

THE FISCHER FILES AMERICAN FAMILY ASSOCIATION SPOKESMAN SPOUTS HATE



Intelligence Report

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PLUS

Officials Struggle to Cope
With Swelling 'Sovereign' Movement

Neo-Confederate Rhetoric
Turns to Armed Struggle

Extremists are moving to Montana
for a last stand they liken to the Alamo
**'A Gathering
of Eagles'**

The Rhetoric of War

BY MARK POTOK



SOMETHING IS HAPPENING ON the radical right. Even as the presidential campaign season heats up and, with it, the possibility of ridding themselves of their hated black president, extremists are ratcheting up the rhetoric of war.

The League of the South, for instance, has long been threatening a second Southern secession with the aim of creating a separate nation ruled by an “Anglo-Celtic”

majority. But the talk was mainly academic, and the league’s political efforts never seemed to go anywhere.

Now, league president Michael Hill is telling his followers that “we are already at war” and urging them to buy AK-47s, hollow-point bullets and tools to derail trains. At its July conference, some 60 league members learned how to draw down on an enemy. Asked Hill: “What would it take to get you to fight?”

William Gheen, the leader of the nativist group Americans for Legal Immigration PAC, said this August that in order to save “white America” from “dictator Barack Obama,” it may be necessary to engage in “extra-political activities that I can’t really talk about because they’re all illegal and violent.”

Sounding a similar note was former Fox News host Glenn Beck, who told his radio audience the same month that if Obama were to lose the 2012 election, his administration “will try to destroy America” on its way out. He said the next president would have to be willing to sacrifice his life to resist Obama’s nefarious plans. “I firmly believe race riots are on the way,” Beck added.

Similar sentiments are emerging among many radical groups and activists. But it may be in Montana where these developments are most striking.

In this issue’s cover story, we describe how radicals of various stripes — neo-Nazis, self-described constitutionalists, antigovernment “Patriots” and others — are retreating to the Big Sky State, also known as “the last, best place.” With varying emphases, many of these men and women are hunkering down for a last stand that one of them compares to the Battle of the Alamo.

“We know there’s a fight coming,” said Chuck Baldwin, the 2008 presidential candidate of the far-right Constitution Party who moved to the state with 18 family members a year ago. “We know there is a line being drawn in the sand.”

In June, militia activist Dave Burgert allegedly fired shots

at a Montana sheriff’s deputy before fleeing into a national forest. In September, neo-Nazi activist Karl Gharst threatened to convene a “citizens grand jury” to investigate “Jewish criminal organizations,” including the Southern Poverty Law Center. The same month, another well-known neo-Nazi, April Gaede, told *Intelligence Report* writer Ryan Lenz, who tried to interview her for our Montana story, that she was getting her gun if he didn’t leave immediately. Gaede has been imploring “white nationalists” to “come home” to Montana, a state that is nearly 90% white and a mere 0.4% black.

A siege mentality is developing, fraught with conspiracy theories that have long animated the radical right. Baldwin says he is fervently hoping for victory, “[b]ut if not, I would rather die fighting for Freedom with liberty-loving patriots by my side than be shuttled off to some FEMA camp.”

As the war rhetoric heats up, some formerly unlikely alliances are being made. The Constitution Party and Baldwin, for instance, are not known for open racism, although Baldwin argues that leaders of the Confederacy were not racist and “the South was right.” But Baldwin’s new Montana church, Liberty Fellowship, includes in its swelling congregation Randy Weaver, the white supremacist and occasional visitor to the Aryan Nations’ Idaho compound who was in a famous 1992 standoff.

An enormous fury seems to be developing in other sectors of the extreme right as well. The American Family Association (AFA) is a well-known group with a \$20 million budget that rails against “indecent” in the media and, especially, homosexuality. In recent months, after saying that Obama “nurtures a hatred for the white man,” AFA’s best-known spokesman, Bryan Fischer, suggested that welfare was incentivizing black “people who rut like rabbits.”

What’s going on with all this white-hot rhetoric?

It’s hard to say. But it does seem possible that many of these people, like Baldwin and Fischer, sense that they are losing the big battle. Growing majorities of Americans now favor same-sex marriage and other gay rights. Neo-Nazism, neo-Confederacy and other forms of explicit white nationalism are not doing well. The Tea Parties may have offered some hope to the far right early on, but they, too, seem to be fading.

Now, with the Republican presidential debates producing no clear favorite or obviously strong candidate, many on the extreme right may be hunkering down for another four years under a relatively liberal black president. And that may be simply too much for them to bear. ▲

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Montana, a state with a long tradition of rugged independence and suspicion of the federal government, was one of the key places where the militia movement of the 1990s was born. More than 15 years later, antigovernment “Patriots,” self-described constitutionalists and neo-Nazis are among those who are gathering there for a last stand that one extremist leader likened recently to the Battle of the Alamo.



12 New Soldiers of the Confederacy

When it was started in 1994, the League of the South was basically a club for white intellectuals who resented the way the American South was being treated. But it soon morphed into an explicitly racist group. Now, some group principals are sounding increasingly militant, training with weapons and talking of “war.”



22 The Fischer Files

In 2009, the American Family Association, a group that battles “indecentcy” in the media, hired a man named Bryan Fischer, who has since become known as one of the most vitriolic gay-bashers in the country. Fischer’s rise to prominence, it turns out, began years before in Idaho, enabled by opportunistic politicians and a gullible media.



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The movement of “sovereign citizens,” people who believe they’re not subject to most laws or taxes, has exploded since 2008. Now, in the wake of the murder of two police officers by sovereigns, law enforcement and other agencies are working to effectively counter what most see as a serious and growing threat.

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LAW ENFORCEMENT INQUIRIES WELCOMED

The Intelligence Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) welcomes law enforcement inquiries regarding right-wing extremists and hate groups. Please direct questions during normal business hours to Joseph Roy Sr. via the SPLC's general number, (334) 956-8200.





ANTIGOVERNMENT EXTREMISM

Conspiracy Theorists: 'Whites Are the New Al Qaeda'

Proving yet again that a black president is simply too much for some of them to handle, three right-wing conspiracy theorists in July and August broadcast racially charged hypotheses about supposed federal government plots to keep the white man down.

First came Alex Jones, who has done more than anybody to popularize the theory that the government was complicit in the 9/11 attacks. On July 18, he featured on his website, Infowars, an article that characterized the Department of Homeland Security's year-old "If you see something, say something" terrorism-awareness campaign as a racist conspiracy to

"characterize predominantly white, middle class, politically engaged Americans as domestic extremists."

The program, which actually encourages people to consider "behavior, rather than appearance" when considering whether to report suspicious activity, entails a series of public service announcements designed to drive home that point. What piqued Jones was a 10-minute PSA in which most of the "terrorists" are white, while the citizens who report their suspicious activities are all minorities. He milked the issue for at least a month. "What do you think of [DHS] rebranding that the terrorists aren't Al Qaeda anymore?" he said on

Three figures on the far right — conspiracy mongering radio hosts Alex Jones (from left) and Glenn Beck, along with nativist leader William Gheen — recently suggested that the Obama Administration is targeting whites, who Beck described as "the new Al Qaeda."

his Aug. 18 radio show. "It's that veteran, it's that gun owner, it's that farmer ... it's that white person. Whites are the new Al Qaeda."

Jones may have brought a few fellow travelers along with him. In an Aug. 22 appearance on far-right radio host Janet Mefferd's show, William Gheen, head of the nativist extremist Americans for Legal Immigration PAC (ALIPAC), speculated that DHS was preparing for a race war. They're "putting out videos and propaganda telegraphing what I believe to be a conflict with white America they're preparing for after they get another 10 or 15 million people in the country to back them up," he said. To

HATE IN THE MAINSTREAM

“There’s 12 flight attendants. ... Eleven fucking over-the-top fucking ass-fucking homosexuals and a granny.”

— Southwest Airlines pilot **JAMES TAYLOR**, in a March 25 rant accidentally broadcast to air traffic controllers that became public on **June 21**, resulting in Taylor’s temporary suspension and public apology

“[W]e are going to have an HIV epidemic if this passes.”

— **SAM TROMBLEY**, a GOP legislator from Clinton County, N.Y., discussing that state’s bill legalizing same-sex marriage on **June 22**, two days before it passed

“[T]he homosexual movement is the tip of the spear. They’re the ones ... trying to tear down the moral fiber of America.”

— Oklahoma GOP State Rep. **SALLY KERN**, on **July 27**, promoting her new book *The Stoning of Sally Kern* on American Family Radio

“So far as what’s happening is concerned and who’s making it happen, I’m on the same page as Anders Breivik.”

— Columnist **JOHN DERBYSHIRE**, giving a nod to a Norwegian mass murderer of perceived liberals in a **July 29** *National Review* podcast and arguing that the “ethnic masochism” of “leftist white elites” is a threat to “European civilization”

“I think the Antichrist is Islam.”

— Evangelical **PAT ROBERTSON**, the founder of the Christian Coalition, during an **Aug. 22** broadcast of his “The 700 Club”

“One of the reasons that God brings earthquakes to the world is because of the transgression of homosexuality.”

— Rabbi **YEHUDA LEVIN**, who has also blamed gay people for 9/11 and a Haitian earthquake, in an **Aug. 23** YouTube video discussing the earthquake that rattled the East Coast that day

“[I]f you love Mexico, bitch, get the fuck over there!”

— Comedian **KATT WILLIAMS**, arguing with a Latino heckler during a standup performance in Phoenix on **Aug. 27**

“The ground zero mosque will offer courses in Shariah Law and will doubtless spawn hundreds of new terrorists eager to pick up where the 9-11 hijackers left off.”

— Political commentators **DICK MORRIS** and **EILEEN MCGANN**, in an **Aug. 29** blog post at dickmorris.com, attacking an Islamic center in lower Manhattan without any supporting evidence at all

“Melanin is thicker than water.”

— Conservative radio host **RUSH LIMBAUGH**, asserting on **Aug. 29** that former Secretary of State Colin Powell, who in 2008 crossed party lines to support Barack Obama but has not said if he will do so again, will vote for the president in 2012

QUOTES ON THIS PAGE WERE COMPILED FROM MEDIA ACCOUNTS, WEB PAGES, E-MAIL GROUPS AND MEDIA MATTERS FOR AMERICA, A GROUP THAT MONITORS THE FAR RIGHT.

save the country from “dictator Barack Obama,” he said, it may be necessary to engage in “extra-political activities that I can’t really talk about because they’re all illegal and violent.”

After a barrage of criticism for appearing to promote violence, Gheen vainly attempted to backpedal. He posted on his website a “clarification” that read, in part, “What peaceful and political hope do we have for any future border or immigration enforcement in America? Those responsible for this well organized invasion and betrayal of the American citizenry know the answer to that ... NONE!” Offered a further opportunity to explain himself, Gheen admitted to radio host Alan Colmes, “I should have prepared my comments [on Mefferd’s show] a bit better” — but only “so they would not be exploited by my political opposition.”

In the meantime, veteran fear-monger Glenn Beck on Aug. 11 offered a racially charged vision of the 2012 election. Discussing the prospects of various Republican presidential candidates, Beck said that if President Obama loses to a Republican next year, the Administration will try to destroy America on its way out the door. “The next president needs to be willing to sacrifice his life, because the choices the next president is going to have to face is [sic] going to be awful,” said Beck, in a rant that was quickly picked up by the white supremacist Council of Conservative Citizens. “I firmly believe race riots are on the way.”

TERRORISM

Neo-Nazi Pleads Guilty in Attempted MLK Day Bombing

The white supremacist who last January planted a backpack bomb along the route of a Martin Luther King Jr. Day unity parade in Spokane, Wash., pleaded guilty on Sept. 7 in federal court, five days before his trial was set to begin.

Concluding a complex investigation, FBI agents identified Kevin William

Harpham, 37, through bomb component receipts, deleted photographs and a DNA match.

Harpham, a man with past ties to the neo-Nazi National Alliance and the racist Vanguard News Network, agreed to plead guilty to charges of attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction and using that weapon to carry out a hate crime.

Prosecutors called the bombing attempt an act of domestic terrorism by the unemployed electrician and former U.S. Army ordnance technician. "Mr. Harpham has told others he is a white supremacist and a white separatist," Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph Harrington, the lead prosecutor, told the court.

Sentencing was set for Nov. 30. Harpham could have been sentenced to life in prison if convicted on all four counts in the indictment. As part of a 16-page plea agreement, he faces a sentencing range of 27 to 32 years.

Harpham told the court he acted alone and that it took a month to build the bomb — which, once defused, became a windfall of physical evidence.

The improvised explosive device, which meets the federal definition of a "weapon of mass destruction," was made out of six-inch-long steel pipe packed with 100 grams of black powder and surrounded by 128 fishing weights dipped in brodifacoum, an anticoagulant and active ingredient in rat poisons. A model rocket igniter was hooked to two 6-volt lantern batteries. The triggering system consisted of a remote car starter/alarm receiver that FBI agents confirmed Harpham purchased over the Internet.

Once the FBI crime lab identified the type of quarter-ounce fishing weights used in the device, agents contacted a Wal-Mart store in Colville, near Harpham's home, and learned from computer records that the store "had an unusually high amount of the weights sold during a one-week period in November 2010." FBI



agents also retrieved records showing Harpham bought a digital camera on Nov. 15, the prosecutor said. On its memory card were traces of several dozen deleted photos taken during the MLK parade; they included pictures of Harpham and his intended victims.

Michael Ormsby, the U.S. attorney for Eastern Washington, said the case was solved through solid investigative work by the Inland Northwest Joint Terrorism Task Force and other police agencies. "There was no 'aha' moment," he said. "It was a giant jigsaw puzzle, put together by the FBI and other police agencies."

Harpham was just the third person to be charged with a federal hate crime under the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009.

WHITE NATIONALISM

Pop-Singing Gaede Twins Renounce Racism

Lynx and Lamb Gaede were twin pop sensations for all the wrong reasons. Their songs dealt with overt white nationalist themes, and even their band, Prussian Blue, was a reference to the distinctive color of Zyklon B residue in the Nazi gas chambers. In one of the most infamous photos from their childhood, the girls posed in white T-shirts with a smiley face adorned with Hitler's toothbrush mustache and neatly parted, jet-black hair.

That's all over, the girls told *The Daily*, an online publication, in July.

Lynx and Lamb — once described as the "new face of hate" — say they've abandoned the racism foisted on them by their mother, neo-Nazi activist April Gaede, and instead settled into "a place of love and light."

"I'm glad we were in the band," Lynx said. "But I think we should have been pushed toward something a little

more mainstream and easier for us to handle than being front-men for a belief system that we didn't completely understand." Lamb put their transformation more bluntly: "I'm not a white nationalist anymore."

The girls' career began in the company of the National Alliance (NA), which was for decades the most dangerous and best organized neo-Nazi formation in America. In 2003, when Lynx and Lamb



Then and now: Lynx and Lamb Gaede, daughters of neo-Nazi activist April Gaede, had their first brush with fame in 2005, when ABC News' "20/20" featured them as 14-year-old twins who worshipped Hitler. Six years later, the girls, struggling with health problems, say they're more into marijuana and tolerance.

turned 9, their mother was a prominent member of the NA and began heavily promoting the twins as the young face of white nationalism. While they toured the racist circuit in America and Europe, she kept them out of public school and used pre-civil rights-era textbooks to support a curriculum heavy on Holocaust denial and racial pseudoscience.

For the past five years, Lynx and Lamb have been outside the lime-light because of health problems. Lynx was diagnosed with cancer during her freshman year of high school, and doctors removed a large tumor from her shoulder. She now suffers from a rare condition called cyclic vomiting syndrome (CVS). Lamb suffers from scoliosis and chronic back pain. They each carry state-issued medical marijuana cards in Montana, where they live with their mother. “I have to say, marijuana saved my life,” Lynx said. “I would probably be dead if I didn’t have it.”

April Gaede, who was reared in central California by ardent white nationalists — including a father who branded his horse and cattle with a swastika — blamed the girls’ defections on the whims of youth. “They’re 19,” she told *The Daily*. “When they have children of their own, they’ll come to the same conclusions I have.”

Chatting with friends on Facebook the day after *The Daily* piece came out, Gaede suggested that her daughters were professing a change of heart simply to scam the Jews. “The girls are using the Jews [sic] media to make bank as usual. If they had done anything else they would not have gotten any attention.”

Amid sympathetic messages from Gaede’s white nationalist friends, a Facebook commenter identifying herself as hard-line Arizona nativist Laine Lawless focused on the practical, reminding Gaede to be sure she was paid for any photos used by the media.

“Better to make the judenpresse [German for Jewish media] PAY for pix than to give them away,” Lawless wrote. “Don’t just hand stuff over to them ... make them PAY. It’s THEIR WAY; they can understand it.”

ANTI-LATINO HATE

Anti-Latino Hate Crimes Spike in California

Anti-Latino hate crimes in California spiked up by almost 50% last year, the state’s attorney general’s office reported on Aug. 11. The increase, from 81 such crimes in 2009 to 119 in 2010, followed a decade of declines.

The numbers may be indicative of a renewed national rise in hate crimes directed at Latinos, who are often assumed to be undocumented immigrants. Nationally, FBI hate crime statistics showed a 40% rise in such crimes between 2003 and 2007, but that was followed by decreases in 2008 and 2009. The national numbers for the year 2010 are not expected to be released until November of this year.

The national hate crime numbers are notoriously sketchy, providing only a rough indication of trends. However, many experts consider California particularly good at reporting hate crimes, so that state’s statistics are considered much more accurate than those in other states. California, along with Arizona, has been the scene of much conflict between native Americans and immigrants, and if that conflict is heating up there, a similar pattern may be developing nationally.

California officials also reported that the number of hate crimes directed at black people, the LGBT community and Jews declined in 2010 from the year before.

The apparent national rise in anti-Latino hate crime between 2003 and 2007 coincided with virulent anti-immigrant rhetoric from mainstream media and political figures like then-CNN host Lou Dobbs and then-Congressman Tom Tancredo (R-Colo.). If a second national spike in hate crimes against Latinos has occurred since then, it’s not clear why.

An increasing proportion of the nativist invective of the last couple of years has been directed at Muslims.

In a related study—based not on police reports but rather on questionnaires sent to a statistically representative sample of the population—the Department of Justice in June estimated there was an average of about 195,000 hate crime victimizations per year from 2003 to 2009. An earlier DOJ study using the same methodology, considered far more accurate than the hate crime statistics reported to the FBI each year, found an average of 210,000 hate crime victimizations each year between 2000 and 2003. That apparent decline followed the national pattern of generally declining violent crime.

NEO-NAZIS

Out of Prison, Bill White Finds Way Around Court Order

Bill White, the neo-Nazi Internet threat-maker and former head of the American National Socialist Workers Party, is out of prison and up to his old tricks.



Neo-Nazi ex-con Bill White was forbidden to post on the Internet as a condition of his parole. So he started writing for the anti-Semitic publication *American Free Press*, which then promptly posted White’s articles online.

After serving time for earlier offenses, White was released in April on the condition that he refrain from participating in “any Internet related

business or hobby involving a website, and the posting of any information on any website.” He had been found guilty in late 2009 of threatening several people through intimidating phone calls and Internet postings.

Now, in an apparent end-run around the court’s restriction on his activities, White is relying on old-fashioned ink-and-paper media to spread his hateful beliefs. His outlet of choice is *American Free Press*, an anti-Semitic weekly that bills itself as “America’s Last Real Newspaper.” Since May 23, White has contributed at least eight articles to the racist publication founded by Holocaust denier Willis Carto. Those articles are then published in the paper’s online version.

According to correspondence obtained by the Southern Poverty Law Center, White has also waded back into the real estate business — apparently going back to his pre-prison routine of buying up cheap properties, renovating them and renting them out. In mid-July, he posted an advertisement on Craigslist seeking a property manager and real estate manager in Roanoke, Va.

The SPLC obtained a copy of the message White sent to those who responded: “First, I am ‘the’ Bill White that people like to make noise about. If this is a problem for you, let me know and I am not offended. Much if not most of what you have likely read about me is untrue, but I have no desire to engage in a discussion over it.” The rest of the E-mail is a job description and information about the company. White claims he represents a group of investors who, starting with a handful of properties, hope over the next two years to put up \$10 million and buy 100 or more buildings.

White is no stranger to the real estate game. He began buying up properties in 2004, accumulating houses and apartment buildings in a largely black neighborhood for what he called his “ghetto improvement project.” His reported pattern of improving the distressed properties, raising rents, and, often, booting out original residents who could no longer afford to stay led the local Legal Aid Society to file

complaints with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Tenants at the time also claimed White walked around their neighborhood armed with a shotgun and tried to intimidate them by saying the Klan was coming to “regulate” the area.

ANTI-MUSLIM HATE

9/11 Anniversary Sparks Hate Crimes Against Muslims

It wasn’t much of a surprise, after more than a year of heated anti-Muslim rhetoric, that the 10th anniversary of 9/11 brought out some of the worst in American bigotry. Apparent hate crimes linked to the event were reported in **North Carolina, New York, Texas and California.**

Hate crimes directed at Muslims and Arabs shot up by more than 1,600% immediately after Al Qaeda’s attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, killed nearly 3,000 Americans in **New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania.** Between three and eight persons were murdered — the number remains in dispute — in hate killings in the aftermath of the attacks, several of them Sikhs apparently mistaken for Muslims. But anti-Muslim hate crimes dropped by almost two-thirds in 2002, in large part because President George W. Bush repeatedly emphasized that Muslims and Arabs were not the enemy. Anti-Muslim hate crimes continued to diminish, to about one-fifth the 2001 level, until 2009, the latest year for which national hate crimes statistics are available.

