

# **The Watchdogs**

**A close look at Anti-Racist “Watchdog”  
Groups**

**Second Edition**

**Part 1**

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# Foreword

Any criticism of so-called anti-racist “Watchdog”<sup>1</sup> organizations and activists is not without its perils. In the “either/or” and “good guys versus bad guys” mentality that characterizes the moral absolutism of the anti-racist milieu it’s easy to be misunderstood. Most people, unaware of the ideological roots of many anti-racist activists or their general disdain for the civil liberties of their critics, regard them as reasonable response to legitimate grievances - which in certain cases they may be.

Watchdog groups do some laudable things, particularly in the area of promoting bona fide inter-group harmony. We all have to get along together, regardless of race, religion or anything else. Unjustified hatred based on racial, ethnic, religious or other differences is demeaning to both the perpetrator and the subject. It places burdens on our ability to govern ourselves, to remain a free people, and to provide the stability and civil liberties of a genuinely democratic republic.

To the extent that Watchdog groups help that, they are a valuable and important part of our society. This report is not a criticism of genuine efforts to improve relationships between people.

“Anti-racism” as used here generally refers to the complex network of assumptions, prejudices, modus operandi, rhetorical style and ideological biases that tends to characterize the militant anti-racist movement, including the Watchdog organizations mentioned. It does not refer to the practice of or belief in opposing genuine racism *per se*, which I applaud.

Like most liberals of my era, I have always had a strong sympathy for the underdog. I first joined the NAACP when I was 17, in Baltimore, MD. At the University of Kansas I was active in the Civil Rights Council, an official student organization, and served a term as vice-chair of the Lawrence, KS, chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). I marched in the picket lines during the early civil rights movement and was on the board of the local American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) chapter. I have remained an ACLU member for almost 40 years. I am a member of Amnesty International and work with them against capital punishment, which I oppose. I come from a large multicultural family and we make no distinctions with respect to race, ethnicity or religion.

What I objected to about racism was the treatment of individual members of a class (in this case racial minorities) as if they were responsible for all other members of that class, that because they were alike in some respects they were alike in all respects, and that race or ethnic identity was a basis for the granting or denying of rights and privileges. For me the central issue in the civil rights movement was freedom - freedom in the sense of non-constraint, of having choices, and of being able to speak one’s mind.

There is a humanist anti-racism that focuses on reconciliation and healing, that works to bring people together, that functions openly and honestly....this I support and always have.

What I did not realize at that time was the peculiar attraction of “anti-racism” as an ideology that could be adapted to explain all things and justify almost any course of action.

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<sup>1</sup> The term “Watchdog” as used herein refers to private agenda-driven organizations who, as a primary function, watch, observe, surveil, spy upon or “stalk” a particular class of individuals and/or organizations for the purpose of gathering intelligence and reporting upon their values, opinions, beliefs or actions with reference to a particular issue for the purpose of exposing, defaming, degrading or otherwise impeding the furtherance of their objectives. This does not include bona fide journalistic reporting for the purpose of disinterested news coverage.

Simply said, there are careers, status, jobs, and influence to be had as long as racism exists. There is also the peculiar utility of anti-racism to function as a carrier for extreme ideologies, which without such cover would be instantly exposed. As specific problems are solved new problems are defined and created to keep the movement alive.

Indeed, there is an anti-racist *industry* entrenched in the United States that has attracted bullying, moralizing fanatics, whose identity and livelihood depend upon growth and expansion of their particular kind of victimization. In certain respects the anti-racist movement has become a massive extortion racket, as lawyers have used every nuance of civil rights and equal opportunity laws to extract massive judgments for objectively lesser offenses, and anti-racist street fanatics have attacked and vilified individuals for their values, opinions and beliefs. This is not what the civil rights movement was originally about.

