb County, home base of American Resistance. Until Oct. 25, when Georgia's hate-crime law was declared unconstitutional because of vague wording, activ-

ists were pressing the Cobb County district attorney to bring hate crime charges against Lopez' assailants — and those of Carlos Perez and Elias Tiu. "These victims were chosen, clearly, because they were Latino day laborers," says MALDEF's Tisha Tillman. "And if you're going to say that robbery was the motive, why were these men beaten with fists and sticks and pipes?"

Because so few atrocities committed against Hispanics are ever reported — much less brought to trial — Angela Arboleda, civil-rights analyst for the National Council of La Raza, says justice is especially important in this case, hate crimes or no hate crimes. "The message sent by these assaults is already bad enough," she says. "If you wake up at 5 a.m. and want to work hard

in Georgia, you're putting your life at risk."

Every weekday morning, just down the hill from the old mill house where Lopez lives, scores of laborers still gather to take that risk. On a misty morning in late September, a couple of dozen have assembled at MUST Ministries, a two-story brick storefront converted into one of Georgia's few job centers for day laborers. MUST provides a measure of safety, taking contractors' names and license-plate numbers in case there's trouble. But many contractors prefer to stop up the street, where dozens more men wait in front of Tienda Guatemalteca and La Luna Panadería, a bakery — and where no ID is required.

"Everyone knows it's dangerous," says Manolo, an ebullient 22-year-old from Chiapas, in southern Mexico, who's volunteering at MUST on a late September morning. "American men — they don't like to pay. That's usually the trouble. But some people have been robbed and beaten — right up there." He points up the street toward one of the unofficial work sites, where dozens of *jornaleros* have crowded around a contractor's truck, clamoring for work.

A few blocks up the street at La Luna Panadería, Antonio (who doesn't want to give his last name) believes things have gotten a little better since he arrived in Canton four years ago. Back then, "Americans would throw things out their cars at me when I would walk down this street to lunch." On one memorable occasion, as he walked through the local park with friends, he says a group of black and white men drove by and opened fire on them with pellet guns.

That hasn't happened in a while, Antonio says. But there was that day last year when he came to work to find a dead man out front on the sidewalk. "He had bruises all over like he was beaten," Antonio says. The police came, the body was taken away, and "The Latino community still has no idea what happened." Nor do Canton police. But since the Cherokee High School students were rounded up, says Assistant Police Chief Jeff Lance, no more bruised Hispanic bodies have been reported in Canton.

"It's been real quiet," Lance says. "Knock on wood." ▲

BOOKS ON THE RIGHT

A Different Kind of Hero

Who was the man now lauded as the top hero of neo-Confederate activists? A military genius? A brutal bully? Or both?

Nathan Bedford Forrest: A Biography

By Jack Hurst

NEW YORK: VINTAGE BOOKS, 1994, \$15.95 (PAPERBACK)

For the better part of the last century and a half, the quintessential white Southern hero has been regarded as Civil War Gen. Robert E. Lee, the man who surrendered at Appomattox on April 9, 1865. Lee was widely admired in both North and South for his undeniable grace, his Christian humility, his wisdom and his many exemplary qualities as a leader of men. He was a moderate, warning early on against the war that became America's bloodiest conflagration and only reluctantly joining the battle out of loyalty to his home state of Virginia. He had relatively enlightened ideas about slavery, describing it in 1856 as a "moral and political evil" even as he criticized abolitionists for trying to hurry along God's plan. At the close of the Civil War, Lee called on Southerners to remain in the land of their birth, to acquiesce to the verdict of history, and to "promote harmony and good will" in the reborn Union.

In the last decade or so, however, Lee's star has gone into decline, and especially so among the many activists of the so-called neo-Confederate movement. Today, it is a different Civil War general who is lauded as the greatest hero of the South. In the last several years, statues have gone up from Selma to Nashville to honor this man. His face dominates T-shirts, cof-

fee mugs and a slew of other products. Nathan Bedford Forrest, for better or for worse, is the man of the hour.

Who was this semi-literate "Wizard of the Saddle," this cavalry general who personally slew at least 30 men in hand-to-hand fighting in addition to ordering the death of any Confederate soldier who fled the field? Was he the acme of homespun Southern genius, as neo-Confederate activists today would have us believe? Or was he a homicidal bully, a brutal man whose entire life was drenched in blood?

The answers, or as close to answers as it seems possible to get, are found in Jack Hurst's first-rate biography of Forrest. Although the work is over a decade old (the first edition was published in 1993), and despite several competing Forrest biographies, Hurst's book succeeds like no other in laying out Forrest's life. While he sometimes seems reluctant to reach conclusions suggested by his own research — and more than once appears to read the evidence as favorably toward Forrest as possible — Hurst still presents the fullest picture of his subject available.