In the last year, however, propaganda from activists and politicians has vilified Muslims. More than a dozen states have taken up proposals to pass laws against the imposition of Islamic Shariah law — laws that are completely unnecessary, given that the

Constitution prohibits using foreign law, but that have had the effect of ginning up anger against Muslims.

Some of the recent hate attacks include:

- On Sept. 7, unknown arsonists set fire to a rural grocery store in **Clay County, N.C.**, that reportedly was owned by a Sikh family. Left behind was spray-painted graffiti, “911 Go Home.” Authorities were investigating the arson attack as an apparent hate crime.

- On Sept. 10, a Muslim imam in **Bronx, N.Y.**, received a partially burned Koran at his mosque. The package also contained cartoons suggesting anti-Muslim hatred, according to reports.



Ten years later: A rash of hate crimes aimed at Muslims marked the anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, Al Qaeda attacks. The last big spike in anti-Muslim hate crimes came immediately after 9/11.

- On the anniversary itself, a Muslim man went to a **Houston** bar called Petrol Station and ordered a hamburger to go. When he was given the to-go box, said Tarek Ghalayani, “Happy September 11th” was written on it, with the 11 formed by a drawing of the World Trade Center towers.



One more victim: Kamaljit Atwal holds a picture of his father, one of two elderly Sikhs gunned down in California this year in a suspected anti-Muslim hate crime.

Ghalayani said he and a friend were called “assholes” by a bartender, who was reportedly later fired.

• On Sept. 14, arsonists hit a dry cleaning business in **Orangevale, Calif.**, leaving behind a scrawled swastika and the words “fuck Arab.” The owners, Arab Christians, suffered some \$60,000 in damage to their business. The FBI was investigating the attack as a hate crime.

• Also in **California**, police in **Elk Grove** still have made no arrests in the double murder of two elderly Sikh men in March. Both men, shot while walking down the street, were wearing traditional Sikh turbans, which have caused some Americans to mistake Sikhs for Muslims.

WHITE NATIONALISM

Radical Campus Group Forges Ties to Southern Hate Group

Youth for Western Civilization (YWC), an ultraconservative student group, has long cultivated relationships with white nationalist organizations. Now, the group appears to be forging ties with the League of the South (LOS), a neo-Confederate hate group that

advocates a second Southern secession and a society dominated by “European Americans.” The league believes that the “godly” nation it forms should be run by “Anglo-Celtic” (read white) elites who would establish a Christian theocratic state and politically dominate non-white people. Its leader, Michael Hill, opposes racial intermarriage and has denounced egalitarianism as a “Jacobin” leftist doctrine that undermines healthy societies.

Matthew Heimbach, a member of the league’s Maryland division who attended the League’s recent annual conference in Abbeville, S.C., appears in a video uploaded to YouTube on July 29 with another, unnamed Maryland LOS member, who says the Maryland chapter of the LOS will be working with YWC. He also states that YWC has “similar principles as us and similar goals.”



JUNE 18, 2011 • COLUMBUS, OHIO

For years, the racist skinhead coalition Hammerskin Nation was in a “blood feud” with a Midwestern skinhead outfit known as the Vinlanders Social Club (VSC), which had the effrontery to challenge the Hammerskins’ once legendary dominance of the national skinhead scene. But there were more Internet threats and name-calling than actual physical confrontations, and in 2007 VSC co-founder Brien James (see also related interview, p. 28) announced that the two clubs had been in meetings and settled their differences. This summer, the VSC held its first-ever white power concert, entitled “Plunder and Pillage,” drawing more than 50 racist skins to Ohio from around the country. A photo taken at the concert shows the VSC’s James (left picture, at right) drinking cheerfully with Richie Meyer, president of the Confederate Hammerskins, one of the regional groups that make up the Hammerskin Nation — proof that the truce has held up for four years now. Other photos showed (center photo, from left) Vinlanders Ryan Verkennis of Minnesota, James and Lance Roeder of Arizona, and (right photo, from left) James shaking hands with Forrest Fogarty, a high-ranking Confederate Hammerskin. Fogarty is the lead singer of the band Attack!, which played the concert.

Updates on Extremism and The Law

JUNE 15 Two men with no apparent connection to international terrorism pleaded not guilty to charges they planned to disguise themselves as Hasidic Jews in order to blow up a **New York City** synagogue. Ahmed Ferhani, who moved to the United States from Algeria, and Mohamed Mamdouh, a U.S. citizen from Morocco, were arrested after New York City police uncovered their alleged plot.



Ahmed Ferhani (left) and Mohamed Mamdouh are both U.S. citizens. But officials say that didn't stop them from planning a jihadist attack on a New York City synagogue.

JUNE 17 Eric Fairburn, a racist skinhead musician who co-founded the white supremacist **Vinlanders Social Club**, pleaded guilty to murder in the shooting death of William McDaniel, 57, in **Springfield, Mo.** He was sentenced to life in prison. Prosecutors said Fairburn targeted McDaniel because he was allegedly responsible for the drunken driving death of one of Fairburn's friends.

JUNE 22 William Bolton, a member of the **Connecticut White Wolves**, a white supremacist group that has since changed its name to **Battalion 14**, was sentenced to 30 months in prison

for selling guns to an undercover FBI agent posing as a member of the **Ku Klux Klan**. Bolton, a 32-year-old Army and Navy veteran, previously pleaded guilty to plotting to rob an **Ansonia, Conn.**, weapons collector and to selling a sawed-off rifle to a convicted felon.

JUNE 23 Walter Fitzpatrick, a retired naval commander who headed the antigovernment "Patriot" group **American Grand Jury**, was convicted of resisting arrest after attempting to detain a grand jury foreman in **Madisonville, Tenn.** Fitzpatrick allegedly tried to carry out the citizen's arrest because the grand jury declined his demand to indict President Obama.

JUNE 28 Richard Poplawski, a longtime racist and avid reader of the online **white supremacist** forum **Stormfront.com**, was sentenced to death for the April 2009 shooting deaths of three **Pittsburgh** police officers. The officers were responding to a domestic disturbance call at the home Poplawski shared with his mother.

JULY 13 Neal Ray Schmidt, a former grand dragon of the Missouri chapter of the **Ku Klux Klan**, was sentenced to 20 years in prison after admitting to driving 600 miles for sex with what he believed were two 14-year-old girls. The girls were, in fact, undercover police officers. When he was arrested in **McDonough, Ga.**, Schmidt was carrying several guns, Klan paraphernalia and an assortment of sex toys.

JULY 28 Allen Goff, a 19-year-old white supremacist, was sentenced to 40 days in jail after pleading guilty to threatening an American Indian teen at

gunpoint in **Billings, Mont.** Goff leads the **Montana Creators Assembly**, an offshoot of the neo-Nazi **Creativity Movement**. In 2009, Goff was charged with the racially motivated shooting of a Latino teen, but he claimed it was an accident.

JULY 28 Vincent McGee pleaded guilty to killing a white supremacist leader in **Brandon, Miss.**, and returning a day later to set fire to the crime scene. He was sentenced to 65 years in prison for the death of Richard Barrett, 76, the founder of the **Nationalist Movement** near **Jackson, Miss.** Barrett operated a school for racist skinheads and traveled the country promoting race separation.

AUG. 23 August B. Kreis III, the self-appointed director of the neo-Nazi **Aryan Nations**, pleaded guilty to a federal charge of lying to the U.S. government to draw military veteran benefits in 2006 and 2008. Kreis is a longtime minister of the white supremacist **Christian Identity** theology and once was tapped by Aryan Nations founder Richard Butler to take over the organization. After Butler's death, Kreis was one of several people claiming to lead the remnants of Butler's group.

SEPT. 2 Zachary Beck, a member of the neo-Nazi **Aryan Nations**, was sentenced to 51 months in prison for a January 2010 attack on a lone black patron of a sports bar in **Vancouver, Wash.** After following the man out of the bar, Beck and two others punched their victim, threw bottles and shouted racial epithets, including "White Power!" Beck has a long history of hate-related crimes. In 2005, he pleaded guilty to assault charges after shooting at Longview, Wash., police.

Heimbach is also a student at Towson University, where he leads YWC's newest chapter, which after much controversy was officially recognized on Sept. 13. In the YouTube video, Heimbach announced that the club hopes to host guest speakers including Pastor John Weaver of the LOS, who instructs league members on how to use firearms, and Maryland LOS chaplain David Whitney, who says churches should help arm and train people in self-defense.

According to a post on YWC's Facebook page, Towson's YWC chapter will kick off with a "pro-Israel event with resources from the David Horowitz Freedom Center." Horowitz is a right-wing propagandist who, among other things, organized "Islamofascism Awareness Week," which brought prominent anti-Muslim activists to college campuses in 2007 and 2008.

'SOVEREIGN CITIZENS'

'Sovereigns' Scheme, Scam, Shoot and Face the Music

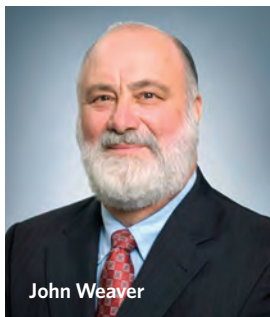
"Sovereign citizens" — antigovernment extremists who believe they are exempt from most laws and don't have to pay taxes — continue to wreak havoc across the country. Notable among them are two prominent figures with longtime ties to the militia and other extreme-right movements.

Drew Allen Rayner, a major figure in the militia movement for the past two decades, was indicted for mail fraud in **Poplarville, Miss.**, for allegedly using a fake promissory note to pay a court-ordered fine.

Rayner headed the **North Mississippi Militia** in the 1990s and was a senior leader in the Southeastern States Alliance, a long-defunct Southern



David Whitney



John Weaver

coalition of militia groups. He is one of 20 people who signed an April 1996 declaration delivered to the FBI regarding a then-ongoing standoff with members of the antigovernment **Montana Freemen** who were holed up in their armed compound. The declaration demanded that the Freemen be tried by a special court, and it threatened, "If any action is taken against any signer, their families or any supporter of this Declaration, it will be considered an act of war." In April 2010, Rayner was one of several sovereign citizens who signed a letter to all 50 governors

demanding they vacate their offices, or else. The letter campaign was organized by the Guardians for the Free Republics, a group that included the vanguard of the sovereign citizens movement.

Another longtime extremist stands accused of running a scheme whereby his clients filed bogus tax forms as part of a plot to defraud the government. In its June complaint, the Justice Department accused John Lloyd Kirk of **Des Moines, Wash.**, of selling so-called "redemption" plans in the name of a phony American Indian tribe, alleging that at least 31 of his customers have filed fraudulent returns totaling \$8 million. Kirk is a friend of infamous Montana Freeman LeRoy Schweitzer and for years has been linked to the Little Shell Pembina Band, a sovereign citizens group that claims to be an American Indian tribe. In 1997, according to the Anti-Defamation League, Kirk was arrested on a variety of weapons and explosives charges.

Old-timers weren't the only sovereigns making trouble.

• In **Hurst, Texas**, self-described "Moorish national" Joseph M. Tesi, 48, (who, unlike most "Moorish" sovereigns, is white) faces a charge of attempted capital murder after he was shot twice by a

police officer during an exchange of gunfire on a residential street on July 21. As often happens with sovereigns, the trouble began with relatively minor traffic violations. After a February 2010 traffic stop in **Arlington, Texas**, Tesi was fined for driving without a seatbelt. He never paid, and a warrant was issued for his arrest. The following December he was stopped for allegedly speeding in **Colleyville** and was arrested on the Arlington warrant after failing to produce a license. The July confrontation began when a Colleyville officer recognized Tesi — then wanted on a variety of traffic charges and failure to appear — near the city line and followed him to his home in Hurst. According to the police report, Tesi fired first. The officer, a 26-year veteran of the force, was uninjured. Tesi, also known as James Michael Joseph, is expected to recover from bullet wounds to his face and foot.

• Prosecutors in July accused a **Washington** couple — Raymond Leo and Ute Christine Jarlik-Bell — of fraudulently attempting to collect \$320,600 in tax refunds. Previously, the couple had participated in the "Sovereign Assemblies" movement that promoted sham business accounts to conceal income from the IRS.

• Marshall Edwin Home, 81, a former mayoral candidate in **Tucson, Ariz.**, was arrested July 1 after filing false documents with the U.S. Bankruptcy Court. He sought to place the United States itself into bankruptcy, asserting that he personally had a \$3 billion claim against the federal government. Home operated the "Individual Rights Party: Mortgage Rescue Service," through which he would charge clients \$500 to "make the foreclosure process stop." According to a federal complaint, he was responsible for 173 false claims against the United States totaling over \$2.5 trillion.

• On Aug. 9, a sovereign citizen in **Ulster County, N.Y.**, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and six months of home detention for attempting to intimidate local public officials with false liens and fraudulent invoices. Jeffrey Burnfeindt, 48, was one of three area men who schemed to extort

\$1.24 trillion from officials after being arrested for minor crimes such as trespassing and driving without a license.

- A **Michigan** man with connections to the sovereign citizens movement was found guilty on Aug. 10 on charges of gun and drug possession. Jeffrey Szewczyk, 38, was found with several guns and 73 marijuana plants in a police raid on his house. During the trial, Szewczyk rejected the government's right to regulate drugs and his possession of weapons. He faces up to four years in prison.

- Also on Aug. 10, public television host and former mayoral candidate John McGowan of **Bethel, Conn.**, was convicted of first-degree sexual assault. McGowan is a "senator" with the "Republic for the united States" (RuSA), a national coalition of sovereigns that promises freedom from taxes and is building a government-in-waiting. He faces up to 20 years in prison.

ANTI-MUSLIM PROPAGANDA

FBI Used Training Materials from Anti-Muslim Extremists

Controversy erupted in July when it was revealed that the FBI was using anti-Muslim propaganda in the training of some counterterrorism agents.

Wired magazine, which broke the original story, reported in September that it had received a trove of instructional materials from an FBI whistleblower that said,

among other things, that mainstream Muslims are likely to be terrorist sympathizers, that Muhammad was a "cult leader," and that the more "devout" a Muslim is, the more likely he is to be "violent."

Mike German, a former FBI agent who now works for the ACLU and who once infiltrated American radical-right groups, told *Wired*: "Seeing the materials the FBI agents are being trained with certainly helps explain why we've seen so many inappropriate FBI surveillance operations broadly targeting the Muslim-American community. ... Biased police training can only result in biased policing."

Among the materials recommended to field agents hoping to further their understanding of Islam were books by Robert Spencer, a prominent anti-Muslim figure who co-founded the group Stop Islamization of America.

The revelation was particularly troubling considering that Spencer's positions on Islam have contributed significantly to the spread of anti-Muslim sentiment in America. Spencer appears to have influenced Anders Behring Breivik, the Norwegian terrorist who slaughtered 77 people, mostly teens, with a fertilizer bomb in Oslo and a shooting

spree on the nearby island of Utoya on July 22. Breivik cited Spencer's writings dozens of times in his 1,500-page manuscript, which argued that Islam is destroying Western civilization.

Spencer has written a dozen books on the topics of Islam and the Koran. The FBI recommended *The Truth about Muhammad* and *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam* — both of which hinge on Spencer's skewed interpretation of Islam as a violent religion inseparable from the actions of its most radicalized adherents.

The FBI's presentation was obtained by groups including the American Civil Liberties Union in northern California and the Asian Law Caucus, a San Francisco-based civil rights group.

Perhaps even more shockingly, an NPR investigation in June revealed that the FBI has repeatedly invited Timothy Phelps of the Westboro Baptist Church — an anti-gay hate group notorious for picketing funerals with signs that say "God Hates Fags" — to speak at law enforcement training classes. High-ranking FBI officials have said they didn't know of Phelps' presence until recently; Phelps, son of Westboro chief Fred Phelps, claims he was invited to speak to agents about how to deal with controversial groups. Since the brouhaha erupted, the FBI has barred the future use of Westboro members in training sessions. ▲

Words and action: Former FBI agent Mike German (from left) criticized the agency for using Muslim-bashers like Robert Spencer in training counterterrorism agents. Spencer's writings were repeatedly cited by Anders Breivik, an Islamophobe who murdered 77 people in Norway in July.



New Soldiers of the Confederacy

The League of the South started out verbally defending the South, then went on to advocate secession. Now, its rhetoric has turned to arms

BY JANET SMITH AND RYAN LENZ

ABBEVILLE, S.C. — Since its bookish beginnings as a group dominated by academics in 1994, the League of the South (LOS) has been obsessively driven to glorify Southern history and culture, pining for the independence denied the region by federal troops 150 years ago.

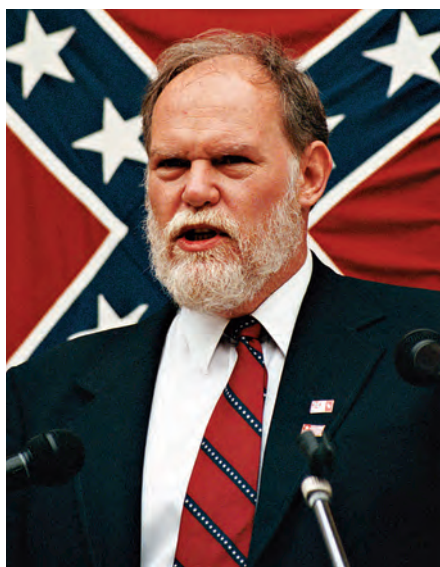
But over the years, the neo-Confederate group's platform grew to be distinctly racist, with the goal of building a theocratic South defined by "the cultural dominance of the Anglo-Celtic people and their institutions," as its president, former Stillman College professor Michael Hill, once put it. At the same time, its early rhetoric angrily demanding that the rest of the country treat the South with more respect was replaced with explicit calls for a second secession from the "ungodly" North.

Now, the LOS agenda appears to be evolving even further, this time away from the ivory tower. Beginning in 2007, when its national conference was titled "Southern Secession: Antidote to Empire and Tyranny," each year has seen further and more militant dedication to that idea. The theme in 2008 was "Surviving the Empire's Collapse" — an idea of survivalist resistance that similarly has since been echoed each year with increasing enthusiasm.

During its national conference this July in Abbeville, S.C. — the self-proclaimed "birthplace and deathbed of the Confederacy" — the LOS continued in the same vein of preparing for the day the federal government collapses and the South rises again. "The mantra [that] violence, or the serious threat thereof, never settles

anything is patently false," Hill said in a prepared speech that was later posted on the group's website. "History shows that it indeed does settle many things. Please don't forget this — your enemy hasn't."

For two days at the conference, more than 100 members sat through workshops delivered with end-of-days flair



From push to shove: At first, League of the South founder Michael Hill only suggested a possible second secession if Yankees didn't treat the South better. But soon he was railing against racial intermarriage and calling for a Southern theocracy. Now, Hill is suggesting that violence may be necessary.

and focused on surviving the unrest to come. Pastor John Weaver, former "chaplain-in-chief" for the Southern heritage group Sons of Confederate Veterans and a member of the white supremacist Council of Conservative Citizens, gave lessons on

basic gun safety. Franklin Sanders, considered the LOS's No. 2 man, encouraged members to invest in silver and gold — the idea being that when the government collapses, so will the Federal Reserve. There were also training sessions on how to stock and maintain a home pantry, lessons on how to hunt and track, and calls for members to buy shortwave radios and begin using them instead of telephones.

Hill said much to suggest that a physical fight is brewing. "He who is willing to die for a cause will defeat one who isn't," he told his listeners. "Always act as if you are fighting in the last ditch for the survival of all you hold dear." Later, Hill added, "We are already at war — we just don't know it."

For a group that initially defined itself as a kind of political club for culturally concerned intellectual Southerners, this apparent embrace of survivalist paramilitarism comes as something of a surprise. But in many ways, the conference marked the culmination of a long and steady march toward the extremist fringe.

For years, in fact, there have been hints of hard-line militancy from some key LOS members. At a meeting of the LOS's Georgia chapter in March, Hill had compiled a list of supplies to keep for the day the "Evil Empire" toppled. He encouraged members to stock up on assault weapons (AK-47s are preferred because they require less maintenance) and plenty of ammunition. He said a family would need 400 rounds of ammunition to last in the woods for two days, and he even recommended the style of bullets — deadly hollow points. He also recommended families equip themselves with



League of the South members have pushed for more public displays of the Confederate battle flag for years. Here, they rallied in Alabama in 2000 to call for the flag to be flown above the state Capitol — something expressly forbidden by the Alabama Constitution.

tools to derail trains and a deer-hunting rifle with a scope.

“American deer hunters are the largest army in the world,” Hill said.

As clear as this evolution seems, the LOS has fervently denied anything is afoot beyond a reasoned response to troubled times. After the Southern Poverty Law Center’s Hatewatch blog drew attention to the group’s increasing militancy, Mike Tuggle, editor of the LOS blog *Rebellion*, mocked the suggestion that the game had changed. “Lord help us, they’re canning vegetables!” he wrote of his compatriots.

But there is other evidence of the league’s mounting radicalism. Consider the case of Michael Tubbs of the Florida division of LOS and the increasingly prominent role the former Green Beret demolitions expert has played in the group in recent years.