The simple fact is there are money and careers to be made. The classic case of this is Morris Dees' Southern Poverty Law Center, which now (1998) has reserves approaching 100 million dollars acquired from donors. Even smaller anti-racist groups often find themselves awash in donations, government and private grants. In June 1998, for example, Leonard Zeskind, President of his self-created "Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights" was the recipient of a \$295,000 award from the Chicago-based MacArthur Foundation<sup>2</sup>

Anti-racism can be molded and shaped to serve other interests. Activists with a hidden radical agenda find anti-racist organizations very amenable to manipulation. Almost no one buys into traditional class struggle Marxism anymore. Democratic capitalism has produced the highest standard of living and most individual freedom the world has ever seen. In rational terms, class struggle Marxism is a hard sell. However, when it's reframed as anti-racism and anti-fascism, much of the onus is gone.

There is a humanist anti-racism that focuses on reconciliation and healing, that works to bring people together, that functions openly and honestly without the use of dossiers, spies, specious lawsuits, disinformation, and that recognizes the rights of individuals whether they agree with one another or not. This is the anti-racism of good neighbors, of people helping people, of community goodwill, and of the realization that we are all human beings. This I support and always have.

On the other hand there is a vindictive and corrupt anti-racism that focuses on paybacks and punishment, that demonizes and degrades its critics, that attempts to carve out special rights for its constituency, that opposes free and open discussion of ideas, that attempts to silence, censor and stifle its opposition through intimidation and harassment, and encourages law enforcement scrutiny of opponents because of their alleged values, opinions and beliefs.

This kind of anti-racism is more dangerous than the problem it purports to remedy, and this is the anti-racism that tends to characterize the Watchdog organizations. This is *doctrinal* and *ideological* anti-racism, a mindless fanaticism and extremism, more akin to a cult than a brotherhood and sisterhood of people accepting one another, freely and honestly, as the fallible imperfect human beings that we all are.

Extremist behavior is characterized by a "style" that transcends content. Even a good cause may be compromised by a shrill, intolerant and vindictive advocacy. There is a great deal at stake in how we handle society's rebels and discontents that bodes good or ill depending on the way the issue is addressed. The old saying about "burning down the barn to catch the rat" is very appropriate to this issue. Unless even the most unpopular and outcast members of society, including those who dissent on racial, ethnic, religious or historical issues, receive the same protections and consideration as the rest of us, we are all in serious trouble.

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<sup>2</sup> "29 Are Chosen For The MacArthur Foundation's Fellowships," *New York Times* (2 June 1998); John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation ([www.macfdn.org](http://www.macfdn.org)), Chicago, IL. 1998.

Organizing for or against specific causes is an American tradition, and the right to organize, agitate, and propagandize is part of our constitutional heritage. Watchdog groups, of course, should enjoy these protections, too. Virtually all political organizations have some kind of “watchdog” function. The right of Watchdog organizations to investigate, publish, make public policy proposals, and so on is not an issue here. It would be nice if they would recognize the same rights of their opponents and critics.

Rather, the issue is the abominable record of these organizations with respect to individual rights and civil liberties, their misrepresentations and lies, their exploitation of normal human sympathy for the underdog, their flagrant double standards, their hidden agendas, their unprincipled methods, and their unconscionable use of law enforcement to advance their own ends. These are serious issues that need careful examination.

A couple of points need to be made here. My criticisms of the Anti-Defamation League have nothing to do with the fact that it is a Jewish organization. The ADL behavior that I document in this report would be equally susceptible to criticism if they were Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or any other religion or, for that matter, if they were not identified by religion. Throughout this report it is behaviors and not ethnic, racial, or religious identity that I am addressing. In point of fact, many of the greatest civil libertarians have been Jewish, including a number of my personal heroes.

This report on the “dark side” of the Watchdog organizations is intended to focus on these abuses and to make a case for correction. It is also a plea for journalists to take their self-imposed blinders off and give these organizations the same scrutiny they would from any other agenda-driven special interest group.

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Rationality, logic and a scientific approach, all point to a society which is ‘open’ and pluralistic, within which incompatible views are expressed and conflicting aims pursued; a society in which everyone is free to investigate problem-situations and to propose solutions; a society in which every-one is free to criticize the proposed solutions of others, most importantly those of the government, whether in prospect or application; and above all a society in which the government’s policies are changed in the light of criticism.