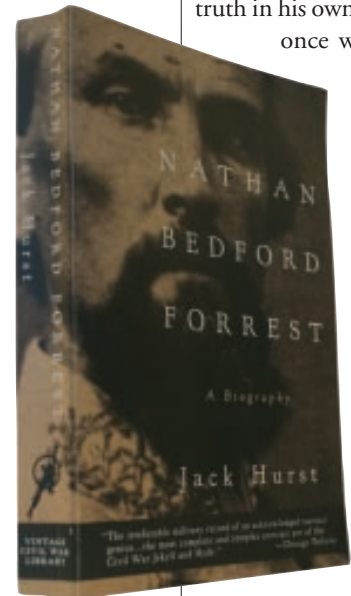
Of Forrest's military genius there can be no doubt. Unlettered, contemptuous of West Point formal training,

and given to insubordination, Forrest nonetheless was a brilliant horseman and tactical thinker — and the only soldier on either side to go from private to lieutenant general during the course of the war. Above all, his tactic was the charge, and he frequently overcame Union forces that vastly outnumbered his own as he personally led his troops. (Forrest suffered four major wounds during the war, and had 29 horses shot out from under him.) Union Gen. William Sherman, no slouch himself, described him as a "devil" who should be "hunted down and killed if it costs 10,000 lives and bankrupts the treasury."

But there was more to Forrest than that. He was renowned for a terrifying temper that transformed him into something resembling a blood-engorged beast. He personally shot his own men if they tried to shirk a battle. He was given to duels and furious arguments, oversaw savage whippings of recalcitrant slaves, shaded the truth in his own behalf repeatedly, and once wrongly shot innocent "deserters."

The severest of the criticism of Forrest — subjects studiously avoided by today's neo-Confederate activists — centers on three indisputable facts: Forrest was a Memphis slave trader who acquired fabulous wealth before the war; he commanded the troops who carried out an 1864 massacre of mostly black prisoners; and he led violent resistance to Reconstruction as the first grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan.

As Hurst points out, friendly Forrest biographers have attempted to describe him as a kindly slave trader,



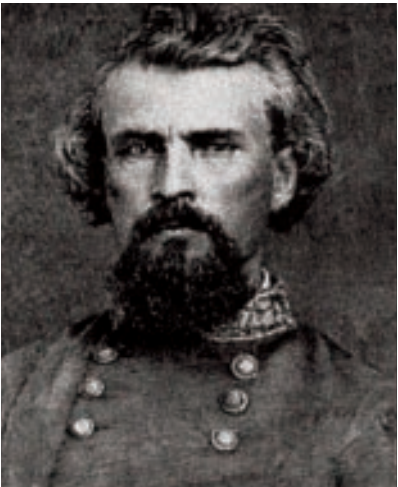
a man who cared for his charges and always avoided separating families. But a Civil War newspaper account described whippings in which four slaves held the victim stretched out in the air while Forrest personally administered the bullwhip. Women were allegedly stripped naked and whipped with a leather thong dipped in salt water. Such accounts were later backed up by former slaves who described terrifying brutality and the break-up of their families.

Forrest despised blacks who fought for the Union, and was accused by one Union general of personally shooting a captured free mulatto who was a servant of a Federal officer. A Confederate

cavalryman once recounted how Forrest “cussed [him] out” for failing to execute a captured black Union soldier. But it was the slaughter of Union forces at Fort Pillow, Tenn., that was the most damning episode of all.

After surrounding the fort, Forrest demanded surrender from the 580 men within or, he said, “I cannot be responsible for the fate of your command.” While this demand was being negotiated under the white flag, Forrest illegally improved his position, according to later Union allegations. In any event, the Union commander refused to surrender, and soon Forrest’s men were pouring over the ramparts.

“I with several others tried to stop the butchery and at one time partially succeeded, but Gen. Forrest ordered them shot down like dogs, and the carnage continued.” – Confederate sergeant



Nathan Bedford Forrest

“The slaughter was awful,” a Confederate sergeant later wrote his family. “I with several others tried to stop the butchery and at one time partially succeeded, but Gen. Forrest ordered them shot down like dogs, and the carnage continued.”

There were numerous similar accounts from Union soldiers, several of whom said they heard Confederate officers saying Forrest had ordered them to “kill the last God damn one of them.” Eventually, Forrest sympathizers produced a Union officer who said there had been no slaughter of men trying to surrender — an officer who later said that he gave a false statement under duress while in rebel captivity.