In the 1990s, Tubbs pleaded guilty to theft and conspiracy for stealing weapons from the military — some of them at gunpoint from fellow soldiers. The case went back to 1987, when then-Sgt. 1st Class Michael R. Tubbs and another Army Green Beret, toting automatic weapons fitted with silencers and dressed completely in black, robbed two fellow soldiers of their M-16 rifles during a routine exercise at Fort Bragg. “This is for the KKK!” they shouted as they fled.

Years later, after an informant talked, authorities broke the case and found several caches containing machine guns, 25 pounds of TNT, land mines, an anti-aircraft gun, grenades, 45 pounds of C-4 plastic explosive and more. Prosecutors said Tubbs had drawn up a list of targets including newspapers, television stations and businesses owned by Jews and black people, though none was ever attacked.

But none of that caused the LOS to back away from Tubbs. In fact, Hill and others in the LOS today seem to be giving Tubbs more airtime than ever.

At the Abbeville conference this

summer, Tubbs gave a major speech on why reforming the federal system is impossible. Using rhetoric reminiscent of that of the antigovernment “Patriot” movement, Tubbs told the national gathering to withhold loyalty from the federal government and instead pledge allegiance to the Southern National Congress, a neo-Confederate group focused exclusively on advancing a new secession through political means. Tubbs’ presentation also included a seven-part strategy to “delegitimize” the federal government through the establishment of “organic local communities.”

“The beast is dying and dragging us with it,” Tubbs said.

For Hill — a former history professor, with expertise in Celtic traditions, at Alabama’s historically black Stillman College — the coming fight is no different than Scottish freedom fighter William Wallace’s insurgent war against the British. In fact, he first developed his ideas about Southern heritage in the 1970s, expanding on the theory that the South was different from the materialistic, ungodly North



Enter stage right: Evidence of the increasing militance of the League of the South includes the hard-line views of league principals (clockwise from left) John Weaver, who has been giving members weapons training; Larry Darby, a Holocaust denier and associate of prominent neo-Nazis; and Michael Tubbs, a self-described “Aryan” who served federal prison time in connection with a plot to attack black and Jewish businesses with weapons robbed from the military.

because its white population was “Anglo-Celtic” and fully embraced “Orthodox” Christianity — a belief that led to the creation of the LOS. Now, Hill seems to believe that the only way to defend the South against the “Jacobin” egalitarianism and secular humanism of the North is through force of arms.

“What would it take to get you to fight? ... What would it take to turn you into a William Wallace?” Hill asked in opening his Abbeville speech. “We are not made to live in isolation. Rather, we here in the South are a people. ... The South is where we make our stand.”

The LOS also continues to associate itself with other hard-line extremists, including Larry Darby, an Alabama man who was once a leading atheist activist but more recently has spent time associating on friendly terms with neo-Nazis and denying the Holocaust. Even Pastor John Weaver, who has defended American slavery, continues to be a mainstay.

At the same time, there are worries that LOS’ influence on the radical right

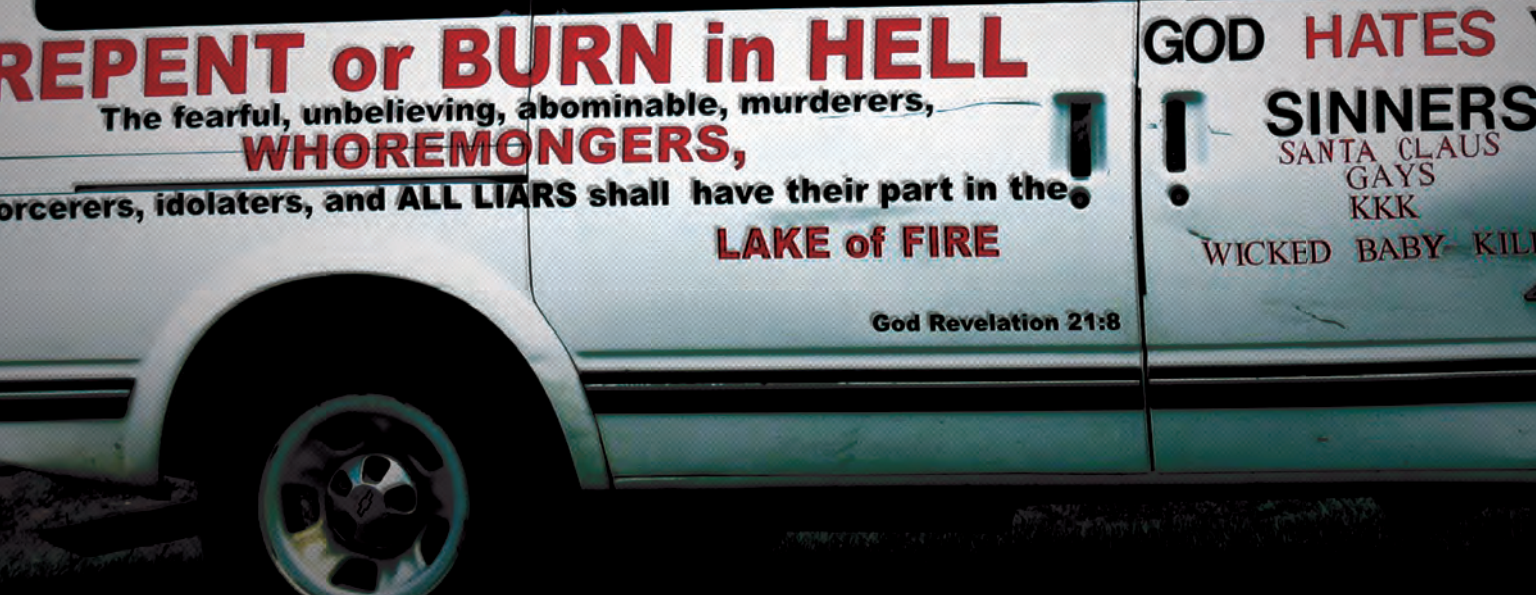


may be spreading. Matthew Heimbach, a member of the league’s Maryland division and an attendee of the Abbeville conference, claimed on a YouTube video posted this July that his league chapter would be working with Youth for Western Civilization (YWC), a campus group that already had

ties to a number of other white nationalist organizations. Heimbach described YWC as having “similar principles to us and similar goals.”

Also at this year’s conference in South Carolina, Weaver held a class with a focus on armed battle. He showed a gathering of about 60 people how to draw a pistol, how to hold it and not accidentally shoot the weapon, even how to draw down on an enemy. “Divine providence always arranges the time for fighting. You must remember, God is the god of war,” he reassured them. “Do you realize when God is involved, the outcome is guaranteed? When God is involved, victory is assured. When God is involved, there is no failure.” ▲

Fire and brimstone: Repent or Burn in Hell Ministries, located in southern Alabama, is a vitriolic gay-bashing group made up of a single family, much like its more infamous cousin, Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kan.



‘REPENT OR BURN’

A clone of an infamous gay-bashing Kansas church is raising Cain in Alabama. But its ‘prophetess’ keeps landing in jail

BY LEAH NELSON

On June 4, Nashville, Tenn., police responded to a complaint regarding traveling evangelist and self-proclaimed “prophetess” Glynis Bethel, who had allegedly pepper-sprayed a woman who was protesting her anti-gay preaching. When an officer moved in to arrest Bethel, she pepper-sprayed him, too.

Out on bond three days later, Bethel posted a press release accusing police of

violating her First, Second, Fourth and 14th Amendment rights. “I would prefer to be beaten and to die than to allow these wicked and evil Nashville poLICE officers and white racist bigots to get away with breaking the laws they are supposed to be upholding,” wrote Bethel, who is black. “Romans Chapter 13 states that it is our duty to bear the sword upon evil doers and this Bible scripture doesn’t exempt corrupt po-LICE.”

The prophetess, who with her husband, “Apostle” Orlando Bethel, leads the Baldwin County, Ala.-based Repent or Burn in Hell Ministries, is a well-known figure in certain circles in the southeastern United States. Together with their three teenage children (who are the ministry’s only members), the Bethels travel from town to town, denouncing “sinners” and exploring the outer limits of their First Amendment rights. Their

self-described “fire and brimstone” preaching, which especially targets gay people, along with “fornicators,” “whore-mongers” and abortion clinics, has led to countless arrests – usually on charges of disorderly conduct, protesting without a permit or public obscenity.

“It’s a curse,” Orlando Bethel said of homosexuality in an interview posted on YouTube. “It’s just like a disease, leprosy. It’s something that’s used as a judgment of God on a person because, basically, of their rebellion against him.”

Not surprisingly, the Bethels are often compared to Kansas’ much-reviled Westboro Baptist Church, which is best known for picketing funerals with signs captioned with insults such as “God Hates Fags” and, like Repent or Burn in Hell Ministries, is largely composed of a single family. But while Westboro – whose ranks include a number of highly skilled lawyers who recently won a First Amendment case in the Supreme Court – limits its legal crusade to free speech rights, the Bethels (who do not possess law degrees but are experienced *pro se* litigators) take a more expansive view of how the Constitution protects their right to evangelize.

“It says ‘the right to keep and bear arms,’” Orlando Bethel told the *Intelligence Report* in a reference to the Second Amendment. “Not keep it in your closet. To bear it.” Complaining about the Baldwin County sheriff’s denial of his wife’s 2009 petition for a concealed carry permit, supposedly on the grounds that she had a “grievance with government,” he said, “I thought that was funny because that was the original intent of the Second Amendment.”

It is exactly this kind of language that worries Baldwin County Sheriff Huey “Hoss” Mack, who has been dealing with the Bethels since they arrived about 10 years ago. At first, Mack told the *Report*, the ministry seemed little more than a nuisance. But, he said, “It has escalated. The amount of aggravation and the amount of contact with public officials as well as those in the legal system has increased and [they have] become more confrontational. ... There is a legitimate concern that if it continues to escalate, how far will it go?”

The Bethels’ first brush with the law apparently came in 2002, when Orlando,



One more mug shot: Glynis Bethel's latest arrest came in August, when police in Mobile, Ala., apprehended her on old family court charges. She and her husband have been arrested on numerous occasions.

who had been invited to sing at the funeral of Glynis’ uncle, followed up his crooning with what one reporter described as “a surprise-attack chastisement” of both the deceased and the throng of 100-plus mourners. Orlando denounced Glynis’ late uncle as a “fornicator” and “drunkard,” and said he was in hell – where, he added, most of the bereaved would also one day burn. When someone cut the mike, he whipped out a bullhorn he’d brought from home and continued to preach, stopping only when a group of enraged mourners dragged him away from the pulpit. Orlando and several of Glynis’ relatives were arrested, and the tale made national news. “Funeral fracas confirms ancient wisdom of showing respect for dead,” a mirthful headline in Charleston, S.C.’s *Post and Courier* read.

Things went better for the Bethels in 2003, when Orlando was arrested in Escambia County, Fla., for protesting without a permit while demonstrating in front of churches with posters inscribed, “Worship God, not your Pastor.” He pleaded not guilty and challenged the law in federal court, where he was represented by the uber-conservative and anti-gay Liberty Counsel and cheered on by the American Civil Liberties Union. Ultimately, the county agreed to amend the permit ordinance.

In a gesture that would permanently influence Orlando Bethel, Escambia’s attorney supposedly congratulated him for having gotten as far as he had. “I guess he was saying it complimentary, but I thought it was just terrible,” Bethel

told the *Report*. “My interpretation is, they’ve violated a lot of people’s rights, [and] that’s why I know lawsuits have to be filed.”

Glynis Bethel, who was in jail at press time and not available to comment, played a mostly supporting role in the Escambia fight. But in 2006, when she was removed from a list of prospective substitute teachers after she spent her first and only day as a Baldwin County substitute proselytizing high school students, she began a legal crusade of her own – suing the local school system for allegedly violating her rights by turning down her request to start a for-profit Christian after-school program on public school property.

Neither of the Bethels hold a law degree, but by all accounts, they understand how the system works. Though their legal filings are replete with accusations of criminality, corruption, ungodly motives and racism, they usually also contain the necessary components to move forward in court.

“It would be different if these people weren’t intelligent, but they are,” said Mark Boardman, attorney for the Baldwin County school system, which has spent tens of thousands of dollars defending itself from the Bethels’ filings.

The school system saw a darker side of the Bethels’ intransigence in January 2009, when it sent a truancy officer to their home to track down their three children. In response, Glynis Bethel sent school board employees a copy of her concealed carry application and announced she had purchased a BB gun and baseball bat to “protect” herself against “corrupt government officials.”

Citing the Bethels’ repeated threats against school officials, judges and law enforcement, Boardman applied for and was granted a protective order on behalf of all employees of the public schools in Baldwin County, one of Alabama’s two seaside counties.

A few months later, Glynis Bethel threatened to use her “Second Amendment rights” against a deputy sheriff who came to her home to serve papers. She was charged with interfering with a government operation, a misdemeanor. While waiting in the courtroom lobby for a related hearing, she “started hollering and carrying on,” as Sheriff Mack put it,



Glynis and Orlando Bethel are some of the most pugnacious gay-bashers in America. They are also among a tiny handful of people who have joined protests by the equally vicious congregation of Westboro Baptist Church (below).



and was additionally charged with disorderly conduct. Convicted on both charges, she was sentenced to consecutive six-month stints at the Baldwin County Jail — a verdict she appealed all the way up to the Alabama Supreme Court.

In February 2010, while Glynis Bethel was still waiting for her appeal to be heard, her husband launched a campaign of his own, running unsuccessfully for Baldwin County sheriff on a platform of weeding out what he alleged was rampant corruption within the department. In April, Orlando Bethel was arrested and briefly jailed for harassing other candidates at the Baldwin Strawberry Festival. Soon after that, Alabama's high court announced that his wife had lost her appeal and would have to report to jail.

The prophetess and her family fled the jurisdiction. They bounced around the Southeast for months in 2010 and 2011, staging religious demonstrations and suing school districts for alleged violations of their constitutional rights. This April, they landed in the Nashville suburb of Brentwood, Tenn. As they had elsewhere, the Bethels claimed homelessness and went to the local high school to enroll the children, who for their first day of school were clad in T-shirts reading "God hates gays," "God hates whores" and "God hates you sinners." On discovering that the family owned a home in Alabama, Brentwood refused their application, but

the Bethels refused to leave the principal's office at the meeting's end. According to local newspapers, the children were arrested and charged with trespassing.

For Glynis Bethel, at least, this seems to have been the last straw. Soon after the family was kicked off the high school campus, she "invoked" the Second Amendment and pepper-sprayed the Nashville police officer. "GOD told me to use the MACE like David used a pebble," she blogged this June 7.

On July 13, apparently still in Tennessee, she issued a tweet likening herself to Michael Bray, an anti-abortion extremist and "justifiable homicide" advocate who spent nearly four years in prison in the 1980s for his role in bombing women's health clinics and advocacy groups around Washington, D.C. On July 14, she left a voicemail with the Baldwin County sheriff's office saying she was armed with a gun and prepared to be a martyr, school officials said. The county's (mostly empty) school buildings were

locked down, but Bethel never showed.

On Aug. 4, police apprehended her in Mobile, Ala., where she was wanted on old family court charges. Upon completion of that case, she was expected to be returned to Nashville to face the pepper spray charges, and then to Baldwin County to serve time there.

None of this seems to be slowing Orlando Bethel, who sings the praises of the hardheaded approach pioneered by Westboro Baptist Church and its leader, Fred Phelps. In the YouTube interview, in fact, Bethel does his best imitation of Phelps, telling the camera, as Phelps has done countless times, that "God hates fags."

That wasn't good enough for the Westboro congregation, however, which has done its best over the years to distinguish itself as the most extreme anti-gay group in America. Sniffed Westboro spokesman Steve Drain, when asked by the *Report* about the apparently sympathetic ministry of Orlando Bethel: "He's no better or different than the fags." ▲



Khurrum Wahid doesn't make excuses for domestic jihadism, but he points out that only a "microscopic percentage" of U.S. Muslims engage in terrorism. He also suggests that intervening early with young Muslims could cut those numbers even further.

YOUTH & RADICALISM

A Miami defense attorney says reaching Muslim-American youth early is the key to preventing their radicalization

*Miami defense attorney **Khurrum Wahid** has handled hundreds of white-collar crimes, violent felonies and juvenile cases, including murder. In the days after the 9/11 attacks, he worked with civil rights organizations to represent people detained on material witness warrants and immigration holds related to the attacks. Wahid has also defended individuals charged with committing or conspiring to commit acts of terrorism. Wahid began this work while serving as a Florida public defender. Later, he started his own criminal defense practice, Wahid Vizcaino LLP, where he continues his work with those accused of terrorism and related crimes. In the past decade, Wahid also has worked to integrate young American Muslims into American life, co-founding and now serving as vice chair of Emerge-USA, a national nonprofit created to provide civic engagement for young Muslims. Emerge introduces young people to elected officials and community leaders and helps them to productively express their concerns about American policies. Wahid talked to the Intelligence Report in October, sharing the insights he has gained from his work.*

How did you come to do this work?

After 9/11, I was one of the few defense attorneys known in the American Muslim community. Once the authorities began picking up suspects, I started getting calls and helped to find attorneys for hundreds of cases. It was largely pro bono work, involving material witness

warrants and other lower level cases that detained people. What a steep learning curve! I'd never handled a federal material witness complaint before that.

You continued after leaving your public defender job?

I left the Neighborhood Defenders

Service of Harlem in 2005. My first well-known case was Ahmed Omar Abu Ali, a Virginia man and alleged member of Al Qaeda charged with plotting to assassinate President Bush. Some other well-known cases I had were Shahawar Matin Siraj, who was accused of a plot to blow up Union Station in Manhattan; Dr. Rafiq Sabir, who was charged with taking an oath to treat wounded Al Qaeda members; Ehsanul Siddiqui, who was accused of trying to create a video to help recruit jihadists; and Syed Hashmi, who was charged with helping another person to send equipment to Al Qaeda members in northern Pakistan.

When I was still a Miami public defender, I voluntarily took on the case of three medical students who were wrongfully accused of plotting to blow up Miami on the first anniversary of 9/11. I have also consulted on cases such as that of Professor Sami Al-Arian, who was a Palestinian activist, and Dr. Rafil Dhafir, who sent medical aid to Iraq in violation of the sanctions.

What characteristics have your clients shared?

I would put them in two broad categories. First, those who were a little older and true political activists. They were essentially propelled to act by compassion for their Muslim compatriots. In the Al-Arian case, he felt he was acting for the Palestinian people; for Dhafir, it was for the Iraqis.

But a second, younger group, I would describe as socially disenfranchised. Their initial impulse to leave a mark on society is positive, but, of course, that's not how it ends up. Their compassion ends up being used for the wrong ends.



"Let's build trust, and end this culture of fear of law enforcement. Help American Muslim parents to help these young men through their identity crisis, and bring them back into the American fold."

Do you think second group has similarities with kids who end up in urban gangs?

I really equate a lot of what I see with what I see in urban gang kids. Both groups are highly alienated from greater society and distrusting of police.

How do these younger Muslims become radicalized?

I believe they begin the journey out of compassion for injustices, perceived or actual, committed against Muslims. Often this is combined with very little knowledge of the Koran and the teachings of Islam. Their hope to do something important and stop the injustice leads them on a search for information. When they don't get it from local sources, they go to the Internet, where they find justifications for actions that would otherwise be unjustifiable. They find a jihadist website that throws gas on their growing fire. They don't know much about Islam and they find a verse and take it out of context. They may end up knowing a lot about a small sliver of Islam. Without the context, anything can be misinterpreted.

And because they spend a lot of time studying rules of engagement in combat,

they think they know it all. They also come to see America as the source of the problem. They don't allow for America defending itself and, yes, sometimes making mistakes like Abu Ghraib. They miss this entirety of America, its civic history, its rich culture, the fact that, while not perfect, we have a pretty open society where Muslims can worship more freely than in many Muslim countries, at least until the "Arab Spring" came about.

Does law enforcement take the right approach to these young people?

I think the current strategy is a "gotcha" approach. I think it would be better if law enforcement addressed the home-grown terrorist issue the same way they do urban gang violence. There is just so much commonality between both groups of kids. They are both socially disenfranchised and searching for identity. We should help steer them away from a negative path.

My concern with the way we have approached homegrown terrorism is that all of the resources go to enforcement, nothing goes to intervention. The DOJ has an office of delinquency prevention.

Funding for research, discussion forums, community policing and other intervention can be translated to the home-grown terrorism genre. Law enforcement should learn about the American Muslim community and use it as a resource. American Muslims working together with law enforcement could help divert these young folk, before a few of them make the wrong decision.

What is alienating these young people? Is it family problems?

Not the immediate family, but their interaction with the community around them. There's a feeling of not fitting in, of being very different, especially vis-à-vis non-Muslims. It's been worse in the last decade, with growing Islamophobia. That makes some young Muslims feel that they are the "other." A few of those become radicalized, and a few of those may act on those polarizing comments.

What kind of numbers are you talking about?

A microscopic percentage. I know that public figures, from Congressman Peter King [the New York Republican

who earlier this year held provocative hearings highlighting domestic Islamic extremism] to [Department of Homeland Security Secretary] Janet Napolitano, who have both said that this is a huge problem, make it sound like Islamic radicals are everywhere. And, obviously, one individual can wreak enormous havoc. But in terms of actual statistics, it's infinitesimal.

The American Muslim community is anywhere from 6 to 8 million people, and you can count on your hands and toes the terrorism cases in the last decade. That doesn't mean that [Islamic extremism] shouldn't get a good deal of attention and resources. One person can create major devastation. But maybe we can do a better job stopping these young men before that happens.

How are we approaching the community now?