So a tolerant society must be prepared in some circumstances to suppress the enemies of tolerance. It should not do so unless they constitute a genuine danger - quite apart from anything else this - leads to witch-hunting. And it should try all in its power to meet such people first on the level of rational government.<sup>3</sup>

## Introduction

- We sure could have fascism here but we’d have to call it anti-fascism, Louisiana Governor Huey “Kingfish” Long, quoted in *On 1984* by Peter Stansky, 1983.
- Violent antipathies are always suspicious and betray a secret affinity. William Hazlett, *Characteristics*, 1823.
- Given sufficient control over information and enough public distance from the reality of events, even the most unlikely situations can be endowed with powerful emotional trappings. W. Lance Bennett, *Public Opinion in American Politics*, 1980.

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<sup>3</sup> Bryan Magee, *Philosophy and the New World: An Introduction to Karl Popper* (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1982), 79, 81.

- The surest way to work up a crusade in favor of some good cause is to promise people they will have a chance of maltreating someone. To be able to destroy with good conscience, to be able to behave badly and call your bad behavior 'righteous indignation' -- this is the height of psychological luxury, the most delicious of moral treats. Aldous Huxley, *Chrome Yellow*, 1921.
- The slogan, 'the end justifies the means,' a great favorite of revolutionists and opportunists, is an affirmation of activist ethics. It sounds like a realistic, down-to-earth principle and is often cited to counter ethical arguments based on 'abstract' moral considerations or on sentiment. What are a few hundred drops of the guillotine weighed against the ends? Anatol Rapoport, *Operational Philosophy*, 1953.

In the 35 years that I have been studying extremist groups of the far left and far right, it has become obvious to me that the various "Watchdog" organizations that monitor these groups often develop a strange symbiotic relationship with them. Watchdog organizations tend to define themselves in terms of their opposition, i.e., the various individuals and organizations they call "extremist," and depend upon this opposition to justify their existence, their intense hatred of their enemies, and their often questionable fund-raising activities.

Moreover, Watchdog groups tend to exaggerate the divisions that exist in American society. In fact, the supposed polar opposites on the ideological spectrum have far more in common than they do in opposition. Recent studies suggest that extremism is overestimated in American politics and that the differences between left and right are partly imagined.

Dacher Keltner, assistant professor of psychology at the University of California at Berkeley, has found that people have a powerful tendency to exaggerate the views of their ideological opponents, seeing, on average, twice as much difference as actually exists.

Moreover, he has turned up this "imagined extremism" in a variety of settings, including conflicts over abortion rights, the interpretation of a racial incident, the attitudes of gays and Christian fundamentalists and the choices of English professors toward use of the "Western Canon" in university classes.

Without fail, both partisans and nonpartisans in political disputes seriously overestimated the polarization between the two sides, said Keltner. Although a tendency to demonize one's opponents is not a new understanding, Keltner's work breaks new ground in being able to measure the extent of the effect by gathering hard data on actual versus perceived differences among the parties to a dispute as well as among neutral observers.<sup>4</sup>

The anti-racist Watchdog tendency to polarize issues in dramatic terms and then to propose legislative and law enforcement solutions to the consequences of that polarization, is an example of the social construction of an "extremism" crisis characterized by a relatively small number of crimes and criminals and a disproportionately large amount of media and news coverage. The stereotype of the hate-crazed maniac does exist, but he is extraordinarily rare in our society of 273 million persons. Any politically or racially-motivated death or serious crime deserves attention, but when one compares this kind of violence in the United States with other forms of crime it falls into its proper perspective.

For example, gang murders in Los Angeles County -- the majority of which are committed by ethnic minorities -- do represent a serious crisis. According to statistics released by the Compton, California, Police Department, in a single year - 1995 - there were 807 gang-related murders in this single county. In the preceding five-year period from 1990 to 1994

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<sup>4</sup> Patricia McBroom, University of California, Berkeley, News Release, 1/4/97, *Political attitudes in the U.S. are exaggerated, according to UC Berkeley psychologist in studies of "imagined Extremism."*

the total deaths reached over 3,700!<sup>5</sup> Even if an Oklahoma City-style bombing occurred every year, the casualties would remain but a fraction of those attributed to ethnic gang violence in that same period.