Later, as the war came to a close, Forrest found a man and a boy without papers near Selma, Ala., where he was about to lead a last-ditch defense. Although the two said they were innocent, they were executed on the spot and a sign, “SHOT FOR DESERTION,” set above their bodies. Forrest ordered the bodies left out for two days before burial. It later turned out that they had, in fact, been innocent.

After the war, Forrest returned to Memphis. He quickly became associated with hard-line resistance to Reconstruction and, secretly, he became the first leader of the national Ku Klux Klan. Although he repeatedly denied membership — even lying to Congress — Forrest in fact led the Klan through one of its most violent and successful periods, when robed terrorists succeeded in rolling back Reconstruction. He even told one newspaper reporter that while he was no member, he “intend[ed]” to kill radical Republicans. He added that he could raise 40,000 men in four days.

Forrest sympathizers have long claimed that he disbanded the Klan when it became violent. In fact, it had been extremely violent for years under Forrest, and was only disbanded when its work was essentially done — blacks and Republicans had been terrified into not voting — and when it came under intense criticism.

Nathan Bedford Forrest was certainly one of the most intriguing and colorful characters of the Civil War, and Hurst does him justice in his wide-ranging and well-written biography. But Forrest was no Robert E. Lee, and the fact that this often brutal and thuggish man has come to be lionized by today’s neo-Confederate right is remarkable indeed. Where nostalgia for the Lost Cause was once presented in the rosy light of Lee’s personality, today it is a man who was a slave trader, an apparent party to war crimes and a brutal Klan boss who represents that movement. ▲

— Mark Potok

LEGAL BRIEF

Hate On Trial

The First Amendment protects hatemongers’ racist beliefs. So how can prosecutors introduce evidence of racism at trial?

BY CATHERINE E. SMITH

When Skinhead Kevin A. Johnson got into a fight with Michael Schnelle on Sept. 1, 2002, customers at St. Louis’ Courtesy Diner witnessed anything but courtesy. Instead, patrons looked on as Johnson beat Schnelle to death outside the restaurant, spewing anti-Semitic epithets at his non-Jewish victim.

At his trial, Johnson denied making the anti-Semitic statements and argued that he acted in self-defense. The prosecutor produced witnesses who said they had heard Johnson make the statements while he beat Schnelle. The prosecutor also offered images of the defendant’s swastika and Confederate battle flag tattoos, asserting that the body art underscored the anti-Semitic nature of the crime. The Skinhead claimed he didn’t know what the symbols meant.

In the end, the jury sided with the prosecutor, finding the Skinhead guilty of second-degree murder. But his case, like so many others involving elements of racial hatred, illustrates an important legal quagmire: The First Amendment protects an individual’s right to espouse racist sentiments and to associate with others who have similar beliefs. [*See NAACP v. Alabama ex rel. Patterson*, 357 U.S. 449 (1958).] So, how is it that prosecutors can introduce such evidence during criminal trials?

Essentially, a defendant’s racist views or hate group affiliation is admissible only when connected to a legitimate trial issue. There is no *per se* barrier to the admission of evidence about a criminal defendant’s racist beliefs or hate group associations. But, to avoid penalizing a defendant on the basis of his unpopular or morally reprehensible views, the First Amendment prohibits the admission of such evidence when it has “no bearing on the issue being tried.” [*Dawson v. Delaware*, 503 U.S. 159, 168 (1992)] Three Supreme Court cases are instructive in deciding whether the evidence is admissible.

Determining Legitimate Trial Issues

In *Barclay v. Florida*, defendant Barclay and four other black men murdered a white man and pinned a racist note

Catherine E. Smith is an assistant professor at the Denver University College of Law, where she teaches a course on extremism and the law.

to his body with a knife. In assessing several aggravating factors at the penalty phase, a Florida trial judge considered Barclay’s membership in the Black Liberation Army and the group’s mission to kill white people indiscriminately and instigate a race war. [463 U.S. 939 (1983)]

Barclay claimed that the trial judge’s consideration of his racist beliefs and group membership violated his First Amendment rights. A plurality of the Supreme Court disagreed. The Black Liberation Army’s desire to start a race war, the court concluded, was relevant to three of Florida’s statutory aggravating factors. [*See Barclay*, 463 U.S. at 948-950.]

First, the fact that Barclay selected five other victims to kill for being white before settling on his ultimate victim demonstrated that the defendant posed a “great risk of death to many persons.” Second, the evidence of his beliefs and group affiliation was relevant to his intent to “disrupt or hinder the lawful exercise of a governmental function”; the notion of a race war threatened the foundation of American society, the Supreme Court said. Finally, the sentencing judge’s comparison of the racist murder to Nazi concentration camps was relevant to weighing the “especially heinous, atrocious and cruel” aggravating circumstance of the crime. [*See Id.* at 947-950.]