Certain politicians are creating an environment of "us" versus "them." It's better to send a signal that we are all Americans. I think the president has done a good job of that, but many other public figures haven't. And the controversy surrounding the Park 51 community center [established by a moderate imam in lower Manhattan but dubbed the "Ground Zero Mosque" by anti-Muslim extremists] really ostracized Muslims.

More importantly, Muslims and non-Muslims need to find ways to interact. One is through interfaith activities, but there are other things that could be done. And we have to change how law enforcement is perceived as seeing the Muslim community. Stop sending the signal that a higher degree of Muslim religiosity equals a higher likelihood that someone will be a terrorist, and a target for an investigation into terrorism. This perception, even if not intended, makes young Muslims say, "I want to be a part of America, but I don't think America wants me." It is also worthwhile for the Muslim community to see law enforcement treat "terrorism" from non-Muslims the same way. It helps to counter the double standard many Muslim youth feel is at play with law enforcement in America.

So that goes back to the alienation issue, and finding a home in gangs. It's the same thing with young, inner-city kids. We should be saying, "We want you in our community," so they will feel like someone is looking out for them.

Are there other analogies to the African-American experience?

They share issues of racism and discrimination. In some cases they share poverty or at least despair about the future. For the American Muslim community, there is also growing

at a mosque and three young men said it had happened to them. The enforcement agents say, "I want you to be an informant and if you don't I am going to make life very difficult for you." This causes young folks to get angry. They feel very unwelcome in the country they are trying to assimilate to.

I think there is more of an effort to conscript young Muslims as informants because law enforcement is increasingly focusing on homegrown Islamic terrorism, especially after the 2010 Times Square attempted car bombing



In his Miami offices, Khurrum Wahid works with partner Carmen Vizcaino and assistant Imran Siddiqui.

Islamophobia. There are similarities in how both communities feel law enforcement treats them. There is a reason Muslims adopted the term "flying while Muslim."

We hear constantly from young Muslims, similar to what African Americans say, that cops harass them. They say they are approached at school, at work, at their mosque. First, cops say, "Hey, we just want to talk to you." But then they pressure them into becoming informants. If they object, they are threatened with arrest or the bringing of immigration cases or other adverse actions. This doesn't build trust.

Is that kind of thing widespread?

I think it's growing. I'm handling a couple of cases right now. I spoke recently

[by American Islamic extremist Faisal Shahzad]. But I don't think this tactic alone is useful; we also need constructive engagement early on to take these kids out of this world. We have a duty to treat other people in a just and inclusive manner, not like threats before having any evidence. It's just not credible to young Muslims when law enforcement says they don't think Muslim equals terrorism.

What would you like to see happen?

Programs like those used to fight gangs, with funds to help young people participate in positive activities. Let's build trust, and end this culture of fear of law enforcement. Help American Muslim parents to help these young men through their identity crisis, and bring them back into the American fold. ▲



The Fischer Files

Gay-basher Bryan Fischer is famous for his bigotry. What's less known is how 'mainstream' Idahoans jump-started his career

BY JODY MAY-CHANG AND JILL KURAITIS ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL ADEL

For a week or two this August, the spotlight of national media attention cast a harsh light on a prayer rally in Houston entitled “The Response: A Call to Prayer for a Nation in Crisis.” Although it was billed as a non-political event held only to ask God for unity and righteousness, The Response drew a roster of hard-line religious rightists best known for their gay-bashing rhetoric.

Some of those who were scheduled to speak merely caused the eyes of the critics to roll, like the “prophetess” who earlier in the year blamed the mass die-off of black-birds in Arkansas on the acceptance of homosexuality. The heavy criticism centered on the American Family Association (AFA), a group that aggressively promotes

“decency” in the media with a \$20 million-a-year budget and a network of some 200 American Family Radio stations, and that paid for the event.

The AFA, after all, had come under fire many times since its founding in 1977 by the Rev. Donald Wildmon, who

But the criticism this summer of the AFA, fueled in part by the Southern Poverty Law Center’s 2010 listing of the organization as a hate group, really came down to the remarkable utterances of one man: Bryan Fischer, the loquacious, baby-faced “director of issue analysis” who

“He was chaplain of the Senate. I guess you could say he was a state-endorsed clergyman.”

has repeatedly suggested that obscene content on television and in the movies is largely due to the media being controlled by Jews. On one occasion, the AFA demanded that an openly gay Arizona congressman be barred from speaking at the Republican National Convention and suggested that he be arrested under a state law criminalizing sodomy. A former network entertainment executive once called the AFA’s boycotts “the first step toward a police state.”

joined the Tupelo, Miss.-based group in 2009 and has become its best known, and most eyebrow-raising, spokesman.

Fischer, 60, graduated from Stanford University with a philosophy degree, but that hasn’t stopped him from claiming that “[h]omosexuality gave us Adolph Hitler, and homosexuals in the military gave us the Brown Shirts, the Nazi war machine and six million dead Jews” — a complete falsehood, as any historian knows.

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Nor has it prevented him from suggesting that gay sex should be penalized in the same way heroin use is, or asserting that gay men and lesbians should be forced into controversial “reparative therapy,” which improbably claims to “cure” people of their homosexuality. Since joining the AFA, Fischer has said, against all the evidence, that “homosexuals, as a group, are the single greatest perpetrators of hate crimes on the planet, outside the Muslim religion.” He has claimed that non-Christian religions “have no First Amendment right to the free exercise of religion,” which would have been a surprise to the authors of the Bill of Rights. He said that the “sexual immorality of Native Americans” was part of what made them “morally disqualified from sovereign control of American soil.” He even

suggested the best way to deal with promiscuity would be to kill the promiscuous.

Fischer did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

Not content with insulting the LGBT community, the sexually active, Muslims and virtually all other non-Christians, Fischer has even crossed the Rubicon of race, saying that President Obama “nurtures this hatred for the United States of America and, I believe, nurtures a hatred for the white man.” In case that wasn’t enough, he recently added that welfare had “destroyed the African American family” and was incentivizing black “people who rut like rabbits.”

These facts are well known. But what may be most remarkable of all about Fischer, aside from the fact that an organization that has more than 2 million people

on its E-mail list hired him, are some of the details of how he spent almost 30 years as an increasingly radical pastor in Idaho. Despite being passed over as senior pastor of one church and abruptly leaving another, Fischer eventually came to be treated as the state’s leading voice of the Christian Right, wrote regular guest columns in the state’s largest newspaper and was named chaplain of the Idaho State Senate.

The Early Years

Bryan Fischer was born on April 8, 1951, in a small town in Colorado, and moved in his early teens to California. Later, while attending Stanford, he landed an internship at Peninsula Bible Church in Palo Alto, where he was befriended by senior pastor David Roper, a man who would influence him strongly. Three years after

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Quotes from the AFA

The principal officials of the American Family Association have a long history of making extremely provocative remarks on everything from the role of Jews in the national media to the supposed dangers posed by Muslims and their faith. But over the years, the most outrageous comments of all — and the ones that are most often simple falsehoods dressed up as “research” — have been aimed at LGBT people.

“Most television producers are of the Jewish perspective.”

— AFA founder and chairman **DON WILDMON**, *People* magazine, 1981

“[Fifty-nine] percent of the people who are responsible for network programming were raised in Jewish homes. If the people who control the networks in Hollywood were 59 percent Christian and if they were only 1 percent as anti-Semitic as the networks are currently anti-Christian, there would [be] a massive public outcry from the national liberal secular media.”

— **DON WILDMON**, in a speech before the National Religious Broadcasters, 1985

“Only a relatively small handful of people determine what Americans can and will see on network television. These people are overtly hostile to the Christian faith.”

— **DON WILDMON**, in his book *The Home Invaders*, 1985

“Hollywood and the theater world is heavily influenced by Jewish people.”

— **DON WILDMON**, *The Home Invaders*, 1985

“The television elite are highly secular. Ninety-six percent had a religious upbringing, the majority (59 percent) in the Jewish faith.”

— **DON WILDMON**, “What Hollywood Believes and Wants,” *AFA Journal*, 1989

“[T]he homosexual lifestyle is characterized by anonymous sexual encounters and celebration of sexual obsession and perversion unparalleled in any other social group.”

— **RICHARD G. HOWE**, “Homosexuality in America: Exposing the Myths,” published by the AFA, 1994

“This year many pointed their compasses toward Disney World in Orlando, Florida, unaware of an impending cultural collision with a two-faced ‘family

entertainment’ company that welcomed hordes of homosexuals to celebrate their sexual perversions at ‘The Sixth Annual Gay and Lesbian Day at the Magical Kingdom that Walt Built.’”

— **AFA JOURNAL** on Disney World’s “Gay Days,” 1996

“I never dreamed I would see the day when sodomy would be called normal, and those who held to traditional values based on Christian teaching would be called bigots.”

— **DON WILDMON**, “Principles Which Guide the AFA’s Opposition to the Homosexual Agenda,” ca. 1999 (still on the AFA website)

“As with smoking, homosexual behavior’s ‘second hand’ effects threaten public health.”

— **GARY GLENN**, state director of AFA Michigan, 2001

“We fear the focus will now become homosexual indoctrination among young girls. ... Lesbianism, cross-dressing, and abortion are all part of [Patricia] Ireland’s history. It soon will become YWCA’s present.”

— **DON WILDMON**, on the YWCA hiring Patricia Ireland, former president of the National Organization for Women, AFA Action Alert, 2003

“Homosexuality is not only harmful to homosexuals themselves, but also to children and to society.”

— **STEPHEN BENNETT**, AFA website, 2004

“Keith Ellison, D-Minn., the first Muslim elected to the United States Congress, has announced that he will not take his oath of office on the Bible, but on the bible of Islam, the Koran. He should not be allowed to do so — not because of any American hostility to the Koran, but because the act undermines American civilization.”

— **DON WILDMON**, AFA Action Alert, 2006

“The homosexual agenda represents the single greatest modern threat to freedom of religion and conscience... Gay activists are so driven by their agenda that they cannot even permit a private institution to maintain standards of sexuality that differ from theirs.

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, in a press release from his Idaho Values Alliance (a chapter of the AFA), about a gay rights group’s visits to campuses, April 12, 2007

“[S]ame-sex marriage will only increase sexual

confusion in children and encourage dangerous sexual experimentation among the nation’s youth.”

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, Idaho Values Alliance press release, July 7, 2008

“If President Obama, congressional Democrats, and homosexual activists get their wish, your son or daughter may be forced to share military showers and barracks with active and open homosexuals who may very well view them with sexual interest.”

— **AFA ACTION ALERT** on the repeal of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy on gay people in the military, Feb. 8, 2010

“Muslims, by custom and religion, are simply unwilling to integrate into cultures with Western values and it is folly to pretend otherwise. In fact, they remain dedicated to subjecting all of America to sharia law and are working ceaselessly until that day of Islamic imposition comes.”

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, AFA director of issue analysis, AFA blog post, April 8, 2010

“The homosexual agenda represents a clear and present danger to virtually every fundamental right

graduating in 1973, he married Deborah Marie Rogers, who is still his wife.

Roper had attended Dallas Theological Seminary, the top ideological powerhouse of the most conservative wing of the evangelical movement. Fischer followed in his mentor's footsteps, graduating from the seminary in 1980.

While Fischer was in Dallas, Roper left California to become pastor of the Cole Community Church in Boise, Idaho, where he would remain for the following 17 years. Roper told the *Intelligence Report* that, later in 1980, he invited Fischer to join him in Idaho to help start the Cole Center for Biblical Studies. The center would become known regionally for the prominent locals who it graduated.

At the time, however, Fischer had markedly different theological views than

he does today, said Dennis Mansfield, who started the Idaho Family Forum and was then the state's leading Christian Right spokesman: "Bryan brought me in to debate about his opposition to Christians being involved in government; he was a fierce opponent of it then. My opinion was that we should be involved in everything, and his was theological isolationism. I remember three debates where I crossed swords with him and found him to be one of the most intelligent men I'd ever known. But I won the debates, and ... he did not like being beaten by the likes of me."

As time passed, Fischer increasingly embraced the strain of "dominionist" theology that suggests that Christians should seek to control government as well as spiritual matters. Simultaneously,

a church insider said, Fischer developed a group of his own personal followers and was ultimately asked to leave the church.

Roper denied that, saying Fischer left because he had "decided he wanted to do more in the political realm." But Mansfield, who remains friends with Fischer after many years, said that Fischer was passed over when Roper decided to leave Cole Community Church. "Roper announced he was leaving and that he would select a successor," Mansfield said in an interview. "A church of three to four thousand people is a significant Pacific Northwest church to be leader of. Ultimately, when the decision was announced, Roper chose a different pastor to head it up. Bryan was dumbstruck and he told me he was resigning from his position.

"I would imagine he felt so dishonored

given to us by our Creator and enshrined for us in our Constitution."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, blog post, Feb. 26, 2010

"There is an overwhelming correlation between homosexual preference and pedophilia. This is further evidence that homosexuality is in fact sexual deviancy. For this reason alone, no homosexual should be elevated to the United States Supreme Court."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, blog post, April 16, 2010

"Now the only people that are going to be allowed to wear the uniform of the United States military will either be sexual perverts, sexual deviants, or people who support sexual perversion or sexual deviancy."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, on "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," speaking on his AFA "Focal Point" radio show, Sept. 21, 2010

"So Hitler himself was an active homosexual. And some people wonder, didn't the Germans, didn't the Nazis, persecute homosexuals? And it is true they did; they persecuted effeminate homosexuals. But Hitler recruited around

him homosexuals to make up his Stormtroopers, they were his enforcers, they were his thugs. And Hitler discovered that he could not get straight soldiers to be savage and brutal and vicious enough to carry out his orders, but that homosexual soldiers basically had no limits and the savagery and brutality they were willing to inflict on whomever Hitler sent them after."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, "Focal Point," May 24, 2010

"[T]he nation had lapsed into rampant immorality. ... [Phineas] found an Israelite in flagrante with a Philistine woman and he ran them both through with a spear... And that shook up the nation, it got their attention and they transformed... [T]hey turned from that behavior and renewed their commitment to follow God. ... God is obviously looking for more Phineases in our day."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, "Focal Point," citing the Old Testament to suggest that God wants sexual promiscuity today to be cured by killing promiscuous people, May 21, 2010

"Homosexuality gave us Adolph Hitler, and homosexuals in the military gave us the Brown Shirts, the

Nazi war machine and six million dead Jews."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, blog post, May 27, 2010

"[H]ere we have the leader of our nation and the Democrat Party celebrating sexual behavior which is contrary to nature and pushing a household structure that we know is harmful to children. ... "[O]ur President is so committed to normalizing homosexual conduct that he is putting the twisted sexual desires of adults ahead of the needs of children."

— AFA President **TIM WILDMON**, press release, referring to President Obama's Father's Day recognition of same-sex parents, June 21, 2010

"Many of the tribal reservations today remain mired in poverty and alcoholism because many native Americans continue to cling to the darkness of indigenous superstition instead of coming into the light of Christianity and assimilating into Christian culture."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, blog post, Feb. 8, 2011

"Islam has no fundamental First Amendment claims, for the simple reason that it was not written to

protect the religion of Islam. Islam is entitled only to the religious liberty we extend to it out of courtesy... Our government has no obligation to allow a treasonous ideology to receive special protections in America, but this is exactly what the Democrats are trying to do right now with Islam."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, blog post, March 23, 2011

"There is no spirit of God in Islam. It is the spirit of Satan. It is the spirit of darkness. It is the spirit of tyranny. It is the spirit of bondage."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, "Focal Point," March 29, 2011

"From now on, no more immigrants from Islamic countries. Can't have it. It's going to corrode Western culture."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, "Focal Point," March 29, 2011

"Welfare has destroyed the African-American family by telling young black women that husbands and fathers are unnecessary and obsolete. Welfare has subsidized illegitimacy by offering financial rewards to women who have more children out of wedlock. We have

incentivized fornication rather than marriage, and it's no wonder we are now awash in the disastrous social consequences of people who rut like rabbits."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, blog post, April 5, 2011

"Homosexuals comprise less than three percent of the population, but are responsible for fully a third of all instances of pedophilia. ... Bottom line: homosexual or bisexual men are about 10 times more likely to molest children than heterosexual men."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, blog post, June 28, 2011

"But by the time of the founding until the late 20th century, homosexual activity was a felony offense in the United States of America, there is no reason why it cannot be a criminal offense once again, absolutely none."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, "Focal Point," Aug. 29, 2011

"If we do not stop Islam at our shores, we will have to stop it in our streets. That day, in fact, is already here. Let's stop the contagion while we can."

— **BRYAN FISCHER**, blog post, Sept. 9, 2011

that the order of things didn't follow his ideas," Mansfield said. "He and his wife were distraught they weren't chosen. He departed Cole Community [in 1993] and never looked back."

Mansfield said that very few people came forward to support Fischer then and that the two became close as a result. At a lunch held to discuss Fischer's future, Mansfield said he detected "a real brokenness and humility in Bryan, and openness to new opportunities. He came up with the idea of a community church, one that would have a different angle... That became Community Church of the Valley."

As he consolidated his new Boise church, Fischer began to gain real prominence in the state. He was first quoted in *The Idaho Statesman*, the state's largest newspaper, in 1999. It was the beginning of his rise to national stature.

"I used to be the go-to religious-right person for media in Boise because of IFF [the Idaho Family Forum]," said Mansfield, whose theological views have since softened considerably. "Then I ran for Congress and lost to [now-Gov.] Butch Otter in 2000 and, of course, became invisible. There was a gap without a spokesman for the religious right, so Bryan stood up to be that person."

Onward and Upward

Bryan Fischer was on his way to local celebrity. But that ascent was only really cemented in 2001, when the state's Republican then-majority leader, present-day U.S. Sen. Jim Risch, appointed him as the Idaho State Senate chaplain.

Even though the position was essentially honorary, paying \$16.86 an hour to deliver prayers to the Idaho Senate, it gave Fischer easy access to the Republican leadership in a state that has long been completely dominated by the GOP. Word of the appointment of Fischer was not universally welcomed.

"The choice of one of Idaho's most polarizing religious leaders has sent shock waves through the state's churches and has some powerful senators reeling," *The Idaho Statesman* reported in a Jan. 13, 2001, news story. It said that the Senate's assistant majority leader and majority caucus chairman had no idea that Fischer had been hired until he delivered the opening Senate session prayer that year.



Betsy Russell, president of the Idaho Press Club and long-time Boise bureau chief for *The (Spokane, Wash.) Spokesman-Review*, said the post mattered. "One of the reasons he was able to achieve a platform is because he was given one by the state of Idaho quite officially: He was chaplain of the Senate. He held an official position... I guess you could say he was a state-endorsed clergyman."

In the immediate aftermath of Fischer's appointment, a woman named Jennifer Boyd wrote a letter to *The Idaho Statesman*. Boyd said she was a former member of Fischer's Community Church of the Valley and recounted how she was excommunicated. "Fischer removed me from his congregation after my divorce," she wrote, "which he deemed unacceptable, non-biblical and sinful." She angrily accused Fischer of speaking "out of both sides of his mouth. ... [H]e said one thing while he did another. ... [H]e judges people ... based on limited knowledge."

Despite the controversy, *The Idaho Statesman* began to quote Fischer regularly. Between 1999 and 2009, when Fischer would leave the state, the newspaper quoted him in nearly 100 news stories and printed 16 of his guest editorials — huge numbers in the relatively small Boise media market.

"Obviously, Fischer relies on polarizing messages that catch the attention of reporters, but it felt like he was able to

Even in Idaho, a highly conservative state controlled politically by the GOP, Bryan Fischer was widely seen as a firebrand who often went too far. His appointment as state Senate chaplain helped make him a national figure despite that well-deserved reputation for "hot rhetoric."

control the narrative around issues of reproductive, queer and immigrant rights," said Amy Herzfeld, executive director of the Boise-based Idaho Human Rights Education Center, a nonprofit group. "I do think that many Idaho news outlets helped Fischer earn national accolades."

Like Jennifer Boyd, Mansfield recalled being disillusioned with his friend's ministry. In 2000, his son was arrested for possession of a marijuana pipe. The story made the local papers because Mansfield was then running for Congress.

"We went to Bryan and asked what to do, and he was at a loss," Mansfield said. "He didn't have a practical solution. I thought, 'This isn't helping anybody!' We went looking for another church that had solutions." Mansfield said that families already had begun leaving the congregation "in battalions." For him, the church had become a "professorial, debate-society culture" that did not offer solutions.

Fischer did not react well to his departure, Mansfield said. "With Bryan, it was as if I had betrayed him. I was just another person who left his church."

Words Have Consequences: Anti-LGBT Hate Crime

The American Family Association's chief spokesman, Bryan Fischer, has a special fondness for calling gay people ugly names.

They are “perverts” and “sexual deviants,” he says. They are 10 times more likely to molest children than heterosexuals, he claims against all the scientific evidence. They were specially selected by Hitler because “homosexual soldiers basically had no limits” to their “savagery and brutality” — an assertion no serious historian agrees with. LGBT activists are “Nazis” who will “do the same thing to you that the Nazis did to their opponents,” he insists, and gay people are “the single greatest perpetrators of hate crimes on the planet, outside the Muslim religion.”

Well, not really. Actually, LGBT people are the minority who, by far, are the most victimized by hate crime violence in the United States.