In July 1999, the U. S. Department of Justice published an extensive study of the gang problem. A response to the 1996 National Youth Gang Survey, the study is based on responses from law enforcement agencies throughout the country. Among their findings were these:

It was estimated that 30,818 gangs and 846,428 gang members were active in the United States in 1996.

The...survey revealed that Hispanics and African-Americans constituted the majority of gang members. The following aggregate percentages were reported nationally: Hispanic – 44 %, African-American – 35%, Caucasian – 14 %, Asian – 5 % and Other - 2%.

Gang members were reportedly responsible for an estimated 2,364 homicides in large cities and 561 homicides in suburban counties in 1996.<sup>6</sup>

Even more shocking is the enormous disparity between Blacks and whites with respect to inter-racial rapes. According to the U. S. Department of Justice, in 1991 there were only 100 rapes involving white offenders and Black victims, while there were 20,204 rapes involving Black offenders and white victims. The likelihood of this happening by random chance is extremely remote, yet rapes committed by Blacks are not treated as “hate crimes.”<sup>7</sup>

These government statistics clearly establish that ethnic violence against whites is far, far more prevalent and far, far more deadly than so-called “hate crimes.”

## **Interracial Crime in the U.S.**

Although a taboo subject in the U. S. media, the statistics of interracial crime leads to conclusions entirely at odds with the Watchdog stereotype of white criminals and black victims.

Writing in the *Sydney [Australia] Morning Herald*, reporter Paul Sheehan covered this issue in considerable detail in a 1995 article entitled *The Race War of Black Against White*, Sheehan’s article noted the following:

Most victims of race crime - about 90 percent - are white, according to the [U. S. Department of Justice] survey *Highlights from 20 Years of Surveying Crime Victims*, published in 1993.

Blacks thus committed 7.5 times more violent inter-racial crimes than whites even though the black population is only one-seventh the size of the white population. When these figures are adjusted on a per capita basis, they reveal an extraordinary disparity: blacks are committing more than 50 times the number of violent racial crimes of whites.

According to the latest annual report on murder by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, most inter-racial murders involve black assailants and white victims, with whites murdering whites at 18 times the rate that whites murder blacks.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Compton, California, Police Department release, 1999. Also, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, OSS Division, “Gangs In Los Angeles County,” 1997.

<sup>6</sup> 1996 National Youth Gang Survey, (Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Justice: 1999), 13, 24, 32.

<sup>7</sup> U. S. Bureau of Justice Statistics (Washington, DC: 1991).

<sup>8</sup> Paul Sheehan, “The Race War of Black Against White,” *Sydney Morning Herald* (20 May 1995).

In 1993 the Southern Poverty Law Center reported that 31 bias-related murders occurred in 1992 in the entire country,<sup>9</sup> and that may have included questionable and ambiguous cases. The Watchdog campaign against “hate crime” is not for the purpose of preventing unnecessary deaths and depredations, because there are much better ways to do that. Rather, it’s to promote their image and interests and to advance a more extensive political agenda.

## **Watchdogs as “Opposition Research?”**

Most political groups have certain Watchdog functions, politely called “opposition research.” They exist and have existed across the political spectrum. A few organizations are exclusively devoted to a watchdog function, and are far more interested in bringing grief to their critics and enemies than anything else.

This report examines the two largest representatives of the anti-racist watchdog community, the Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center, and the much smaller Center for Democratic Renewal, and Political Research Associates. The latter two organizations have roots in the extreme Marxist left of the American political spectrum. Before we get to them, however, let’s look at Watchdogs in America’s past.

### **Watchdogs Past: The Anti-Saloon League**

Watchdog organizations have taken many forms. Alcohol prohibition organizations of the 19th century were essentially watchdog organizations, as were organizations devoted to enforcing moral and sexual purity.

The Anti-Saloon League constantly monitored the state of alcohol consumption in the communities where it was organized and lobbied hard for legislation to further its interests and to prohibit citizens from doing what it thought was wrong. This, and other anti-alcohol Watchdog organizations, focused on their sponsorship of the total national prohibition of alcohol, which became law in 1919 as the Eighteenth Amendment to the U. S. Constitution. Massive disobedience followed, not surprisingly, and on 5 December 1933 the Amendment was repealed. Prohibition is regarded today as a failure.