In *United States v. Abel*, the issue before the Court was witness credibility. Defendant Abel was convicted of bank robbery. At trial, a fellow member of the Aryan Brotherhood, a white supremacist prison gang, testified on Abel’s behalf. The government admitted evidence showing that both the defendant and witness were members of the Aryan Brotherhood, and that members were sworn to lie, cheat, steal and kill to protect each other. The Supreme Court found that the evidence of membership in the Aryan Brotherhood was admissible to demonstrate the witness’ potential bias, even if organizational membership warranted First Amendment protection. [469 U.S. 45 (1984); *see also Dawson*, 503 U.S. at 164-165]

In both Barclay and Abel, the Supreme Court found links between the admission of a defendant’s racist views or hate group affiliation and an issue at trial. This was not the case, however, in *Dawson v. Delaware*.

In Dawson, the defendant, another member of the Aryan Brotherhood, escaped from a Delaware prison and killed a white woman during his ensuing crime spree. Dawson was convicted of several crimes, including first-degree murder.

During the death penalty phase, the defense and prosecution stipulated to the admission of evidence that Dawson had “Aryan Brotherhood” tattooed on his hand, as well as a description of the Aryan Brotherhood as a “white racist prison gang that began in the 1960’s in response to other gangs of racial minorities” and that “[s]eparate gangs

CONTINUED ON PAGE 56

for the Record

Incidents of apparent hate crimes and hate group activities listed in *For The Record* are drawn primarily from media sources. These incidents include only a fraction of the approximately 10,000 hate crimes reported to the FBI each year and an even smaller proportion of the 50,000 reported and unreported hate crimes that are estimated to actually occur annually. This listing carries a selection of incidents from the third quarter of 2004 (additional listings may be found on the Southern Poverty Law Center's Web site, www.intelligenceproject.org.)

ALABAMA

Bay Minette • July 18, 2004

Christopher Ryan Gaines, 20, and Nichole Kelsay and Robert Holly Lofton Porter, both 18, were charged with capital murder in the death of their gay roommate.

Mobile • July 23, 2004

A note containing a racial slur and a threatening statement was left on the door of a house a black couple was to rent from a white couple.

Mobile • Sept. 26, 2004

A man allegedly used a chain saw to smash the side window of a Jordanian man's car and screamed racial epithets at him.

Montgomery • July 4, 2004

Fliers from the neo-Nazi National Alliance were distributed in a neighborhood.

ARKANSAS

Concord • Aug. 14, 2004

Fliers from the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan were distributed.

Conway • Sept. 16, 2004

Wesley Bono, 35, was found guilty of harassment for spreading three tons of manure on a gay pride parade route.

CALIFORNIA

Alameda • Sept. 16, 2004

Three men allegedly used racial slurs and hurled water bottles at eight Muslim students.

Antelope • Aug. 20, 2004

The letters "KKK" were spray-painted on the garage door of a Jewish couple's residence and a

swastika was spray-painted on the garage door of an African-American couple's house.

Los Angeles • Sept. 19, 2004

Several windows were broken and two rainbow flags were stolen from a gay resource center on the UCLA campus.

San Francisco • Sept. 25, 2004

Steven Holten, 40, the Nevada state leader of the neo-Nazi Aryan Nations, was charged with allegedly sending an E-mail threatening Jewish organizations, government officials and media organizations.

Victorville • Sept. 9, 2004

Christophe Tolliver, 26, a reported member of the neo-Nazi White Aryan Resistance, was charged with armed robbery for his alleged participation in the Aug. 11 robbery of three U.S. Navy sailors.

Watsonville • Aug. 27, 2004

A driver allegedly yelled slurs and threw an object at a young man because of the victim's alleged sexual orientation.

COLORADO

Lakewood Ranch • Sept. 10, 2004

Anti-immigration leaflets from the neo-Nazi National Alliance were left on doorsteps in a neighborhood.

CONNECTICUT

Bridgeport • Aug. 20, 2004

Brian W. Staehly, 18, member of the neo-Nazi Skinhead group the White Wolves, was arrested for violating probation after he was charged with robbing a jewelry store in New York.

FLORIDA

Brandon • Sept. 11, 2004

Karl Freudenberger, 23, was convicted of hate crimes for vandalizing and setting fire to a church.

Clearwater • July 13, 2004

Kyle Maskell, 18, was sentenced to 10 days in jail and two years' probation for shattering an office building window that appeared to reflect an image of the Virgin Mary.

Valrico • July 6, 2004

Three white teenagers, Damian Yeager, 15, Phillip Belcher, 14, and John Bailey, 16, were charged with spray-painting a swastika, profanities and references to the Ku Klux Klan on a black neighbor's garage and driveway.