An analysis of 14 years of FBI hate crime data by the Southern Poverty Law Center found that LGBT people are more than twice as likely to be attacked in hate crimes as black people or Jews. They are more than four times as likely to be attacked as Muslims. And they are vastly more likely to suffer violent hate crime attacks than either Latinos or, especially, white people. Fischer's claim that gay people regularly target Christians for hate violence is completely unsupported.

Fischer and the American Family Association would certainly deny it, but it seems obvious that their reckless rhetoric contributes mightily to an atmosphere in which hate violence is all but inevitable. Fischer calls himself a Christian, but he is remarkably quick to bear false witness against his LGBT neighbors.

Another Church Conflict

In the following years, Fischer developed a reputation for asserting men's “authority” over women — a position that made some in his congregation uncomfortable, along with many in the larger community. On Aug. 21, 2005, for instance, Fischer said in a sermon that while Scripture says that men and women are “equal in essence and existence and worth,” they are “NOT equal in authority.”

That fall, the Dalai Lama was scheduled to visit Idaho as part of events surrounding the fourth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. In the run-up to the visit, Fischer disparaged Buddhism in remarks to his congregation, calling it a “godless myth” and a “terrible deception” that came “from the father of lies.”

But that didn't stop him from joining an interfaith discussion with the Dalai Lama, along with 100 other representatives of a variety of faiths and denominations in the region. There, he questioned the Dalai Lama about the nature of evil, telling a reporter afterward that the Dalai Lama's view of it was “simplistic.”

Things were coming to a head at the Community Church of the Valley. Mansfield, who had helped get the church started, said that church elders “had a meeting about a conflict with Bryan over who had the final say in the church.” Fischer insisted that he did, but Mansfield said it was actually the board.

Exactly what that conflict was remains something of a mystery. Four days after the Dalai Lama's visit, Fischer gave his last sermon at the church he had founded 12 years earlier. The following Sunday, a former ally, elder Robert Weisel, gave an emotional sermon about the prior week, saying how “sick last Sunday” had made him and speaking of the “ruin of friends.” He mentioned how another elder had been “vilified” and apologized to his fellow elders as a group. He said without explanation that the congregation had defeated the enemy of the Gospel.

Fischer departed the church. The next summer, it changed its name to Christian Life Fellowship, but many members left for other congregations in the aftermath of what looked to the larger community like a major split.

Fischer rebounded quickly. In late 2005, he incorporated the Idaho Values

Alliance (IVA) as a nonprofit controlled by Fischer, his wife and their daughter. In 2007, the IVA became the state affiliate of the American Family Association.

Off the Deep End

Fischer was now a public figure who was well known for his fondness for “hot rhetoric,” as the Idaho Press Club's Russell put it. But he crossed another line in May 2008, when a fundamentalist conference called “Shake the Nation” was held in Idaho. One of the invited speakers was Scott Lively, whose book *The Pink Swastika* falsely claims that gay men largely orchestrated the Holocaust.

After getting some criticism, Fischer responded with a press release saying the book was “well researched” and “documents the well-known historical fact that the Nazi Party was birthed in a gay bar, that Adolph Hitler's inner circle included many homosexuals, and that many if not most of the Brown Shirts, his notorious ‘Storm Troopers,’ were also homosexuals.” None of this, of course, was true.

But that didn't seem to bother Fischer. And it clearly didn't bother the AFA, which hired Fischer the next year as its director of issue analysis and moved him to Tupelo, Miss. Since that time, he has been a prolific blogger and the host of a daily two-hour AFA radio program, “Focal Point.” In recent months, the AFA has added a disclaimer to Fischer's blog postings, but he remains its top spokesman.

And what a spokesman he is.

This summer, he said that despite the Supreme Court's 2003 decision to the contrary, there is “no reason” why gay sex should not be recriminalized in all 50 states. Earlier, he summed up his view of “homosexual activists.”

“Ladies and gentlemen, they are Nazis,” he said in July on his AFA radio show. “Do not be under any illusions about what homosexual activists will do with your freedoms and your religion if they have the opportunity. They'll do the same thing to you that the Nazis did to their opponents in Nazi Germany.”

That seems highly unlikely, to say the least. But it did underline the attitude of the AFA, whose officials did not seem to have read any of Fischer's comments when they signed on to an ad accusing their many critics of “character assassination.” ▲

‘ERASING HATE’

Bryon and Julie Widner decided to quit the world of hate. But former comrades, and Bryon’s tattoos, made it an uphill struggle



Bryon and Julie Widner were hard-core racists. Bryon, nicknamed “Babs,” was so committed to the cause that he tattooed his body with racist emblems, including his face, which depicted a bloody straight razor, his weapon of choice. Now 34, Bryon co-founded the Vinlanders Social Club, once one of the most notorious and violent racist skin-head outfits in the country. Julie, now 40, became a leader in the neo-Nazi National Alliance during approximately the same period. In 2005, Bryon and Julie met at a hate music event and it changed their lives. They married later that year and had a son (they also are raising Julie’s other four

children together). After spending 16 years as a vicious brawler and razor-carrying skinhead enforcer, Bryon realized he didn’t want to raise his family in the hostile culture he once embraced. But he knew that his marked face would forever frustrate his efforts to rejoin the respectable world. In a courageous move, the Widners reached out to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), their longtime enemies, for help. Against daunting odds, both Widners made a permanent break with their pasts. Bryon’s path entailed excruciating physical pain, as he underwent some two dozen laser treatments to remove the tattoos from his face and neck that made it impossible for him to find work. The treatments, which were documented in the recently aired MSNBC film, “Erasing Hate,” were made possible by a generous donor to the SPLC, which had long tracked the Widners. Bryon and Julie Widner spoke to the Intelligence Report in September about the white supremacist movement and why they left it.

What first drew you to the movement?

BRYON WIDNER: I first became a skinhead at 14. We lived in Albuquerque, N.M., in the predominantly Mexican North Valley. When I was young, I didn’t like white people. I learned about skinheads from a relative who was one in

the late 1980s. He didn’t indoctrinate me; he just gave me a taste of the lifestyle. To impress him, I shaved my head and drew swastikas and upside-down crosses on my jacket. I got beat up a lot for this. Any normal person would have grown their hair out and quit. I decided

to stick with it, probably because in that area white kids got jumped a lot.

But I didn’t meet any serious white power skinheads for some time; there weren’t many in Albuquerque. I met my first white power skinhead when I was about 17, when a whole crop just came



out of nowhere. This was long before the Internet. There was no way of getting information easily. If you wanted to hear racist music, you had to mix a tape. We had to do it old school.

JULIE WIDNER: My parents divorced when I was about 9 and my mom ended up a single parent. She worked all the time. When I was 13, I had a mohawk, a swastika shaved on one side of my head, and an anarchy sign on the other. Even though I was living in a very nice part of Arizona, I would tell people Hitler wasn't that bad of a person. I didn't think of myself as a racist. I was just rebelling against society. But I know now that I was raised in a family with racist beliefs. My father raised us in that environment, in the Detroit area. You kept to yourself, didn't intermingle, didn't date someone not of your race.

I got pregnant with my first son at 17 and dropped out of high school. I had two kids by 19 and a failed relationship, but it wasn't until my late 20s that I actually found the movement. I met some skins from Tempe, Ariz., and they thought since I was new I should take baby steps. And baby steps meant joining the National Alliance [NA].

What about the racist scene appealed to you?

BRYON: It was a family thing. I was a street kid, a chronic runaway. It got to the point that my dad told me to call every couple of weeks to let him know I was alive. So I didn't have any family but my new family, a small skin group we called the Soldiers of the New Reich. I found out later that my family really did care about me.

JULIE: For me, it was the excitement, because I had been a single mom for so long. All I did was work and take care of kids. And one of the skins I met from NA meetings, I ended up marrying him. I joined the NA in 2002 or 2003. After my husband died in a car crash in 2003, I became even more active after moving to Michigan. I was alone with the kids and they took me in as family. And I was really active on [the racist Web forum] Stormfront.org. I even ended up moving some prominent racists to my town and some stayed in my house. I traveled with a bunch to



EURO [European American Unity and Rights conference, a gathering of white supremacists held near New Orleans by former Klansman David Duke's organization] in 2005. The nametags had your name and your Stormfront screen name, so we got to know each other.

Tell me about your time in the movement.

BRYON: After the Soldiers [of the New Reich] fell apart, we went our separate ways. I got into some legal trouble, bounced around and landed in Indiana. In 1999, I met the guys from the Northern Hammerskins [a racist skinhead group]. They were all huge body builders. They were completely covered in tattoos, frightening looking and a solid unit. Their leader, Jeremy Robinson, was really charismatic. He was the kind of guy you would follow to the gates of hell. But I never got my patch because of legal trouble — I would get in bar fights. I always had anger issues.

Once I cleared up my legal problems, the Outlaw Hammerskins [OHS] had formed. Jeremy [Robinson]

Skinheads, a love story: Bryon and Julie Widner were some of the toughest racist activists on the scene. Then they met, and everything began to change.

remembered me from the parties that I went to, but I didn't see him for a couple years because I was in and out of jail. I brought [future Vinlanders Social Club (VSC) co-founder] Brien James to meet Jeremy, and we got drunk. Our claim to fame as OHS was the fact that we basically took on the Hammerskin Nation [then a dominant racist skinhead federation that included the Northern Hammerskins] and showed they were too chicken shit to shoot us. All the other skinhead crews saw that the Hammers were a joke. Our tattoos and Web presence made us look like a very, very extreme group. For the most part, we just kept to ourselves, and it was very rare if anyone was shot or stabbed. But OHS fell apart after Jeremy left around 2002 or 2003. He was paranoid and scared and just gave up.

JULIE: I was a loyal NA activist for years. Things changed after I found out



"I was preaching white women are the holiest things in the world, but they thought they looked better with black eyes. I didn't want to say anything because I was afraid they'd shoot me."

that [NA Chairman] Erich Gliebe was dating a stripper. I have always been anti-smut. I didn't even know he had a girlfriend, because he would call me and say, "What are you wearing?" I would say, "What do you mean what am I wearing? I'm in my pajamas, let's talk business." I talked to Gliebe a lot on the phone and all of a sudden I find out that he's marrying a stripper? Even worse, in 2002, when Gliebe told me [NA founder and long-time leader] William Pierce died, he said Pierce had a huge pornography collection. So when I found out, it was an easy decision to make, I was gone. I joined [the racist skinhead outfit] American Front, but I never got my patch.

How did the Vinlanders Social Club come about?

BRYON: I was basically the last man in OHS. The day after I turned in my patch, Brien James started talking to me about forming the Hoosier State Skins. A bunch from OHS jumped on board, Eric ["The Butcher"] Fairburn, Jon Carr. We were blackballed from the movement because of OHS's threats against

the Hammers. We really didn't care. We told everyone on the Net that we were a white power group and if they didn't like it, they could fuck off.

But Brien had delusions of grandeur that he was the next führer and would take over the white power movement. Even so, I jumped on board because it gave me a chance to beat up some Hammerskins. I was an enforcer, after all. If another crew was worth a damn, I would bring them on board and run off all their buddies. But the ego battles between Brien and Eric started to really hurt VSC. Everybody thought Eric was the VSC "president" because he was loudest on the Internet. And he loved it. But Brien didn't.

When did things start to go sour?

BRYON: My doubts started even in OHS. My brothers abused women. I had always been very adamant about not kicking the crap out of girls. My image of a skinhead was basically a guy who worked hard and took care of his business. Your work and family comes first and after that you make time for the guys. But apparently that just wasn't the deal. I was preaching white women are the holiest things in the world, but they thought they looked better with black eyes. I didn't want to say anything because I was afraid they'd shoot me. The OHS guys were pretty scary, so I just keep my mouth shut. One of the crutches I used was alcohol.

What hypocrites! I mean, nobody cared about their kids, or their family. They had bastard children all across the country. They didn't pay child support. All they cared about was drinking and committing felonies.

JULIE: It started for me at Nordic Fest [a major white power concert in

Kentucky May 2005], where I first met Bryon. Nordic Fest reconfirmed concerns I already had. None of the women I'd met had their children. It seems like all the skinhead chicks had their kids taken away or their parents were raising them. It's about drinking and partying — not about furthering any agenda.

And then at Nordic Fest, there was a 17-year-old girl and she was in a tent having guys go back and forth. I put an end to that. But there was another tent with another girl that the guys were taking turns with, too. It was supposed to be a family event! By the time Bryon and I started talking after Nordic Fest, we had so much to talk about and we were on the same page. And six or seven months after that, we got married and Bryon came to live with me in Michigan.

And then it got worse because Bryon's buddies were mad that he was closer to his family than them. Here we are trying to make a life — we're married and having a child — and everybody is turning against us. Then Eric [Fairburn] came to see what we were up to. They were partying every day. One night we were at a lake and the guys were trying to get Bryon to come with them. They were all hell-bent on kicking some guy's ass, some Klan member. I leave, go home and I get a phone call asking what medications is Bryon on—he's at the hospital and the doctor wants to know.

Here we are trying be a family and they come out and they start drinking and Bryon is at the hospital. They're trying to tell me that it's none of my business as his wife. After that, Bryon decided no more drinking, because we fought, too, when he drank. And that's also when the phone calls started, around the middle of the summer of 2006. They were calling at 3:30 a.m. and

hanging up or saying, “You’re going to die.”

How did you actually leave the movement?

BRYON: There wasn’t any kind of definitive moment when I just said, “I’m done.” It was the culmination of a lot of things as I slowly opened my eyes. Once the death threats started happening... It was the most ridiculous, unbrotherly thing in the world. That’s when I hung up my boots. Julie was done long before that. I contacted [black anti-racist activist] Daryl Jenkins and we became friends. Then I reached out to former skinhead T.J. Leyden, whom I’d been following on the Web. He told me to call the SPLC. That was February 2006.

What was it like sitting down with your mortal enemies?

BRYON: It was incredibly strange. I mean, [SPLC co-founder] Morris Dees? He was the guy that hid under your bed and shut down your crews, Public Enemy Number One. I was nervous.

How did your tattoos affect your life at this point?

BRYON: I couldn’t get any decent jobs. Half of the people wouldn’t give

me an application because of the way I looked. It sucked and I needed to feed my family. I even talked to Julie about getting some dermal acid on eBay. I was going to test it out on my hands first and see how it worked and I was going to douse my face in it. I figured if I did that enough times the tattoos would come off.

Tell us about why the film, “Erasing Hate,” was so important to you?

BRYON: I agreed to do the first couple of laser treatments without

anesthesia. It was one of the most excruciating things that I’ve done in my life. But I felt like I deserved it. It was penance.

It took 24 separate treatments to get the tattoos off. But if I can prevent one other kid from making the same mistakes I did, if I can prevent one other family from having to go through what I put my family through, maybe I can redeem myself. And it’s really amazing. People have said that I have touched their life in positive ways. I never once thought I would ever touch anyone’s life — except maybe by punching them. ▲





Jasper, Interrupted

In 1998, the murder of James Byrd Jr. tore open racial wounds in East Texas.

Now, controversy is reopening those wounds

BY ROBERT STEINBACK

JASPER, Texas — Thirteen years ago, one of the most horrific racially motivated murders in U.S. history focused the scrutiny of a shocked nation on this staid East Texas town like sunbeams through a magnifying glass: On June 7, 1998, three white men chained a black man, James Byrd Jr., to their pickup truck by his ankles and dragged him three miles along a remote country road to his death, decapitating him and scattering pieces of his body over 75 locations.

Desperate to stave off a devastating racial explosion — not to mention an international reputation as a hotbed of race hate — black and white residents circled their wagons, spurned interloping agitators including the Ku Klux Klan and the National Black Panther Party, and somehow managed to hold their community together despite East Texas' long history of strained

race relations.

For a while afterward, Jasper almost began to look like a model of reconciliation — a primer on how a determined community could, with patience, perseverance and good will, overcome even the nastiest racial legacy. As a testament to that change, the fence separating the whites-only and blacks-only sides of the Jasper City Cemetery was torn down in 1999, the year after Byrd was buried there.

Unfortunately, the racial peace that was slowly built up over the course of more than a decade has taken only a few weeks to dissipate. In Jasper, once again, it's black versus white — and it's getting ugly.

The issue today is the April 22 appointment of the city's new police chief, Rodney Pearson, a black man. A petition drive to

recall three of the black city councilmen who voted for Pearson followed — with nearly all the signatures belonging to white residents.

Each side in the controversy accuses the other of racism: Whites say the black-majority City Council passed over better-qualified white candidates just to name a black man chief, while blacks say whites are angry that black people have the power to pick a chief that whites don't favor.

"I do not believe this petition is about incompetency, but about four black council members voting to hire a black police chief," the Rev. Ray Lewis, who is black, declared at a recent City Council meeting. "We can make it be something else but I believe we, all in this building tonight, know the truth of the matter."

"Was race a factor [in Pearson's selection]?" attorney Mike Getz, who is white and represents the petitioners seeking the three councilmen's recall, asked in an *Intelligence Report* interview. "It appears, if you look at it objectively and subjectively, absolutely. For them to suggest that [Pearson] was the most qualified candidate for the position is absolutely ludicrous."

Almost certainly, both sides are right: The Jasper City Council majority likely did have race in mind as it selected a black man for the job. But hasn't race always been a factor in decisions made for years by white-dominated councils that never considered qualified black candidates?

And, by the same token, both sides are wrong: White people in Jasper now resent a situation they never seemed to mind when it favored them. Black people, meanwhile, are defending the kinds of capricious government decisions they long resented when they worked against African Americans.

The controversy may not be unique in a nation undergoing seismic demographic realignments in countless venues, with the non-Hispanic white population expected to fall below 50% by 2050. But this is Jasper, a town thrust by fate into the role of canary in the coalmine of American race relations. How Jasper handles race may tell us something about how America handles race. Certainly, it makes it clear one more time that there is no easy fix when it comes to race in America. Those who dreamed of a "post-racial" America after the 2008 election



Racial conflict has returned to Jasper, Texas, 13 years after an infamous hate murder. The struggle pits mostly black City Council members, who supported new Police Chief Rodney Pearson (top photo), against whites aligned with Mayor Mike Lout.

of the nation's first black president were doing merely that — dreaming.

A Band-Aid on Race

"Jasper has never healed from James Byrd," observes Willie Land, one of the four black council members who voted to install Pearson as the city's new police chief and who is now a target of the recall effort. "Jasper put a Band-Aid on it. This will set us back further than James Byrd."

The current controversy caught many here by surprise. Even before Lawrence Russell Brewer, John William King and Shawn Allan Berry picked up hitchhiker Byrd and viciously beat and murdered him in 1998, the town was something of an anomaly for East Texas: It had already elected a black mayor, R.C. Horn, despite not being majority black. Since then, coinciding with a slow decline in the white percentage of the population, the City Council has become majority black, though with scarcely a social ripple — that is, until former police chief Todd Hunter stepped down Feb. 1. After that, Jasper's racial détente quickly unraveled.

On Feb. 14, the five members of the Jasper City Council — Land, Terrya Norsworthy, Joe Clyde Adams and Tommy Adams, all of whom are black, and Randy Sayers, who is white — unanimously appointed as interim police chief Pearson, a 22-year trooper with the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and also Jasper's volunteer fire chief for four



years. No one was more shocked by that decision than police Capt. Gerald Hall, an 18-year department veteran and its second-in-command. By most appearances, Hall had seemed the obvious choice for at least the interim role.

What had happened? Apparently, rumors and suspicions swirling independently in black and white Jasper had risen to hurricane force. Black people in town believed Jasper Mayor Mike Lout, who is white, had privately assured Hall, who also is white, that he would be named interim chief, thereby giving Hall a considerable edge for the permanent position — even though, under the city charter, the mayor has no authority to select or even cast a vote for the police chief. Many black critics cite a Facebook post by Hunter, the former chief, to Hall's wife Judy, which read: "I recommended him [Hall] to the Mayor and the Mayor told Gerald he was

going to be the Interim. Didn't think I needed to campaign since it looked like it was a done deal."

Lout vehemently denies being part of any back-room deal regarding the permanent post, saying Hunter's comment merely reflected the widely held belief that Hall would temporarily take the reins until the City Council selected a new permanent chief. Lout's theory is that the black council members voted to hire Pearson to preempt the pro-Hall power play they believed was under way. "I think they really, truly wanted someone black [to be chief], but they really wanted someone who was in their pocket," Lout told the *Intelligence Report*.

Following the Feb. 14 vote, civil discourse in Jasper seemed to crumble. Lout — perhaps the person in town best positioned to mediate the controversy — instead took sides, publicly declaring his displeasure with Pearson's selection.

Hall and two other Jasper police officers publicly criticized the City Council's decision — as their new boss sat listening only steps away. In one council meeting, a local white business owner reportedly made a disparaging remark using the word "niggers," and nearly came to blows with a black resident. The businessman, Ronnie Samples, publicly apologized two days later to defuse a boycott by a handful of protesters outside his store.

Nasty Facebook messages, some written by Jasper police officers, their wives, and local business owners, proliferated. One white businessman, gun shop owner Lance Caraway, who has contracts with the city, wrote, "I'LL SAY IT! STUPID NIGGERS!!!" A black resident reported seeing a black dummy hanging by a noose in a white neighbor's yard, apparently put up by the owner.

The local radio station, KJAS — which Lout owns — obtained a copy of a city-financed background investigation of Pearson that turned up repeated issues with writing bad checks, including a 1990 misdemeanor arrest in Nolan County, Texas, that Pearson initially failed to mention in his application for police chief.