The propaganda of the prohibition movement bears some resemblance to the kinds of distortions and exaggerations of today’s anti-racist Watchdogs. According to Robert A. Goldberg, “The image of a monolithic liquor power.....was more a product of ASL propaganda than a representation of reality.”<sup>10</sup> By exaggerating the power of their opponents and framing them in evil and conspiratorial terms, Watchdogs are drawn to defaming and demonizing tactics.

As it often the case with Watchdog groups today, the prohibition movement had its origins in religious institutions. According to Goldberg,

The Anti-Saloon League traced its roots to Oberlin College in Ohio and the work of Howard Russell. Russell came to Oberlin in 1884 to attend its theological seminary. A practicing attorney, he had experienced a religious conversion and decided to abandon his legal career to pursue a calling in the ministry.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> “Bias-related Murders at 31: Southern Poverty Law Center,” *Jet* (29 March 1993), 24.

<sup>10</sup> Robert A. Goldberg, *Grassroots Resistance: Social Movements in Twentieth Century America* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Pub, 1981), 19-40.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 23.

The backbone of the movement was the local Protestant Church. The ASL sought to establish a league organization in every congregation.... By 1915 almost four thousand congregations participated in such activities.<sup>12</sup>

The ASL instituted many of the tactics of modern-day Watchdogs. They used informants to spy on their adversaries, they viciously attacked the motives and character of their critics, and they advocated harsh penalties for wrongdoers. They were never happier than when they had destroyed the source of livelihood of a local tavern keeper. They were not averse to bullying, moralizing, name-calling and defaming and degrading the reputations of their political opponents. In 1950 the Anti-Saloon League merged with the National Temperance League.

## Society for the Prevention of Vice

One of the more bizarre Watchdog groups was the Society for the Prevention of Vice established by Anthony Comstock in the 1870's. According to Joseph Berke in his fascinating book, *The Tyranny of Malice*:

[Comstock] was personally responsible for virulent moral purifications during the late 1880's as well as antiobscenity statutes that censored the literary and artistic tastes of Americans from 1873 until 1959.

Moreover he advocated the use of informers, spies, entrapment, and mail tampering to ferret out evildoers.

In 1873 he persuaded Congress to pass a federal bill prohibiting obscene materials from the post. President Grant added a rider appointed him a special antiobscenity agent of the Post Office... In the ensuing decades Comstock and his society terrorized publishers and arrested hundreds of citizens caught with questionable literature.<sup>13</sup>

The danger from this kind of watchdog activity was amplified by the quasi-official government recognition given to Comstock and his band of censors. It is one thing to argue for censorship in the marketplace of ideas and quite another to enlist the coercive power of the state in a campaign to protect special interests. Comstock claimed that he had:

...convicted persons enough to fill a passenger train of sixty-one coaches, sixty coaches containing sixty passengers each, and the sixty-first almost full. I have destroyed 160 tons of obscene literature.<sup>14</sup>

Like most of the issues that watchdog groups concern themselves about, the concepts themselves are never made quite clear. No precise agreed upon definition of obscenity, perversion, pornography, subversion, racism or anti-Semitism exists, nor are watchdogs generally willing to admit to degrees.

For the zealots, these concepts exist in a black-and-white world with no intermediate shades of gray. One either is, or is not, and the decision is to be made by a biased and interested party whose career and ideological interests benefit from the discovery of offenders and heretics. With respect to Comstock, the writer Gay Talese observed:

The Comstock Act<sup>15</sup> was deliberately vague so that almost any item useful for sexual relations could and did qualify as obscene.... victims of the Comstock Act included a

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph H. Berke, *The Tyranny of Malice: Exploring the Dark Side of Character and Culture* (New York: Summit Books, 1988), 208-9.

<sup>14</sup> Anthony Comstock, quoted in *Anthony Comstock: Roundsman of the Lord* (Haywood Broun and Margaret Leech), New York, 1927.