HAWAII

Kealahou • Aug. 26, 2004

Henry Bell, 22, was charged with three counts of assault, two counts of terroristic threatening, two counts of unauthorized entry in a motor vehicle, two counts of theft, two counts of criminal property damage, rioting and resisting arrest for his alleged part in a July bias attack on campers.

IDAHO

Coeur D'Alene • July 18, 2004

About 40 members of the neo-Nazi Aryan Nations held a march.

Bloomington • Aug. 21, 2004

Kyle Lopez, 17, was charged with two counts of committing a hate crime for allegedly spitting at and berating an African-American man with racial epithets.

INDIANA

Gary • Sept. 11, 2004

A residence in a predominantly white neighborhood that was about to be occupied by a black family was set afire.

Gary • Sept. 16, 2004

Fliers from the Mystic Knights of the KKK were mailed to residences.

KANSAS

Hays • July 17, 2004

Two different fliers from the neo-Nazi National Alliance were left on driveways throughout a neighborhood.

KENTUCKY

Burlington • July 2, 2004

A burned cross was left in a black family's yard and their car windows were broken.

Louisville • Sept. 7, 2004

Literature from the Invisible Empire of the Ku Klux Klan was distributed on the University of Louisville campus.

LOUISIANA

New Orleans • Sept. 22, 2004

A 36-year-old man was stabbed several times in the side allegedly by two men who thought he was gay.

Slidell • Sept. 11, 2004

Fliers from the neo-Nazi National Alliance were put in newspapers.

St. Amant • Sept. 4, 2004

Members of the Bayou Knights of the Ku Klux Klan held a rally.

MARYLAND

Annapolis • Aug. 16, 2004

Fliers from the neo-Nazi National

Alliance were distributed throughout a neighborhood.

Mount Airy • July 1, 2004

Justin E. Wright, 20, was sentenced to one year in prison and three years of probation for his role in spray-painting racial slurs on a house in September 2003.

Sharpsburg • Aug. 28, 2004

Nine members of the World Knights of the Ku Klux Klan marched.

MASSACHUSETTS

Milford • Aug. 30, 2004

Roger Britton Jr., 33, was ordered to serve one year in jail for an assault against an Iraqi-born gas station attendant.

Milton • July 10, 2004

Fliers from the National Knights of the Ku Klux Klan were distributed throughout a neighborhood.

Newton • July 31, 2004

Literature from the neo-Nazi National Alliance was distributed throughout a neighborhood.

MICHIGAN

Grand Blanc • July 16, 2004

Fliers from the neo-Nazi National Alliance were left at residences throughout a neighborhood.

MISSISSIPPI

Columbia • Aug. 21, 2004

Fliers from the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan were distributed throughout the county.

MISSOURI

Richmond Heights • July 1, 2004

Leaflets from the neo-Nazi National Alliance were distributed in a neighborhood.

Springfield • Aug. 4, 2004

Racist Skinhead Michael Shane McCormick, 30, was sentenced to two years in state prison on a charge of third-degree assault for punching a black man in 2001.

Springfield • Aug. 10, 2004

Michael Osorio, 24, was sentenced to four years in prison for participating in the racially motivated attack of a black man at a restaurant in 2001.

Springfield • Aug. 13, 2004

Steven A. Heldenbrand, 27, was sentenced to two years and eight months in prison for attacking two black men at a restaurant. Kenneth Francis Johnsen, 27, was sentenced to four years and three months for his role in the attack.

MONTANA

Bozeman • Sept. 13, 2004

Fliers from the neo-Nazi National Alliance were distributed.

NEBRASKA

Lincoln • July 17, 2004

About 25 members of the Nationalist Socialist Movement held a rally.

Flemington • Aug. 17, 2004

Fliers from the neo-Nazi National Alliance were distributed throughout a neighborhood.

Lakewood • July 8, 2004

Frances A. Stiles, 42, was charged with bias harassment for allegedly urging children to throw pennies at a group of Jewish people. She also was charged with employing a juvenile to commit a crime.

Plainfield • July 14, 2004

Melvin Ross, 33, and Oshea Clarke, 20, were charged in separate attacks related to a string of violent robberies targeting Hispanic men.

Plainfield • Sept. 27, 2004

Dexter Pereira, 27, was charged with first-degree robbery, first-degree bias intimidation and second-degree aggravated assault for his alleged role in the June 10 beating of a Hispanic man.

NEW YORK

Bronx • Aug. 1, 2004

A man allegedly yelled anti-gay slurs

and shot another man in the back with a pellet gun.