But KJAS didn't report that Lisa Peterson, the county attorney for Nolan County, told the investigator Pearson and his then-wife were "equally guilty" of writing bad checks, that "[f]ull restitution

was finally accomplished," and that Peterson described Pearson as "good and honorable person." Pearson, however, also served a five-day suspension from DPS in 1995 for more bad-check problems — problems he had also failed to note on his application. Pearson acknowledges the application omissions, but says they were inadvertent and that he had made an effort to amend the application before the matter went public. "It was a mistake," Pearson told the *Intelligence Report*. "I've never had the chance to explain that."

Into the Fire

On April 22, the four black members of the City Council named Pearson, a 19-year resident of Jasper, the permanent chief of police, bypassing Hall and 21 other applicants. (Sayers, the lone white council member, dissented.)

The civic ruckus only intensified. A local ad hoc group called the League of Concerned Citizens launched the petition drive to recall the three black council members eligible for reelection, charging them with "incompetence, misconduct and malfeasance in office" — even though their vote for Pearson was perfectly legal.

One of the recall drive's proponents, Vickie Stewart, insisted that the issue was the council's judgment, not the race of the applicants. "None of [the council members] gave any reasoning for their decision other than, they did it," Stewart, who is white, told the *Intelligence Report*.

The language used in the petition — which attorney Getz said was necessary because the city charter allows recall efforts only for cause, not for mere unhappiness over a vote — further amped up the animosity, as it implied, wrongly, that the council had done something illegal.

After months of feeling as though they had no counter to Lout's reports on KJAS, which they considered one-sided, the council majority finally deployed some heavy artillery of their own: Attorney and tough-talking former state Sen. David Bernsen.

One of Bernsen's first moves was to call a July 27 press conference on the steps of City Hall. "The chief and his wife, Sandra, and their family have quietly endured six months of hurtful, false and shameless allegations," Bernsen said. "They were hopeful that common sense, community spirit and decency would

prevail. It is now apparent that a certain small group of people are more interested in their personal, financial and political gain than they are in telling the truth or seeking the truth."

Bernsen is helping the black council members challenge the recall effort in court. Meanwhile, five white Jasper police officers and two other candidates for the chief's position have filed complaints with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, alleging racial discrimination on the part of the council or Pearson.

Of course, even a successful recall of the three targeted Jasper City Council members won't guarantee that a new panel would fire Pearson. Still, petitioners' attorney Getz said, the effort serves a purpose. "You can sit and wring your hands and bemoan what's happening to your city, or you can be active and try to change what you believe are wrongs in your city."

And the sparring continues: Black Jasper activists in September submitted to the city their own recall petition to remove Lout, the mayor, from office.

Can Jasper survive all the racial self-righteousness and emerge, as it seemed to once before when faced with horrific racial violence, stronger? Communities around the country face a similar question as the population continues to undergo racial change even as the nation struggles to cast off its racist past. In some ways, it's hard to see how Jasper will prosper. It seems likely that whether Pearson hangs on to his new job or departs, half the city will remain embittered.

As it happens, Lawrence Brewer, one of the three killers of James Byrd Jr., was executed on Sept. 21 by lethal injection at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice facility in Huntsville, 103 miles from where his crime occurred 13 years earlier. (King is appealing a death sentence, and Berry is serving a life sentence.) But the emotional sentence being served by the City of Jasper has yet to be commuted.

Jasper County Sheriff Mitchell Newnan has been distressed to observe local folks who had been friends for years, now at odds with each other.

"They'll be over it this time next year," Newman predicted, "but there'll be scars. Any time something runs this deep, there'll be scars." ▲

‘Restore Our Republic’

Exploiting a local Arizona controversy, the antigovernment Oath Keepers portray themselves as patriots fighting ‘martial law’

BY RYAN LENZ

QUARTSZITE, Ariz. — This August, in this scruffy Sonoran Desert town populated by nomad retirees and inveterate rock hounds, the antigovernment “Patriot” group Oath Keepers took an odd kind of stand.

On Aug. 27, its members marched on Town Hall — a ragtag band, some dressed in ill-fitting military surplus clothing, others in the Oath Keepers’ black and yellow — to boldly proclaim that the red banner of tyranny would not fly in Quartzsite, a town of about 3,800 residents strung along Interstate 10.

“We want to set an example here,” Oath Keepers founder Stewart Rhodes said at the conclusion of a two-mile march. “If every community across the country simply did what’s being done right here — right here, right now — we would restore our republic.”

Then, just as suddenly as they had come, Rhodes and his followers turned on their heels and disappeared, driving off into the sweltering desert.

In many respects, the Oath Keepers’ foray into Quartzsite was a footnote to an already complicated tale of alleged small town corruption. A battle there pitted Police Chief Jeff Gilbert and the Town Council against then-Mayor Ed Foster, several police officers and a handful of citizens — a battle byzantine enough that it’s hard to say, even at this late stage, exactly what happened. What does seem clear is that the Oath Keepers, a group that traffics in conspiracy theories about government plots, were determined to use the controversy for their own ends.

The Quartzsite controversy centered on the claim that Foster, an avuncular former Wrigley’s chewing gum company engineer, had discovered that checks totaling \$250,000 were mysteriously being written on the city’s accounts

every year. The allegations, which many in the city doubted, prompted several state investigations.

But what really caught the attention of the Oath Keepers came in June. An online video showed a local blogger, Jennifer Jade Jones, being arrested after refusing to leave a Town Council meeting where she had demanded answers to the mayor’s allegations. The video went viral and prompted widespread condemnation of Gilbert and the council; at one point, Gilbert was held up as one of the “Worst Persons in the World” by liberal cable news host Keith Olbermann.

Patriot circles erupted with cries that the “martial law” that antigovernment extremists have feared for years had finally come. Mayor Foster raised the stakes by saying publicly that indeed, that was just what Chief Gilbert had imposed.

Into that fray stepped the Oath Keepers. On their website, they predicted the world would soon see “the Quartzsite saga to be a vital pivot point on which small-town America shall awaken to the encroachment of corruption and violation of rights from Federal levels downward.”



Jennifer Jade Jones, addressing a crowd in the small Arizona town of Quartzsite in August, demanded an investigation into alleged financial chicanery by city officials. She was supported by the antigovernment Oath Keepers, who came to town to participate in a rally.

It’s pretty clear that that did not happen. But one result of the Quartzsite conflict was to give a clearer picture of what the Oath Keepers really represent. Rhodes has angrily rejected characterizations of his group as conspiracy-minded or radical, saying it only asks members to pledge to defend the Constitution (or make that pledge a second time; most Oath Keepers are in the military, law enforcement or are veterans). But they didn’t look that way in Quartzsite.

Marching alongside the Oath Keepers were members of various border militias performing “security.” Some perched on the backs of low-slung pickups with desert tan military-styled rifles propped casually on their laps. That wasn’t all — mingling in the crowd and seeking recruits was at least one member of the Republic for the United States of America, one of the

“sovereign citizens” Patriot groups that believes the government has no right to impose most taxes or other laws.

The spirit of the afternoon, in fact, was as much a call for resistance as it was a day to congratulate Foster, Jones and their compatriots for defending their desert outpost from the supposed onslaught of tyranny. There were speeches and music, and barbecue and beer, as about 100 people settled into lawn chairs to share stories of border adventures and government ignominy.

Gilbert, who monitored the afternoon from afar, said the Oath Keepers’ goal was clearly opportunistic, an effort to paint themselves as noble crusaders against the political rot that the chief said existed only in their minds. “The Town of Quartzsite is not corrupt, nor am I,” he told the *Intelligence Report* by E-mail. “We have been exploited by individuals and groups who have a bigger cause.”

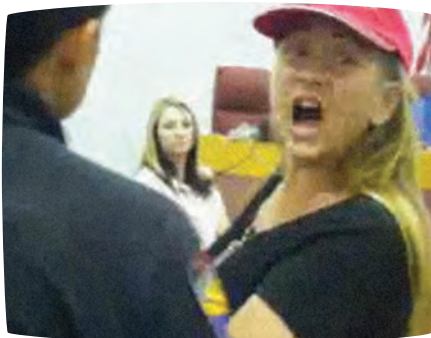
What that cause is has been a matter of dispute.

The group’s core plank and the key element of its website is the “10 Orders We Will Not Obey.” These include orders to put American citizens in prison camps and impose martial law — the very reason the Oath Keepers came to Quartzsite.

Rhodes, in the past, has defended such paranoid fears as mere theoretical worries — worries about, for example, a new version of the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. But the reality is that all the things the Oath Keepers fear — martial law, foreign troops, the collapse of paper money, the internment of liberty-loving Americans in concentration camps — are longstanding conspiracy theories that are central to the ideology of the Patriot movement.

This summer, Rhodes told the conservative *Human Events* magazine that descriptions of the Oath Keepers as a group of conspiracy theorists were “a smear tactic.” But a quick look at the Oath Keepers website make it pretty obvious why such allegations are regularly made.

This April 17, for instance, Rhodes described America’s military veterans as a “sleeping giant” who needed to be awakened to save the country. “The hour is late, and our Constitution hangs by a thread,” he wrote. He then went on warn of “the liberty crushing plans of the political and



A dispute pitting the mayor of Quartzsite against the Arizona town's police chief began when blogger Jennifer Jones was arrested at a Town Council meeting. Jones' supporters claimed her free speech was being suppressed; in fact, she was arrested for refusing to leave after the council ordered her ejected.

financial elites who intend to use chaos as an excuse to scrap our Constitution and national sovereignty once and for all.” He predicted the crash of the system of “fiat money” — money that is not backed by precious metals — and said that the “coming economic collapse” may be used as a pretext to impose “martial law.” He proposed that state militias be formed capable of “repelling invasions” (he has since made efforts to establish such a militia in his native Montana). He also suggested setting up barter networks and using gold and silver as money. “We must have an alternative to the fiat money in

place when it collapses, so we can resist what the globalists have in store for us.”

Be that as it may, it’s unclear what any of that really had to do with Quartzsite. The suggestion that the town had been put under martial law came from the mayor during an emergency meeting held to address Jones’ arrest, and after that Gilbert quickly became a focal point for Patriot ire, with some websites referring to the chief as a “Nazi cop.” But there doesn’t seem to be anything to it.

“There’s this misconception that [Jones] was arrested because she was exercising her freedom of speech,” Gilbert told the *Intelligence Report*. “She got arrested because she refused to leave when the council voted to have her removed” after she violated the council’s rules. (A video of her arrest confirms this.)

Gilbert also showed the *Report* materials, allegedly from one of Jones’ blogs, that went far beyond community muck-raking. One unsigned post read: “In the AZ that I remember real citizens carried guns and had the balls to use them. ... Take your town back. If they won’t listen to reason, run them out of town, or kill them.”

Gilbert later said that things had grown quieter in Quartzsite. The Oath Keepers had promised to help Jones move, he said, but few stuck around after their rally finished. Jones has since moved herself out of town.

The Oath Keepers, meanwhile, have touted their afternoon as nothing short of a smashing success. “As our Declaration of Independence made clear, the only legitimate purpose of government is to secure our rights, and if one level of government is abusing our rights, it is incumbent on the next level to investigate and to take action to stop the abuse,” Rhodes wrote following the event.

Apparently, the people of Quartzsite don’t agree. A recall election held on Aug. 30 ousted Mayor Foster, who lost his post to former town councilman and Fire Department Capt. Jose Lizarraga. The La Paz County Recorder’s Office counted 289 votes, or 53% of the vote, for Lizarraga, compared to Foster’s 230. Jones, the local gadfly who set off the ruckus and later described the recall outcome as a “nauseating turn of events,” ran as a write-in candidate and garnered just 23 votes.

Said Gilbert: “I hope this is the starting point again.” ▲

‘A Gathering of Eagles’

In Montana, the ‘last best place,’ a batch of newly energized extremists is coming together to build a movement

BY RYAN LENZ ILLUSTRATION BY DALE STEPHANOS



Montana as the new Alamo: Among those gathering for a last stand in the Big Sky State are (clockwise, from lower left) Karl Gharst, a neo-Nazi activist; Constitution Party principal Chuck Baldwin; Oath Keepers founder Stewart Rhodes; “Pioneer Little Europe” organizer April Gaede; and fugitive militia activist Dave Burgert.

KALISPELL, Mont. – For two years in the mid-1990s, Judge Greg Mohr carried a gun and wore a bulletproof vest while presiding over his tiny courtroom east of here.

Members of the Montana Freeman, an armed group of racist extremists, were regularly appearing before him, and they didn't mince words. Some of them later sentenced Mohr to death in their own pseudo-legal "common-law courts."

Nearly two decades later, similar types of antigovernment stirrings are frequently being felt again across Montana, especially in this nearly all-white city in the northwest corner of the state. Far-right extremists are vowing that if a war with the federal government comes, their base will be in the mountains here.

Chuck Baldwin, a Baptist preacher who ran for president under the Constitution Party banner in 2008, moved 18 members of his family to Montana's Flathead Valley last fall after receiving what he called a divine message telling him the state was the "tip of the spear" in the fight for liberty. Stewart Rhodes, a Yale-educated lawyer, former Army paratrooper and head of the conspiracy-minded Oath Keepers, also moved here. Rhodes is laying the groundwork for a new militia and is calling for citizens to adopt a barter economy to escape the bondage of U.S. currency. Neo-Nazi April Gaede, also a transplant to the state, has issued a call for white nationalists to "come home" to the Northwest.

These extremists and others came for different reasons, but they are having a cumulative effect. Law enforcement officers and courts have seen a surge of anti-government activity by "sovereign citizens," radicals who believe that most laws do not apply to them. Rooms at the Kalispell Public Library host regular screenings of racist films. Christian Identity adherents are papering neighborhoods with their message that whites are the true

chosen people of the Bible and Jews are directly descended from Satan. And, once again, so-called "Preparedness Expos" are being held so shoppers can get ready for the imminent collapse of government.

For Mohr, who got to know most of the Freeman long before their famed 81-day standoff with FBI agents in 1994, it's the second act in a frightening drama.

"Here we go again," he said with a nervous chuckle in September.

'There's a Fight Coming'

What is happening in Montana — thanks to this newest wave of extremists — is a convergence of two "separatist" ideas that have long fermented in the brew of Pacific Northwest extremism. The antigovernment "Patriots," the larger of the two movements, want to establish a remote base of like-minded allies as a bastion of resistance for the day when, as they believe, the government will impose martial law. White supremacists are organizing around the idea of forming a long-desired all-white homeland far away from the multicultural cities.

The idea of staking a claim in the American West is tied intimately to

Montana's history and identity. The state is quintessentially Western, predominantly white, and home to a frontier ethos of militant individualism and support for the Second Amendment. Moreover, Montana's residents tend to distrust the federal government, which is seen as a distant meddler, and they are vigilantly protective of the privacy afforded by the state's remote location and rugged terrain.

Such an environment has historically drawn antigovernment and extremist groups — from the Freeman to the Militia of Montana, founded in 1994 by John Trochmann, a militant with white supremacist leanings. Unabomber Ted Kaczynski also was caught after years of hiding in Montana's remote forests in 1996.

Now, it all seems to be happening again.

Karl Gharst, a former member of the neo-Nazi Aryan Nations and a Christian Identity adherent, is one example. He recently moved to Montana and is working to make a white nationalist presence felt in the Rocky Mountain West. In September, he sent an E-mail to the anti-racist Montana Human Rights Network threatening to convene a "citizens grand jury," a tactic commonly employed by radical-right extremists, to investigate what he described as a "Jewish criminal organization working with other Jewish crime networks." He made similar comments about the Southern Poverty Law Center and Media Matters for America after learning that both were preparing reports on the situation in Montana (see story, p. 40).

More recently, militia leader Francis Schaeffer Cox, now under federal indictment for a scheme to murder state troopers and judges, spent time in Montana building support for his nascent militia before moving to Alaska.

This past June, militia activist Dave Burgert — who spent eight years in prison for his part in the "Project 7" plot to kill judges to spark a revolution a decade ago — allegedly fired shots at a Missoula County sheriff's deputy before disappearing into the Lolo National Forest. Officials believe that Burgert, a trained survivalist armed with only a handgun, is living in the woods on caches of food, ammunition and other supplies. He was still on the lam at press time.

The Flathead County Sheriff's

Department, the FBI and others have not associated Burgert with other radical groups now active in Montana, including those linked to Baldwin, Rhodes and Gaede. Nevertheless, Burgert represents the militant extreme that ideologies now pervasive in the state are capable of reaching.

During a speech to a packed house at Kalispell's Outlaw Inn in January, shortly after moving to Montana, Chuck Baldwin strolled onto the stage like a lawman of old, promising to round up the "terrorists of Washington, D.C.," and restore liberty to America. A firebrand Patriot and "constitutionalist," he vowed to lead anyone who would follow him into the breach.

"We know there's a fight coming," Baldwin said. "We know there is a line being drawn in the sand, and we want to be in the right place. The good ground is right here in Montana."

A Modern-Day Alamo

Baldwin is by far the most visible of this new generation of extremists in Montana, a state he has praised for being thousands of miles from the "Orwellian machine" of government and for being more gun-friendly than most others. Last fall, he arrived in Kalispell after abandoning a church he led for 35 years in Pensacola, Fla.

"We are going [to Montana] to fight!" Baldwin wrote in a Sept. 15, 2010, letter to his followers. "The Mountain States just might become The Alamo of the twenty-first century, with, hopefully, much better results. But if not, I would rather die fighting for Freedom with liberty-loving patriots by my side than be shuttled off to some FEMA camp." (Fears of government prison camps have long animated the radical right.)

Eighteen members of Baldwin's extended family moved with him to Montana, most notably his son Timothy Baldwin, a writer and lawyer. The family has wasted no time in feathering a nest for what Baldwin has called a "gathering of eagles" — people opposed to oppressive "big-city liberalism and UN-sponsored globalism."

The Baldwins established a new church, Liberty Fellowship, which meets every Sunday at Kalispell's Red Lion Inn and claims to attract as many as 200 people every week, including Randy Weaver, a white supremacist who engaged in a famous standoff with federal authorities

at Ruby Ridge, Idaho, in 1992. Timothy Baldwin ran for the board of trustees of Flathead Valley Community College and, although he lost, received a surprising 20% of the vote. Together, Chuck and Timothy Baldwin formed The Baldwin Institute of Education, a school with a distinctly Patriot curriculum focusing on American Revolutionary War history.

It's virtually impossible to accurately say how many extremists have heeded the call to come to Montana. Christian Identity adherent Karl Gharst, in an E-mail to the *Intelligence Report*, claimed, "For every one of us you know, there are 10,000 you don't" — an obvious and wild exaggeration. But there are signs the numbers may be significant.

Chuck Baldwin has publicly said that dozens have already moved to the Flathead Valley and "scores" more are on the way because of his urgings. His speeches draw audiences numbering in the hundreds, and his family has made inroads with many prominent figures on the Patriot scene. They included Weaver; Stewart Rhodes, the Oath Keepers founder who since coming to Montana has embraced a host of conspiratorial fears, including the idea that the U.S. Army has trained soldiers to invade cities; and Dane Clark, a Constitution Party advocate known for wearing a gun on his hip to political functions.

The Baldwins' move to Montana is part of a grand design to prepare the Northwest for an apocalyptic clash between "liberty-loving" Patriots and international agents of the New World Order. The idea of building a fortified home for "Christian Patriots" in the Northwest is known as "The American Redoubt," a plan to strategically group people across five Western states (Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Oregon and Washington) as a "defensive reaction" to threats to liberty and the Christian way of life. It was first proposed by survivalist author and sovereign citizen James Wesley, Rawles. (The comma is part of his name; sovereigns often use such bizarre forms of punctuation.)

"I am a separatist, but on religious lines, not racial ones," Wesley, Rawles wrote on his website. "In calamitous times, with a few exceptions, it will only be the God fearing that will continue to

Montana Extremist Issues Threats



In September, neo-Nazi **Karl Gharst** started writing. A recent Montana transplant who once sat at the feet of Aryan Nations leader

Richard Butler, he sent letters to a host of civil rights groups, naming them "Jewish criminals and traitors to the white race."

In one letter last October addressed to Media Matters that mentioned the Southern Poverty Law Center, La Raza and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), Gharst said he would hold all four guilty of "illegal operations" that "violat[ed] the sovereignty of Montana by working against and contrary to the lawful and rightful citizens of the SState [sic]." (By lawful, he meant white.)

This is not the first time Gharst has turned aggressive. In 2004, he pleaded guilty to charges stemming from threats to a social worker he called a "greasy, turd-colored mongrel." Then, last September, Gharst sent an E-mail to the Montana Human Rights Network accusing the anti-racist group of being a "Jewish criminal organization working with other Jewish organized crime networks." The letter threatened that Gharst would form a "citizen grand jury" to indict his enemies, who include anyone who dares question his ardent white supremacist views.

But the idea had started weeks before. In an interview with the *Intelligence Report* several weeks before he started writing his letters, Gharst accused this reporter of being an "illegal alien" unqualified to conduct the interview. Montana was formed as a "sanctuary for the persecuted white Christian," he said, and it would not be ruined by efforts to expose the actions of racist extremists like him.

"You stand for the death of our race," Gharst said. "Sieg Heil!"

—Ryan Lenz

be law abiding. Choose your locale wisely.”

What Wesley, Rawles casually ignored — as, for that matter, did the Baldwins — is the history of the idea. Others have chosen the Northwest for similar reasons. They were Nazis.