Bronx • Aug. 21, 2004

Anti-Semitic graffiti was scrawled on a wall at a Jewish center.

Bronx • Sept. 19, 2004

Thomas Zibelli, 33, was charged with recruiting children to put hate stickers on a synagogue and at a train station.

Brooklyn • July 15, 2004

Shawn Brown, 27, was charged with menacing as a hate crime, harassment, aggravated harassment, public lewdness, exposing himself and endangering the welfare of a child for allegedly taunting a lesbian couple while exposing himself in front of their child.

Brooklyn • Aug. 9, 2004

Melvin Ashford, 37, was charged with third-degree assault, criminal possession of a weapon and aggravated assault for allegedly attacking a man while yelling anti-gay epithets.

Brooklyn • Aug. 29, 2004

A 10-year-old boy was taunted with anti-Arab slurs and then punched in the stomach.

Buffalo • July 24, 2004

Two teenage sisters were allegedly threatened and chased by a car. The car had two white females inside who allegedly yelled obscenities and made references to the teenagers' Islamic background.

Farmingville • July 13, 2004

Kyle Mahler, 18, was sentenced to one and a third to four years in prison for firebombing a Mexican-American family's home in July 2003. Derek Brandafino, 18, was sentenced to 420 hours of community service, a conditional discharge for three years and youthful offender status for his participation in the incident and William Lutz, 18, was

sentenced to 500 hours of community service and five years probation as well as youthful offender status.

Farmingville • July 26, 2004

Patrick Kelly, 37, was arrested for allegedly targeting Mexican day laborers in a series of armed robberies.

Manhattan • Aug. 5, 2004

A man yelled anti-Arab slurs at a woman of apparent Middle Eastern descent.

Manhattan • Aug. 13, 2004

A group of about eight men allegedly attacked two men they believed to be gay while yelling anti-gay slurs.

New York • Aug. 11, 2004

Brian Lydon, 45, was charged with third-degree assault and harassment for allegedly attacking a man of Middle Eastern descent while yelling "You are Muslim."

Queens • July 11, 2004

Three men allegedly beat a Sikh man into unconsciousness.

Rego Park • Aug. 4, 2004

Kevin McKenna, 35, was sentenced to five years' probation for the 2002 arson of a Korean minister's van.

Richmond Hill • July 11, 2004

Terence P. Lyons, 53, Victor J. Constentino, 58, and Nicholas Maceli, 22, were charged with a hate crime, assault and aggravated harassment for allegedly beating a Sikh man on July 11.

Staten Island • Sept. 11, 2004

Christian Rudge, 20, and Anthony Improta and Christopher Zitelli, both 19, were sentenced to four months in prison and three years of probation in a 2003 bias attack against a black woman and her friends.

Staten Island • Sept. 14, 2004

Adam Russell, 18, and his sister Nicole, 19, were charged with second-degree

assault and aggravated harassment in a September 2003 incident where 15 young white people allegedly yelled racial epithets and attacked a black youth and her friends.

West Village • July 5, 2004
Two men were assaulted by a group of 10 to 12 men who shouted anti-gay slurs at them.

NORTH CAROLINA
Dunn • Aug. 19, 2004
The letters “KKK” were spray-painted on a black family’s residence. A

racial slur was also found on a white man’s house.

OHIO
Cincinnati • Aug. 27, 2004
Nearly 100 monuments were toppled and shattered at the front gate of a Jewish cemetery.

OREGON
Lake Oswego • Aug. 5, 2004
Francis Lawrence Faragalli, Joseph S. Colett and Jess Michael Andrews, all 18, were charged with burning a 15-foot cross into the lawn of a

Jewish family in June.

Troutdale • Aug. 14, 2004
Racist fliers from the Tualatin Valley Skins were distributed.

PENNSYLVANIA
Philadelphia • Sept. 7, 2004
Two crosses were burned in the yard of an interracial couple.

Valley Forge • Sept. 25, 2004
About 100 white supremacists attended a rally sponsored by the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement.

TENNESSEE
Lebanon • Sept. 22, 2004
Fliers from the neo-Nazi National Alliance were distributed throughout two neighborhoods.

TEXAS
El Paso • Sept. 20, 2004
Antonio Flores, 57, was charged with arson and weapons charges after he allegedly tossed a makeshift firebomb at children playing outside an Islamic daycare center.

Grand Prairie • Sept. 19, 2004
Amman Reich, 43, was charged with first-degree murder for allegedly ramming his vehicle into another vehicle, killing one passenger, while yelling racial slurs.

Jasper • Sept. 8, 2004
Joshua Talley, 19, pleaded guilty to criminal mischief in connection with the desecration of the grave of James Byrd, a black man who was dragged to death by three white men in 1998.

League City • Aug. 4, 2004
Darren Christopher Gay and Shawn Michael Reagan, both 21, and Donald Roy Bockman, 24, and a 16-year-old juvenile were charged with aggravated sexual assault and aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon for allegedly assaulting and robbing a gay man in July.

VERMONT
Brattleboro • Aug. 4, 2004
A racist flier from the white supremacist group European-American Unity and Rights Organization was left in a yard.

Guilford • Aug. 1, 2004
The words “AIDS” and “Fag” were carved into the tombstone of Ron Squires, the first openly gay Vermont state legislator, who died of AIDS in 1993.

VIRGINIA
Virginia Beach • July 6, 2004
Richard Elliot was ordered to serve a 90-day sentence for trying to burn a cross in an interracial couple’s yard in 1998.

Williamsburg • July 12, 2004
Fliers from the neo-Nazi National Alliance were distributed in six neighborhoods.

WASHINGTON
Edmonds • July 8, 2004
A cross was burned in the front lawn of a family of Middle Eastern descent.

Seattle • July 16, 2004
Vadim Samusenko, 20, and David Kravchenko, 19, were each charged with first-degree assault and malicious harassment for allegedly beating and stabbing a gay man.

Tacoma • Sept. 23, 2004
Tristain Frye, 23, was sentenced to 13 years and nine months in prison for her role in the hate-related murder of a homeless man in March 2003.

WISCONSIN
Madison • Sept. 24, 2004
Jeffrey Scheidegger, 20, and Jeffrey Jalinski, 19, were charged with hate crime enhancers and bail jumping for allegedly brandishing a replica of a human skull at passersby while yelling, “Speak English. The last couple that didn’t speak English, this is their head” at an Asian couple. ▲

THE LAST WORD

Pants-demonium

‘Unregistered churches’ activists gathered recently to denounce the government. But it was women in pants who really got their goat

BY SUSY BUCHANAN

GREENWOOD, Ind. — The 20th annual Unregistered Baptist Fellowship, an antigovernment gathering held each October near Indianapolis, Ind., draws some of the country’s most radical religious “Patriots.” But this year, discussion of classic villains like tax collectors and federal agents took a back seat to a much more pressing issue — ladies in pants.

Unregistered Baptists believe the government has no place anywhere near a church, and many of them routinely break the law to prove their faith. In 2001, following a three-month standoff, federal agents raided the Indianapolis Baptist Temple, host of the conference, and seized the church building as compensation for 17 years of unpaid withholding taxes. It was all part of “Satan’s master plan to destroy the Lord’s church,” Pastor Emeritus Gregory J. Dixon says.

The scheduled highlight of this year’s conference, held in a reception hall adjacent to a family restaurant, was to be a speech by former Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Moore, deposed for refusing a federal court order to remove his two-ton Ten Commandments monument from the Supreme Court rotunda. The appearance was hyped all week by the presence of Moore’s exiled monument on a flatbed truck in the parking lot. But it was the Rev. W.N. Otwell, speaking before Moore despite recent heart surgery, who really stole the show.

Otwell, an ardent segregationist and militia supporter who heads God Said Ministries in Mount Enterprise, Texas, began his opening-night remarks by berating the women in the audience, one of them dressed as Betsy Ross, for not living a true Christian life. Being saved doesn’t

make you a Christian, he told them in a voice as powerful and angry as his battered body could muster. Women were to take care of the home, raise children, and be completely subservient to their husbands, Otwell lectured. “My wife doesn’t need a head,” he shouted. “I’m the head!”

His audience was with him. “Good preaching!” a man yelled as Otwell outlined a holy dress code he claims is based on



Roy Moore, the “Ten Commandments judge,” smiles alongside Rev. W.N. Otwell, who once told a reporter that whites are superior to blacks because “God uses the white race as leaders.”

Scripture. The Bible, which predates pants by several years, says a “woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man” (Deuteronomy 22:5). Which means, Otwell explained, that the Lord doesn’t want women to cut or dye their hair, and never wants to see a woman in pants. Otwell described pants-wearing women as “dyke-ish” and “cross-dressers.” After holding forth for a full hour, Otwell ordered anyone who felt they’d sinned to come forward to the stage and pray in front of the Plexiglas pulpit. The first one up was Bonnie Kukla, a middle-aged gospel singer with flaming orange hair who sank to her knees in front of Otwell as the congregation prayed. The two women in the audience wearing pants stayed seated.