Coming Home

In the mid-1980s, the idea of carving out a white homeland in the Pacific Northwest was highly popular among neo-Nazis and other white supremacists. The so-called Northwest Territorial Imperative, popularized by Aryan Nations founder Richard Butler, imagined enclaves of “racially conscious” white people. Two decades later, in 2006, April Gaede left her home in California for Kalispell, where she took up residence in a quaint, two-story house adorned with a sunflower garden. Not long afterward, she set out to breathe fresh air into that Aryan dream.

“I am formally making your [sic] invitation to ‘come home,’ she wrote on the white nationalist Web forum Stormfront in 2008. “Over 20 years ago some of the first White Nationalist pioneers started moving to this area. The numbers are not clear, but we are slowly but surely gaining ground.”

Touting “wonderful neighborhoods,” “the best high schools in the nation” and a “state of the art hospital and care,” Gaede implored fellow white supremacists to move to Montana and form “Pioneer Little Europe” communities. The idea, first proposed in a 2001 pamphlet by H. Michael Barrett that was titled *Pioneer Little Europe Prospectus*, envisioned consolidating white residents in existing cities and towns and actively repelling racial minorities.

Gaede’s invitation drew apparently widespread but largely anonymous support online, despite the comical reservations of some detractors who feared that creating a white homeland in landlocked Montana, with no harbors, would make it impossible to ever secede from the Union.

Meanwhile, white nationalists are growing more visible to Montanans. British Holocaust denier David Irving gave a speech in Kalispell last May. Gaede and Gharst hold frequent white nationalist film screenings at the Kalispell Public Library, despite public protest.

Police in Montana are more than aware of the white nationalists’ activities. But in

the absence of criminal activity, there’s little they can do. “We’ve got a lot of dangerous guys in Kalispell,” Police Chief Roger Nasset said. “But as long as they are peaceful, we can’t hold [their beliefs] against them.”

Gaede insists that people are coming, but the indications are that no more than a half dozen families have answered her call. And she has the Patriots to contend with. If the white nationalists are whispering their wishes in shadowy gatherings, the Patriots are yelling through a bullhorn.

In June, a survivalist “Preparedness Expo” in Kalispell drew at least 1,000 people to learn about “resources and



Francis Schaeffer Cox helped found the Flathead Liberty Bell, a Montana “Patriot” group, before moving on the Alaska. He has since been charged in a plot to kidnap and kill police officers and judicial officials.

workshops to help you prepare for the unexpected,” as event fliers advertised. Speakers included Stewart Rhodes, Chuck Baldwin and former Arizona Sheriff Richard Mack, a hero to many Patriots for challenging gun control laws in the 1990s. Such expos were frequently held during the first wave of the militia movement in the 1990s, when the Militia of Montana and other groups were hell-bent on preparation for a war that never came.

The current popularity of the expos is due largely to one group, the Flathead Liberty Bell.

Calling All Patriots

Founded in 2009 with the help of Francis Schaeffer Cox, the boyish, self-made militia leader who spent time in Montana before leaving in March for Alaska, the Liberty Bell arguably represents

the future of the Patriot movement in Montana. It is loosely organized, keeps no public records of its members and remains exceptionally secretive.

Mike Greskowiak, a Kalispell barber who now leads the group and serves as its primary spokesman, bristles at the suggestion his Liberty Bell is anything more than a grassroots organization informing the community of constitutional rights that have been systematically dismantled. “We want nothing more than constitutional government and to get these sons-of-bitchin’ Marxists out of office,” he told the *Report* in September.

In reality, the group wants much more. The Liberty Bell clings to an ideology closely akin to that of the sovereign citizens movement, holding that modern government is slavery and that citizens can once again be free. “American’s Founding Fathers would say that Americans today are slaves. Wealthy slaves that enjoy luxury and tranquility, but slaves none the less,” its website states. Members see government as a “Big Brother” figure meddling in the lives of well-meaning citizens, and the group offers primers on “living off-grid” through “solar power, alternative housing systems and herbal remedies.”

The mindset is distinctly survivalist and tied intimately to the origins of the group. In its early days, founding members met at a sprawling property on top of Big Mountain, near Whitefish, Mont. The property belonged to Sam Halpern, a tax protester, survivalist and sovereign citizen who went by the name Sam Bentacour de Valencia Halpern. His fears, in fact, led him to build a \$500,000 hermetically sealed shelter underground on his property.

The Liberty Bell continues to work closely with many extremists in the area. Greskowiak appeared alongside Rob Blair at a Flathead County Commissioners meeting in February, during which Blair, who heads the Christian Patriot group Mountain Mission, asked the commission to investigate “invalid oath of offices [sic]” among county officials. Chuck Baldwin and Stewart Rhodes also routinely speak for the group.

On March 8, for example, Rhodes

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Taking on the 'Sovereigns'

As a radical movement grows and the FBI warns of violence, officials struggle to come up with adequate responses

BY ROBERT STEINBACK

The flap began on June 23, when half a dozen cows wandered onto Rodney Brossart's land in Lakota, N.D., a tiny prairie town about 100 miles northwest of Fargo. Acting on his peculiar interpretation of open-range laws, Brossart refused to return the wayward beasts and instead claimed them as his own property.

The local sheriff disagreed. That's when the trouble started with the Brossart clan.

Over the next three days, six family members would end up in jail. The sheriff says Brossart had to be Tasered when he defied deputies and that his daughter was taken into custody, too, for interfering with his arrest. The next day, Brossart's three sons were arrested after pointing rifles at deputies. Two days later, his wife allegedly tried to mislead deputies during a search for illegal weapons.

All six were released on bond but then failed to show up for their arraignment. Arrest warrants were issued.

What began as a seemingly minor matter had thus become the latest clash between law enforcement and antigovernment extremists known as "sovereign citizens."

Nelson County Sheriff Kelly Janke knew the Brossarts were followers of another Lakota resident, Roger Elvick, one of the original gurus of the bizarre but remarkably resilient sovereign citizens movement. Adherents — estimated by the Southern Poverty Law Center



From molehills to mountains: Rodney Brossart's conflict with authorities, which started small but escalated to include his whole family, is typical of the "sovereign citizens" movement.

to number about 300,000 nationwide — believe that individuals can simply remove themselves from the authority of local, state and federal laws, and follow their own rules instead.

The movement has caught fire in recent years as part of the resurgence of the broader "Patriot" and militia movements. Across the country, sovereigns are giving law enforcement officers, judges and other government employees fits. In September 2011, nearly a year and a half after two sovereign citizens murdered

two officers during a traffic stop in West Memphis, Ark., the FBI took the step of identifying sovereigns as a potential domestic terrorism threat. In all, six law enforcement officers have been killed by sovereigns since 2000, the FBI says.

But it's not only the potential for violence that has government agencies scrambling to respond — it's paperwork. A favorite tactic of sovereigns is to file bogus property liens and other documents with the purpose of harassing their enemies, who are often government officials. They're also known to engage in financial scams, claim unoccupied houses as their own, and file bogus tax returns claiming they or their clients are owed huge sums of money.

Now, with sovereign activity surging anew, an urgent push has begun to educate law enforcement officers, court officials, county clerks and others who are most likely to encounter them. Law enforcement associations have issued advisories on how to spot sovereigns and offered tips for responding. Meanwhile, the Internal Revenue Service, state legislators, attorneys general and professional organizations representing government recording clerks, counties and others have begun to devise methods to combat sovereigns.

The word is getting around.

Not long ago, police, out of ignorance or machismo, might have marched boldly onto a sovereign citizen's property to serve warrants — and possibly walked

headlong into a hail of unanticipated gunfire, as did two Abbeville, S.C., law enforcement officials who were fatally ambushed while confronting a family of sovereign citizens in December 2003.

Janke sought to avoid a similar miscalculation.

“We’re trying to reach out to the family to get them to surrender,” the sheriff told the *Intelligence Report*. “It’s not common for people to brandish weapons against law enforcement, and to have them all be family members is unique. [It tells me] they’re up to something, they’re planning something, they have some different beliefs. ... We’re going to keep on doing what we’re doing. We’re meeting with a team of experts to find out the best possible way to resolve this.”

As of press time, the Brossarts had not surrendered — but neither had blood been shed.

Law Enforcement Responds

Sovereign citizen ideology traces back to the Posse Comitatus of the 1970s, a racist, anti-Semitic movement whose members denied the legitimacy of taxes and the authority of state and federal government. After fading in the mid-1980s, the ideology enjoyed a renaissance a decade later with the rise of the Patriot movement. The movement subsided again until around 2008, when it came roaring back stronger than ever — propelled by a moribund economy, the efficiency of the Internet in quickly spreading and legitimizing radical ideas and the



The price of ignorance: Former West Memphis, Ark., Police Chief Bob Paudert, whose son was one of two officers murdered by “sovereign citizens” last year, says training could have saved the men’s lives.

once-unimaginable elevation of a left-of-center black man to the presidency, a development that alarmed many far-right extremists.

Today, law enforcement officials say they are encountering sovereigns in every part of the country — squatting in abandoned houses, driving with strangely worded driver’s licenses and fake registrations, resisting arrest, clogging the courts with nonsensical filings, creating their own currencies, duping clients with empty promises of discharging tax debts or fighting foreclosures, and generally making a nuisance of themselves.

In just the last eight months, sovereigns

in Arizona and Texas were shot, one fatally, after engaging in shootouts with police. Officials broke up alleged multi-million-dollar property-theft schemes run by sovereigns in Georgia and North Carolina. A sovereign in upstate New York was convicted of mail fraud after harassing officials with \$1.24 trillion in bogus property liens. In Arizona, two prominent sovereign practitioners were indicted by a federal grand jury on multiple counts of property acquisition fraud for charging clients \$500 to fend off foreclosure actions and then filing bogus court papers that accomplished nothing.

While most sovereigns don’t commit violence, the specter of it hangs over the movement — with good reason. Terry Nichols, the co-conspirator with Timothy McVeigh in the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building in 1995, was a sovereign citizen.

So were Jerry Kane and his 16-year-old son, Joe. On May 20, 2010, the Kanes were pulled over while driving on Interstate 40 through West Memphis, Ark., because of what turned out to be a fake license tag. As police officers Brandon Paudert and Bill Evans puzzled over Jerry Kane’s bogus paperwork, Joe leaped from the car with a blazing AK-47, shooting both



Jerry Kane traveled the country with his 16-year-old son giving seminars on how people could supposedly avoid foreclosure by using “sovereign citizens” techniques. When the pair were pulled over in Arkansas last year, they murdered two police officers before being killed themselves.

officers to death in a stunning scene partially captured on the dashboard camera of a squad car. Both Kanes were killed a short time later in a shootout that seriously injured two more officers.

The murders turned West Memphis Police Chief Bob Paudert, father of one of the slain officers, into a national advocate for training officers about a threat few at the time knew existed. Paudert appeared in a training video produced by the Southern Poverty Law Center and distributed free to more than 80,000 officers and agencies (see sidebar). He soon retired and now devotes his time to giving seminars and lectures on sovereign citizens, mostly to law enforcement audiences.

“They’re still learning,” Paudert said in September. “There’s still a lot of ignorance. They just don’t know about the sovereign citizen movement.”

Law enforcement organizations are working to change that, as is the Southern Poverty Law Center, which offers training sessions on sovereigns and other extremists and has reached more than 5,000 officers this year alone.

In the wake of the West Memphis murders, the Regional Organized Crime Information Center (ROCIC) issued an Officer Safety Alert that examined the history of the movement, offered tips to help officers identify believers, and listed measures officers could take when they do.

Another professional group, the non-profit Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR), began educating officers through its State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training (SLATT) program, funded by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Its director, Richard Marquise, who retired from the FBI after 31 years of counterterrorism work, told the *Intelligence Report* that requests for SLATT training sessions have increased sharply of late because officers are hungry for information about sovereigns.

“We have put together a one-day sovereign citizen class — who they are, how you recognize them, the things that they do — to help cops,” Marquise said. “It goes beyond that street stop, because they’re into filing liens, lawsuits and everything else. We try to give [officers] the whole picture so they can protect themselves on the street, and then what you can do to protect yourself after they file the lawsuits against you.”

Jeff Sandy, sheriff of Wood County, W. Va., and a retired IRS criminal investigator who is an expert on “paper terrorism,” has conducted four training sessions on sovereign citizens for SLATT since mid-summer. “In just the past two months, conservatively, over a thousand law enforcement officers have been trained, and [officers in] every one of those classrooms had numerous sovereign citizens identified in their geographical areas,” Sandy said.

In September, the FBI’s Counterterrorism

Analysis Section issued a warning about sovereigns in the monthly *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, noting that the agency considers sovereign citizen extremists a domestic terrorism movement. “If someone challenges their ideology (e.g., a standard traffic stop for false license plates), the behavior of these sovereign-citizen extremists quickly can escalate to violence,” the *Bulletin* said.

‘Paper Terrorism’

While good training can help cops deal with potentially violent sovereigns,

RESOURCES FOR OFFICERS

Criminal activities from members of the swelling antigovernment “sovereign citizens” movement, including the murder of two Arkansas police officers in 2010, have created an enormous demand for training and advice for law enforcement officials. Here are several resources:



The Southern Poverty Law Center has created a 12-minute officer safety video presentation called “Sovereign Citizens’ and Law Enforcement: Understanding the Threat.” It is available free on DVD, or can be downloaded free at

www.splcenter.org/what-we-do/hate-and-extremism/law-enforcement. The SPLC also offers free in-person training for law enforcement on the radical antigovernment movement, with a focus on sovereign citizen beliefs, rhetoric and indicators, in sessions lasting one to four hours. To arrange a presentation, order a DVD or ask for more information on law enforcement resources, officers can E-mail training@splcenter.org.

The State and Local Antiterrorism Training Program (SLATT) is a source for free training for state, local and tribal law enforcement. SLATT offers a one-day class on sovereign citizens as well as two-hour segments in other trainings on that topic. For more information, visit www.slatt.org or call 850-385-0600 and ask for SLATT.

The Regional Information Sharing System (RISS) is a national program designed to enhance the ability of local, state, federal and tribal criminal justice agencies to identify, target and stop criminal conspiracies and activities crossing jurisdictional and even international boundaries. RISS’s website is www.riss.net. One of RISS’s six regional divisions, the Regional Organized Crime Information Center (ROCIC), published a bulletin for law enforcement on sovereign citizens. ROCIC’s website is www.rocic.com.

coping with their penchant for fouling up the lives of their perceived enemies is more problematic. Sovereign “terrorists” have learned how to turn common government services into weapons of mass harassment — the bureaucratic equivalent of using a hijacked airliner as a bomb.

Filing a lien on real property is designed to be easy, to protect legitimate creditors like mortgage companies and contractors whose money or work is tied to land or real estate, said Carol Foglesong, president of the National Association of County Recorders, Election Officials and Clerks (NACRC).

While filing a false document is illegal, once it’s discovered it can’t simply be torn up and discarded, Foglesong said, because every lien, valid or not, becomes part of a property’s permanent record. If the filer refuses to withdraw it voluntarily, only a subsequent legal document — typically prepared by costly lawyers and approved by overburdened judges — can invalidate it. So the filing itself usually accomplishes the schemer’s goal of making a public official’s life miserable or setting up an attempt to extort money in exchange for removing the lien.

NACRC’s members, who record property documents in 3,600 jurisdictions across the nation, “have all had reason to become aware of the sovereign citizen movement over the last eight to 10 years,” Foglesong told the *Intelligence Report*. “[Sovereigns] spike up in an area, and then they sort of go away.”

The organization has launched an effort to keep its members updated on sovereign citizen activity, but it’s difficult to draw up a defense for clever people who feel no obligation to follow the rules. Sovereign citizens, Foglesong said, “know where the weaknesses are.”

Jeff Sandy, the West Virginia sheriff, has experienced tax-form harassment personally. A sovereign citizen he helped send to prison in 1999 filed a blizzard of bogus documents with the IRS claiming he was party to enormous transfers of cash to Sandy and others. The IRS, naturally, treated the documents as authentic, setting up a nightmarish mess that damaged the victims’ credit ratings. “I was sued for \$1.1 million,” Sandy said. The suspect “starts filing IRS Form 8300 in the billions. He filed them on countless federal judges,

magistrates, state police, you name it ... hundreds of people ... every employee that [he] had ever come in contact with that did not adhere to his beliefs or did anything against him for being a sovereign.”

Some States Act

During the sovereign flare-up in the 1990s, a man named Richard McLaren — the self-styled “chief ambassador” of the sovereign-style separatist group Republic of Texas — became known as a paper terrorism maestro.

The Republic believes the United States illegally annexed Texas in 1845 and agitates for its independence. McLaren



At first, Republic of Texas leader Richard McLaren seemed like a harmless crank, arguing that Texas was really an independent nation. But then his henchmen kidnapped a neighboring couple and the group engaged in a major standoff with Texas Rangers. In the end, he was sentenced to 111 years in prison.

and other group leaders — claiming the government owed them \$93 trillion in “war reparations” — deluged Texas county and district clerks with hundreds, possibly thousands, of fraudulent judgment liens issued by so-called “common law courts.” They also tried to pass \$3 million in fraudulent checks and placed bogus property liens against the state and state officials.

McLaren would later be sentenced to 111 years in prison after a six-day armed standoff with Texas Rangers that began when McLaren’s followers kidnapped and injured a neighboring couple.

Thanks to McLaren’s excesses, the Texas Legislature in 1997 passed a

comprehensive false-lien law, which also outlawed fictitious courts and the fake summonses, judgments and complaints they issued.

Texas wasn’t alone. Between 1995 and 1999, 27 states adopted laws criminalizing the filing of property liens when no legitimate claim existed, according to a 2005 study co-authored by Donald Haider-Markel, chairman of the political science department at the University of Kansas. The study determined that these laws were adopted by states that experienced problems with false liens in the 1990s or bordered states that did.

In 2005, Texas went a step further, requiring any county clerk or secretary of state who suspects someone is attempting to file a fraudulent instrument to contact the county or district attorney’s office to verify its authenticity.

But that, in a way, illustrated the problem with trying to manage the mayhem caused by sovereigns.

“The intentions are good — [the fraudulent document] needs to be stopped before it gets recorded — but how does a recorder know?” asked Foglesong of NACRC, who also is assistant comptroller for Orange County, Fla. “We [in Orange County] have a population of over a million. We record 3,000 documents a day. I did not hire attorneys.”

This year, Arkansas passed a new false-lien law, and one has been debated in Pennsylvania. More states are likely to follow suit.

Still, sovereigns are likely to continue vexing police officers and government officials with their deliberate flouting of the law. What rules can be adopted to corral people who believe the rules don’t apply to them?

The FBI’s September bulletin captured the gravity of the situation and the threat to those most likely to encounter them. “The sovereign-citizen threat likely will grow as the nationwide movement is fueled by the Internet, the economic downturn, and seminars held across the country that spread their ideology and show people how they can tap into funds and eliminate debt through fraudulent methods. As sovereign citizens’ numbers grow, so do the chances of contact with law enforcement and, thus, the risks that incidents will end in violence.” ▲

FOR THE RECORD

INCIDENTS OF APPARENT HATE CRIMES AND HATE GROUP ACTIVITIES LISTED HERE ARE DRAWN primarily from media sources. These incidents include only a fraction of the approximately 195,000 reported and unreported hate crimes that a 2011 Bureau of Justice Statistics report estimated occur annually. This listing carries a selection of incidents from the third quarter of 2011. Any additional listings can be found on the Intelligence Project's website at www.splcenter.org/get-informed/hate-incidents

ARIZONA

Phoenix • July 5, 2011

Gary Thomas Kelley, 51, was sentenced to 20 years in prison for murder and 7 1/2 years for aggravated assault for the May 2010 shooting death of his Latino neighbor Juan Varela. Police said before shooting Varela, Kelley repeatedly used a racial slur and told Varela to "go back to Mexico" or he would die.

ARKANSAS

Bryant • Sept. 20, 2011

A racist note allegedly signed by the KKK was left in the mailbox of a family that has an adopted black son.

Harrison • Sept. 27, 2011

Sean Popejoy, 20, was sentenced to four years in prison for his part in a 2010 racially motivated attack where Popejoy was a passenger in a truck that rammed a car with five Latino men inside, forcing it to overturn and burn, injuring all the men. Popejoy was convicted under the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009.

Salado • July 18, 2011

Tony Branscum, 25, and James Bradley "Brad" Branscum, 23, pleaded guilty to federal hate crime charges of violating housing rights in connection with an August 2010 cross burning at a black man's residence.

CALIFORNIA

Carlsbad • Sept. 28, 2011

Arturo Santiago, 22, was arrested for investigation of a hate crime and assault with a deadly weapon after he allegedly used racial slurs and hit a fellow bus passenger on the head with a bottle on April 4.

Davis • Sept. 17, 2011

Peter Lloyd Zuniga, 25, was charged with felony assault and

committing a hate crime after he allegedly beat and kicked a female convenience store clerk because of her Russian heritage.

Lemon Grove • July 15, 2011

A Latino man was allegedly beaten by a group of white men who yelled a racial epithet and the words "white power" during a road rage incident.

Long Beach • Aug. 25, 2011

Jorge Jhovanoy Ibarrias, 21, pleaded no contest to one count of felony battery with serious bodily injury with a hate crime enhancement for punching a gay man in the face on July 24. He was sentenced to five years in prison.

Los Angeles • Sept. 1, 2011

An immigrant rights activist allegedly received hundreds of threatening phone calls after a radio show known for its inflammatory anti-immigrant rhetoric aired his personal cell phone number.