While outside in the parking lot the Ten Commandments monument gener-

ated about as much interest as a bowl of cold oatmeal, discussion of Otwell’s edict against pants reverberated inside the reception hall. The day after Otwell’s anti-pants sermon, Ken Barber, an ex-con who claims to have been electrocuted, showed full support for Otwell’s viewpoint. “The Bible says women are supposed to celebrate their womanliness,” he explained to a colleague before taking the stage to sing original gospel tunes and discuss his prison ministry. Barber made a point of publicly declaring that his daughters had never worn pants a day in their lives, then searched the faces in the crowd for Otwell’s scowling approval.

One dissenting voice, evangelist Don Boys, later took the stage to criticize Otwell’s “haughtiness” and self-righteous proselytizing, and to make a plea for moderation. Boys argued there were more important issues to be discussed than pants — like, say, gluttony, which appeared to be a more common sin among this crowd. But Otwell was having none of it, and erupted from his seat in outrage. “I maintain my position,” he told the crowd angrily. For a brief moment, it seemed that Boys and Otwell would settle the matter with a preach-off, but Boys quickly took his seat, turned his back on Otwell, and effectively skirted the issue.

Boys’ crusade against obesity didn’t catch on, and conference-goers seemed quite comfortable adding women in pants to a list of unholy things that includes the federal government, abortion providers, the American Civil Liberties Union, communists, “sodomites,” baby snipers, smokers, trick-or-treaters, Mennonites, hip-hop, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, policewomen, John Kerry, R-rated movies, the Internal Revenue Service, Mormons and Satan.

So much sin, so little time. Perhaps they’ll get to gluttons next year. ▲

Hate on Trial CONTINUED FROM PAGE 53

calling themselves the Aryan Brotherhood now exist in many state prisons including Delaware.” Upon completion of the aggravating and mitigating testimony, Dawson was sentenced to death. [*Dawson*, 503 U.S. at 161-162.]

Dawson appealed his sentence, claiming the admission of evidence about his affiliation with the Aryan Brotherhood violated his First Amendment right of association. The Supreme Court agreed. Racial hatred was irrelevant to Dawson’s crime, the court concluded, because the murder of the white victim wasn’t spawned by racial animus. Furthermore, the prosecution failed to prove that the Delaware Aryan Brotherhood had committed any unlawful or violent acts, which may have been relevant to an aggravating circumstance, such as the future dangerousness of the defendant. Finally, the evidence, as stipulated, failed to rebut mitigating character evidence submitted by Dawson — that he was kind to his family members and an active participant in prison drug and alcohol programs.

The Supreme Court concluded that the jurors’ consideration of Dawson’s beliefs and gang affiliation in the abstract, without any connection to an issue at trial, allowed them to punish him based solely on their revulsion for his racist beliefs and Aryan Brotherhood membership, violating his First Amendment rights.

For prosecutors and other legal practitioners wrangling with criminal cases involving hatemongers, the Supreme Court has made its threshold clear: Evidence of a criminal defendant’s racist beliefs or hate group affiliation may be admitted at trial, but the evidence must be relevant to a legitimate issue before the court. Prosecutors can use such evidence to prove motive, witness bias or an aggravating circumstance, but can’t trample on the First Amendment for hate’s sake alone. ▲

SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

Promoting Tolerance, Monitoring Hate, Seeking Justice



Promoting Tolerance

Teaching Tolerance is an education program dedicated to helping teachers across the nation foster respect and understanding among their students. Its award-winning *Teaching Tolerance* magazine provides practical ideas for promoting an appreciation of diversity and the values of democracy and is distributed free twice a year to more than 500,000 educators. More than 300,000 of the program's video-and-text kits and anti-bias handbooks have been distributed free of charge to schools and community groups across the country.

Tolerance.org is a Web project that awakens people to the problems of hate and intolerance, prompts them to action and encourages them to dig deeper.



Monitoring Hate

The Intelligence Project monitors more than 700 hate groups and tracks extremist activity throughout the United States. It provides comprehensive updates to law enforcement, the media and the general public through its quarterly magazine, *Intelligence Report*. Staff members regularly conduct training for police, schools, and civil rights and community groups.

The Center, in partnership with a major university and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, offers an Internet hate crime training course for law enforcement officers throughout the nation.



Seeking Justice

Center attorneys handle innovative cases that few lawyers are willing to take. They fight all forms of discrimination and work to protect society's most vulnerable members. Several of the Center's cases have reached the U.S. Supreme Court, and many have resulted in landmark rulings.

The Center uses novel legal strategies to combat hate groups by suing them for the violent actions of their members. Its victories against several notorious Klan and neo-Nazi groups effectively shut down their operations.

The Center never accepts money from those it helps, and it receives no government funding. Its work is supported by thousands of committed individuals.

VISIT US ON THE WEB

www.splcenter.org • www.tolerance.org • www.teachingtolerance.org