Norwalk • Sept. 1, 2011

Two Latino men allegedly spray-painted racist graffiti on the outside of a black woman's house then forced themselves into her house but fled after the woman fired a gun at them.

Orangevale • Sept. 11, 2011

Anti-Arab graffiti and a swastika were spray-painted on a dry cleaners owned by Palestinian immigrants. The building was then set afire.

Palm Springs • Sept. 8, 2011

David John Reed, a 51-year-old white man, was convicted of first-degree murder in the 2004 racially motivated stabbing death of Ricky Mosley, a black man. Reed, who has tattoos reading "white pride" and "Peckerwood," was sentenced to death.

Pasadena • Aug. 14, 2011

Racist graffiti targeting Latinos was scrawled on a planter outside a fast food restaurant.

Sacramento • Sept. 20, 2011

A black man allegedly yelled sexual epithets at two men who were holding hands and then struck one of the men in the head with a sharp object.

San Diego • Sept. 18, 2011

Halbert Sadler, a black man, was charged with suspicion of a hate crime after he allegedly yelled racial slurs at a white couple and tried to rob them.

San Fernando • Sept. 30, 2011

Francisco Vasquez, 34, and Anthony Gonzales, 19, were convicted of a hate crime and attempted murder for yelling a racial slur and opening fire on two black men in May 2010.

San Luis Obispo • Sept. 12, 2011

Jeremiah Hernandez, 32, Jason Kahn, 36, Sara Matheny, 24, and William Soto, 20, were ordered to stand trial on arson, conspiracy and hate crimes charges for allegedly burning a cross outside a black family's residence in March. All four defendants are either white or Latino.

Ventura • Aug. 3, 2011

Patrick Fitzgerald, 24, was arrested for a hate crime and assault with a deadly weapon after he allegedly called people slurs based on their race and skin color and then was involved in a fight.

Ventura • Aug. 31, 2011

Daniel Dockery, 22, was sentenced to a year in jail after pleading guilty to making a felony criminal threat. Dockery allegedly told two teenage boys in the Ojai area in June that he was a skinhead

before making racial slurs, slapping one and threatening to kill both of them.

Ventura • Sept. 28, 2011

Nicholas Klopp was sentenced to five years in prison after being convicted of felony assault with a deadly weapon with a hate crime allegation. In December, Klopp yelled sexual slurs and threw a drinking glass that slashed a gay man's face during a birthday party at a restaurant.

COLORADO

Boulder • Sept. 30, 2011

Thomas Frank Ross, a 19-year-old student at the University of Colorado, was arrested on suspicion of second-degree assault and bias-motivated crime after allegedly making derogatory remarks about Asian food, then breaking the nose of a half-Asian student who objected.

Colorado Springs • July 2, 2011

A group of people that included two gay soldiers was allegedly beaten by a group of black men who yelled anti-gay epithets.

Denver • July 18, 2011

A man walking with a friend was allegedly chased and beaten by two men who yelled anti-gay slurs. Joseph Murphy, 18, and Zachary Kocman, 19, were each charged with one count of bias-motivated assault and one misdemeanor count of third-degree assault.

CONNECTICUT

Hartford • Sept. 16, 2011

Racist radio talk show host Hal Turner was acquitted of threatening and inciting violence in his online blog against three state officials.

DELAWARE

Newark • Sept. 5, 2011

A cross made of PVC pipe

with racial slurs written on it was planted in a man's yard. A 16-year-old boy was charged with harassment and a hate crime and a 15-year-old boy was charged with second-degree conspiracy, harassment and a hate crime.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington • Aug. 9, 2011

Christian Washington, 19, was charged with bias-related assault after he and several other men allegedly yelled anti-gay slurs at five lesbians outside a Metro station on July 30 and then beat them.

FLORIDA

Immokalee • Sept. 23, 2011

Two gay men allegedly were attacked by five men who yelled anti-gay slurs.

GEORGIA

Atlanta • July 14, 2011

Neal Ray Schmidt, 59, a former state leader for the Ku Klux Klan in Missouri, pleaded guilty to driving to Georgia with the intent of having sex with two 14-year-old girls he met online. He was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

Columbus • Aug. 23, 2011

Michael Carothers, aka Michael Weaver, 31, a member of the neo-Nazi National Alliance, was charged with aggravated assault for allegedly spraying Mace on a black man in December who was walking along the street.

IDAHO

Coeur d'Alene • Aug. 27, 2011

A white man allegedly yelled racial slurs at a black man walking past his house. Joel T. Diekhoff was charged with felony malicious harassment.

ILLINOIS

Belleville • July 8, 2011

A white man allegedly used racial epithets to incite a fight with a 14-year-old youth. Kevin T. Malone, 51, was charged on July 18 with two counts of hate crime and the teen was charged with disorderly conduct.

Chicago • July 7, 2011

Mack Heard, 17, Kenneth Towner,

18, and a 14-year-old boy were each charged with one felony count of hate crime and one misdemeanor count of aggravated assault in a public place after they allegedly used slurs and threatened a man.

INDIANA

Michigan City • Aug. 11, 2011

Rocks and a large cinder block were thrown through the window of an Islamic center.

IOWA

Centralia • Sept. 3, 2011

A racial slur was painted on the garage of a house that was set afire.

Des Moines • July 25, 2011

A doll with its face, hands and feet painted black was hung from a black woman's garage door. A racial slur, profanities and a threat for her to leave her job "or else" also were spray-painted on the garage. A racial slur was allegedly written on the woman's work locker in May.

KANSAS

Wichita • Aug. 15, 2011

Three white teens allegedly yelled racial slurs at a black man, threw bottles at him and then attempted to run him over with their vehicle.

KENTUCKY

Cumberland • Sept. 22, 2011

Four people were arrested for allegedly using anti-gay slurs and beating a gay man in April. David Jason Jenkins, 37, and Anthony Ray Jenkins, 20, were charged with attempted murder and Mabel Ashley Jenkins and Alexis Leann Jenkins, both 18, were charged with complicity.

LOUISIANA

Monroe • Sept. 2, 2011

Brian Wallis, 21, and his brother James Lee Wallis Jr., 25, pleaded guilty in federal court to committing a hate crime by intentionally attempting to intimidate black students at a local high school by hanging a dead raccoon in a noose from a flagpole in front of the school.

MARYLAND

Towson • Sept. 13, 2011

Teonna Brown, 19, was sentenced

to five years in jail after pleading guilty to first-degree assault and a hate crime for beating a transgender woman in a restaurant in April.

MASSACHUSETTS

Provincetown • Aug. 4, 2011

Dorjee Gyadatsang, 24, was charged with assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, two counts of assault and battery with the intent to intimidate resulting in injury, assault and battery with the intent to intimidate, three counts of assault and battery and a civil rights violation for allegedly attacking two men and yelling anti-gay slurs at them.

MICHIGAN

Detroit • July 26, 2011

Glenn E. Morgan Jr., 40, was charged with mailing threatening communications after he allegedly sent photos and letters that included racial slurs and threats to an interracial couple.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul • Aug. 11, 2011

George Thompson, 64, pleaded guilty to violating the civil rights of an 83-year-old Somali man in May 2010 by assaulting him, yelling that the man was Muslim and should go back to Africa and threatening to kill him.

MISSISSIPPI

Jackson • Sept. 6, 2011

Deryl Dedmon, a 19-year-old white man, was charged with capital murder for allegedly beating and running over James Anderson, a 49-year-old black man, with his truck in June.

MISSOURI

Independence • Aug. 31, 2011

Teresa Witthar, 43, was indicted on seven counts of conspiring to violate a biracial man's civil rights by threatening and intimidating him because of his race or color after she and two others allegedly wrote racial slurs in the man's house and then set fire to the residence in 2006. Witthar was also charged with aiding and abet-

ting in the use of force or threat of force; using fire to commit a felony; obstruction of justice and lying to FBI agents.

MONTANA

Billings • Aug. 4, 2011

Jason Lee Paullin, 35, was ordered to serve a three-year deferred sentence after pleading guilty to malicious intimidation or harassment related to civil or human rights. In March, Paullin threatened a black man with his dog, chased him down a street and yelled racial slurs.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Concord • Sept. 18, 2011

Racist messages were written on the residences of several African refugee families.

NEW JERSEY

Jersey City • Aug. 10, 2011

A group of teenagers allegedly yelled anti-Asian epithets at a Filipino man and attempted to follow him into his apartment building.

Newark • Sept. 22, 2011

Douglas Brown, 36, was charged with harassment, bias intimidation and criminal mischief charges for allegedly calling his former neighbors homophobic names, putting oil on their home, slashing their tires and destroying property in a series of incidents that reportedly began in May.

NEW MEXICO

Farmington • Aug. 18, 2011

Paul Beebe, 27, and Jesse Sanford, 25, pleaded to federal hate crimes for beating, branding and writing the words "KKK" and "white power" on a developmentally disabled Native American man in 2010. Beebe pleaded guilty to violating the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crime Act of 2009 and Sanford pleaded guilty to conspiring to violating the act.

NEW YORK

New York • July 6, 2011

Two women who encountered a Muslim woman on the street allegedly attacked her, ripped

off her religious attire and called her a terrorist. The women were charged with assault.

New York • Aug. 31, 2011

Ahmed Ferhani, 26, and Mohamed Mamdouh, 20, pleaded not guilty to state terror and hate-crime charges, including criminal possession of a weapon as a terror crime, terror conspiracy and hate-crime conspiracy following their May arrest for allegedly plotting to blow up a synagogue.

New York • Sept. 27, 2011

Matthew Francis, 21, was sentenced to two years in jail for using an anti-gay slur and beating a man in a historic gay bar in October 2010.

Niagara Falls • July 14, 2011

Two women allegedly yelled ethnic slurs and assaulted a woman of Pakistani origin who was wearing a hijab. Antoinette S. Ivey, 32, was charged with third-degree assault as a hate crime.

NORTH CAROLINA

Asheville • July 20, 2011

A 15-year-old was charged with assault and damage to property in connection with a Feb. 14 incident where he and three others allegedly taunted and assaulted a man they believed to be gay. Lamon Lewis Hopkins, 25, had already been charged with felony assault in the incident.

Hayesville • Sept. 9, 2011

The words “9/11 go home” were painted on a grocery store owned by a Sikh family and a Molotov cocktail was thrown into the building.

PENNSYLVANIA

Carlisle • Sept. 9, 2011

Arrest warrants for ethnic intimidation and disorderly conduct were issued for Brian Fahnestock, 46, after he allegedly threatened a Walmart greeter and made a racial comment.

Harrisburg • July 29, 2011

Kelvin Brian Ford, 25, was arrested following a chase by police, who discovered he was wanted in Maryland for allegedly making

racial comments and cutting a man with a box cutter in July.

Norristown • July 25, 2011

Colin Andrew Ford, 19, pleaded guilty to one count of terroristic threats for spray-painting swastikas and ethnic slurs on a Jewish family's house in February.

Robinson • Sept. 8, 2011

Kenneth Paul Stiffey Jr., 21, was sentenced to 18 months in prison for his role in burning a cross in 2009 at the residence of a family hosting a black foster child. On Sept. 26, Michael Duane Bracken, 23, was sentenced to 15 months in prison for his role in the incident.

Verona • July 12, 2011

A noose was left hanging from the rafters near a production line where a black employee works in a beverage company.

TENNESSEE

Clinton • Sept. 6, 2011

Ricky Lynn Hawkins, 34, a self-identified lieutenant in the neo-Nazi Aryan Nations, was indicted on a charge of aggravated assault and civil rights intimidation for allegedly beating a black man with a baseball bat and yelling racial slurs in October 2010. Hawkins was allegedly angry that the man was dating a white woman.

TEXAS

Houston • Aug. 13, 2011

Four white men, Michael Joe McLaughlin, 40, Brian Kerstetter, 32, Joseph Staggs, 48, and Charles Allen Cannon, 25, allegedly attacked a black man at a bus stop.

Midland • Sept. 2, 2011

Steven Scott Cantrell, 25, pleaded guilty to federal hate crime charges for setting fire to a predominantly black church in December 2010 in an effort to kill a disabled black man he believed lived at the church. The arson was part of a series of racially motivated arsons Cantrell committed in an attempt to gain status with the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas.

UTAH

American Fork • Sept. 8, 2011

A gay man at work in a hair salon was allegedly beaten by two or three people who yelled anti-gay slurs.

Salt Lake City • Sept. 3, 2011

A gay man was allegedly beaten and punched by four men as he walked home from a club that was holding a gay-themed night.

WASHINGTON

Seattle • Sept. 24, 2011

A gay couple's car tires were slashed and an anti-gay note was left in front of their home.

Spokane • Sept. 7, 2011

Kevin Harpham, 37, who has extensive ties to white supremacists, pleaded guilty to attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction and a hate crime for planting a bomb that was intended to hurl poison-laced shrapnel into the multicultural crowd marching in a Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade in January.

Spokane • Sept. 29, 2011

Anthony C. Brockie, 37, was charged with second-degree assault and malicious harassment after he allegedly threatened two convenience

store clerks with a straight razor while yelling racial slurs.

Vancouver • Sept. 2, 2011

Former Aryan Nations member Zachary Beck, 32, was sentenced to 51 months in prison with three years of supervised release for a racially motivated assault at a sports bar in January 2010. He and two other men started a fight with a black man and yelled “white power” and racial slurs.

WISCONSIN

Appleton • Sept. 8, 2011

Chadwick E. Sharp-Bestul, 19, was sentenced to three years in prison on two burglary counts with hate crime enhancements after he and another man broke into and damaged two gas stations because they were owned by “Arabians.”

Berlin • Aug. 11, 2011

Paul Captain, 49, was charged with a hate crime for allegedly sending threatening and racist E-mails to the Wisconsin State Fair spokeswoman.

West Allis • Sept. 3, 2011

The neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement held a rally. ▲

‘A GATHERING OF EAGLES’ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41

and Baldwin spoke at a Liberty Bell function at Valley Victory Church, just outside Kalispell. There, Rhodes issued a call, in front of a giant American flag, for citizens of Flathead Valley to help form his nascent militia. The collapse of the government was imminent, he warned, and the federal government would soon start rounding up American citizens. “You’re weak,” he admonished. “You’re militarily weak.”

This apparent militarization, or at least such rhetoric from many of the movement's most visible figures, has grown increasingly worrisome. Several judges and law enforcement officers say the concerns are real, just as they were two decades ago. People are coming to court armed with a vitriolic distrust of government — and, on occasion, sidearms. Judge Mohr, who sees frequent sovereign citizens and Patriots in his courtroom, said many believe they have been sold a bill of goods. And they are rallying around what he calls “messianic” figures who would much sooner die than bow to a government they hate.

How dangerous does he fear it will become? Is he carrying a gun this time? Mohr just laughs. “I’m not talking about it. Not talking about it.” ▲

Probing the President

Barack Obama, it turns out, is *not* the Antichrist. But he is an agent of a 'Jewish Masonic' plot to enslave the rest of us

BY LEAH NELSON

Between massive unemployment, political gridlock, and intractable foreign wars, America is in a bit of a tough spot these days. But at least we can cross one item off our national list of worries: Exhaustive research by an international team of researchers has proved conclusively that our president is not the Antichrist.

Now, don't get too relaxed. While President Obama is not consciously evil, he is an "apostle" of the New World Order and "one of the most dangerous US presidents ever to hold office" — or so says Mel Sanger, principal author of "The Antichrist Identity."

The *Intelligence Report* was alerted to Sanger's revelatory findings by the hard-working team at WorldNetDaily (WND), which recently sent an "Urgent" E-mail to subscribers interested in "Carefully Selected Offers from Third Parties."

"On 3 separate occasions [sic] this dossier was banned from being available on the internet but luckily the freedom of information act has ensured its survival.... for now," says WND's E-mail. "Act now whilst it is still available." (Actually, the report has been floating around the Internet since at least 2009 — par for the course when it comes to WND, whose publishing arm, WND Books, released Jerome Corsi's long-awaited "birther" manifesto, *Where's the Birth Certificate?* after the publication of that document was old news.)

Sanger's report is a cumbersome blend of Christian eschatology and modern antigovernment conspiracy theories whose

fundamental thesis is that Freemasons and "apostate" Jews (as opposed to "Bible-believing" ones) are behind an ancient plot to depopulate the planet, enslave the human race, and bring about a One World Government headed by European royalty. Aided by the pliant mainstream media, it says, our Manchurian president has already made considerable progress toward the "New World Order" goal of reshaping America into a society of gunless, government-dependent, secular humanists.

Proof of *that* is in the pudding that "Obamacare" will soon forbid us to eat. Though it purports to be about public welfare, the president's health care bill is really part of a sinister agenda that will eviscerate the Constitution, erode privacy, and ultimately allow the government to control us completely. "What is to keep the administration from defining gun ownership as a contributory health factor and, while they can't circumvent the Second Amendment, they could raise healthcare premiums to the point where gun ownership and use becomes less desirable," the report says breathlessly.

That's not even the worst of it. Obama probably isn't Muslim, Sanger contends, but the president is and always has been a crypto-communist — and his church affiliation proves it. Under pastor Jeremiah Wright (whose teachings the president has publicly condemned), Chicago's Trinity United Church of Christ, which Obama attended for years, teaches a brand of "Black liberation theology" dedicated to "a Marxist ideological, collective, class-struggle, and

ultimately tyrannical construct committed to destroying individual freedom."

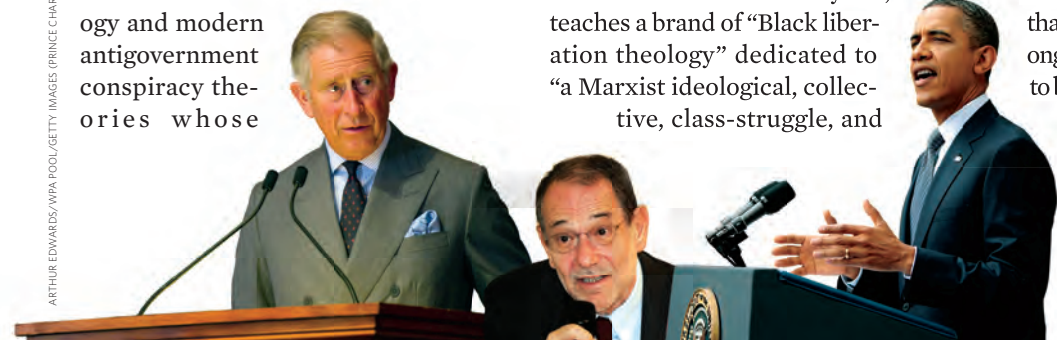
The president isn't the only New World Order apostle on the loose. He shares this distinction with Spanish diplomat Javier Solana and Prince Charles (who Sanger fingers as a crypto-Muslim with the bloodlines to father a potential Antichrist), among others. And behind the scenes, innumerable puppet masters are pulling the strings. Sanger identifies dozens, including the Rothschilds, the United Nations, the Weather Underground, the CIA, the KGB, the Mafia, the Federal Reserve, and the Gallup Poll, whose various roles are helpfully illuminated in a hand-drawn flowchart decorated with circles, arrows, and different thicknesses of pen.

Together, these agents are setting up the planet for takeover by "Jewish Masonic" elites who will reduce the world's population by 5.5 billion and establish "dictatorial Illuministic Communism" in order "to enslave all of mankind under the thumb of a Jewish master race led by a world messiah of Jewish ancestry who is to rule from Jerusalem."

"This is not an anti-semitic [sic] stance," the report hastens to add, "but rather one that differentiates between Godly Jews from the line of Abraham and those Jews whose apostasy has caused them to be an integral part of a major demonic plan."

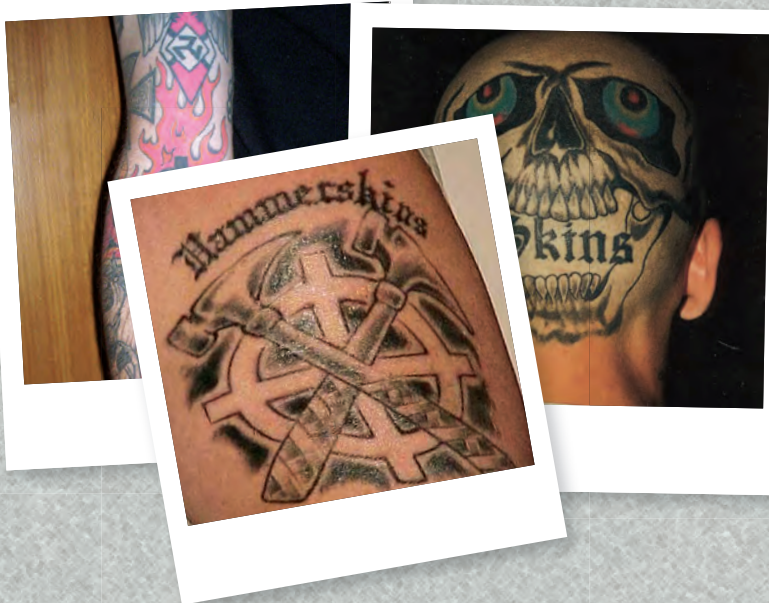
If this sounds implausible, don't worry. You've just been brainwashed like the rest of us. "The good news," the report concludes, "is that you are well informed because of your ongoing search for truth and so will be able to better discern the events that are impacting us with greater frequency." ▲

Stop the presses: An "urgent" E-mail from the deep thinkers at WorldNetDaily reveals that Prince Charles, Spanish diplomat Javier Solana and President Obama are all agents of a conspiracy to depopulate the earth and enslave the human race.



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