New York publisher who was jailed and fined for having in stock Ovid's *Art of Love*, a bookseller who received a similar sentence for selling Dr. Ashton's *Book of Nature and Marriage Guide*.<sup>16</sup>

The Comstock laws, as they became known, were largely directed at the posting, mailing, dissemination or even possession of literature that was - in the opinion of the persecutors and prosecutors - harmful or dangerous to a protected class of people - in this case women and children. Comstock, an abolitionist who volunteered for the Army after his brother was killed at Gettysburg, would have been quite comfortable in the PC world of today where "hate speech" presumably directed at contemporary protected classes may face similar prohibitions, and the modern equivalent of his Watchdog group would be called the Society for the Suppression of Racism.

Watchdog groups invariably advocate the censorship of ideas. It was not the *practice* of sexual immorality by itself that Comstock opposed, but also any speech and publication that disagreed with his views concerning it. Any writer or publisher who transgressed this taboo could be faced with legal consequences that were ruinous.

## Superpatriotic and Anti-Communist Watchdogs

From the early days of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there have been number of super-patriotic anti-Communist watchdog organizations, such as the American Protective League, American Vigilante Intelligence League, National Security League, American Defense Society, American Business Consultants, Church League of America; Circuit Riders; Western Goals; the American Security Council; Aware, Inc. and the Patriotic Research Bureau. The American Legion also had its National Americanism Committee, which kept track of "reds" and other subversives. Most of these groups are either defunct or mere shadows of their former selves.

The right-wing watchdog groups all functioned in a similar way: publishing lists of individuals with their alleged "links and ties" illustrating subversive connections. Often the raw information was correct, but what they claimed it showed or implied was not. People with essentially casual or tangential associations were lumped together with highly motivated ideologues and bona fide subversives. The targets of these watchdog groups were Communists, socialists, and other assorted radicals on the left.

Interestingly, the prototype for the present-day anti-racist Watchdog "links and ties" style was none other than Elizabeth Dilling's Patriotic Research Bureau -- a fact not widely appreciated in anti-racist Watchdog circles. Under the auspices of her organization, Dilling, a Jew-hating super-patriot, published a number of books "linking and tying" various liberals, leftists, socialists and communists together in creative ways with the implication that they were all responsible for one another. Dilling perfected this style and it remains in wide use today.

According to Dilling's reasoning, if "A" was a liberal who was on the board of some organization with "B", a socialist, and "B" had written for the same journal as "C", a communist, then "A" was "linked and tied" to Communists. Consider Dillings' characterization of Felix Frankfurter, who later became a U. S. Supreme Court Justice:

**FRANKFURTER, FELIX:** Professor, Harvard Law School; National Committee, ACLU; Massachusetts ACLU Committee; Griffin Bill sponsor; severely condemned when counsel in Mooney case by President Theodore Roosevelt for "an attitude which seems to me to be fundamentally that of Trotsky and the other Bolshevik leaders in Russia"; . . . filed charges against the U. S. Department of Justice for its

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<sup>15</sup> An Act for the Suppression of Trade in, and Circulation of, Obscene Literature and Articles of Immoral Use, ch 258, 17 stat. 598-99 (1873). This act named Anthony Comstock a "special agent" of the Post Office with the power to monitor the mail for obscenity.

<sup>16</sup> Gay Talese, *Thy Neighbor's Wife* (NY: Ivy Books, 1993).

activities against Communists with National Popular Government League; National Legal Committee, N.A.A.C.P.; endorser “Professional Patriots”; said to have recommended Jerome Frank as Roosevelt appointee . . .<sup>17</sup>

Frankfurter, of course, became a major champion of civil liberties while on the Supreme Court. The suggestion that he had a secret affinity for Marxism-Leninism proved to be untrue. Consider Dilling’s characterization of prominent American attorney Clarence Darrow:

**DARROW, CLARENCE:** Attorney; National Committee of the American Civil Liberties Union; National Committee of the All-American Anti-Imperialist League, 1926-8; National Mooney-Billings Committee; Executive Committee National Council For Protection of Foreign Born Workers (Communist) 1930; National Committee International Labor Defense (Communist), 1928-30; N.A.A.C.P.; Honorary President, Freethinkers Society of America (Atheist), director communist American Society For Cultural Relations With Russia; President, Berger National Foundation, 1931; . . . Vice-President Public Ownership League, 1933; Freethinkers Ingersol Committee, 1933; Sacco-Vanzetti National League; Roosevelt appointee, chairman NRA Review Board, 1934.<sup>18</sup>

Darrow was clearly a leftist, which at the time is not particularly remarkable, but he was no Communist and he was a strong civil libertarian with respect to all political and social opinion. Yet, if one were to consider these “links and ties” without knowing anything else about him, a proclivity for subversive activities might not be entirely unthinkable.

On the other hand, when citing the backgrounds of open and self-admitted Communists Dilling was almost always right. The problems arose in ambiguous cases where the “links and ties” are tangential or circumstantial, as they do with Watchdog groups today.

Several watchdog-type publications utilizing the “links and ties” format appeared in the years following *The Red Network*. One of these, by Unitarian Minister Leon Birkhead, leader of a group called Friends of Democracy, was the organization’s newsletter, *Propaganda Battlefront*.<sup>19</sup> Relying on a collection of dossiers on suspected fascists, the newsletter was a veritable orgy of “links and ties.”

Another was a book by Richard Rollins, *I Find Treason: The Story of an American Anti-Nazi Agent*. Morrow claimed that an exposure of right-wing extremism should be “based entirely upon documentary evidence that would leave the subverts powerless to defend or deny.”<sup>20</sup> Referring to both works, historian Leo P. Ribuffo observes:

Paradoxically, the documents apparent factuality enhanced its power to affect emotions. Birkhead’s lists of native fascists made tiny far right sects seem potent; Rollins’s repeated accounts of casual encounters among local agitators seemed to signal an imminent coup. Indeed, Rollins’s *I Find Treason* and Elizabeth Dilling’s *The Red Network* were stylistic cousins under their bindings.<sup>21</sup>

In 1942 Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn published *Sabotage: The Secret War Against America*<sup>22</sup>, in which they warned of widespread Nazi sabotage and fifth-column activity in America. Although we had a small pro-Nazi fringe such as the German-American Bund

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<sup>17</sup> Elizabeth Dilling, *The Red Network: A “Who’s Who and Handbook of Radicalism for Patriots* (Chicago: The Author, 1936), 282.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 275.

<sup>19</sup> Leo P. Ribuffo, *The Old Christian Right: The Protestant Far Right from the Depression to the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), 178-179, 183.

<sup>20</sup> Richard Rollins, *I Find Treason: The Story of an American Anti-Nazi Agent* (New York: William Morrow, 1941), 63.

<sup>21</sup> Ribuffo, 182.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn, *Sabotage! The Secret War Against America* (NY: Harper & Brothers, 1942).

prior to the war it never exerted any detectable political influence - except to engender a terrified opposition - and reports of Nazi sabotage were almost always overreactions or hoaxes.

Even Nazi espionage was largely ineffectual. In 1942 eight Nazi agents landed on American shores to engage in sabotage and were almost immediately apprehended by the authorities - the only case of its kind during the war. According to Francis MacDonnell:

In 1945 the Federal Bureau of Investigation proudly boasted that no verified acts of sabotage had been committed in the United States during the Second World War. Nonetheless, throughout the Fifth-Column scare the public worried that Nazi agents were busily planting bombs and setting fires throughout the country. These fears peaked in the middle of 1942, when the government repelled a German sabotage mission to the United States.<sup>23</sup>

As is often the case today, Sayers and Kahn utilized their anti-fascist work to promote a broader agenda. Their next book, *The Great Conspiracy: The Secret War Against Soviet Russia*,<sup>24</sup> was unabashedly pro-Soviet. Kahn was associated with several Communist front organizations and wrote for *New Masses*, a party-line journal. In 1943 Kahn, along with 42 other Communists and fellow travelers, signed a declaration honoring Georgi Dimitrov who subsequently became Communist dictator of Bulgaria.<sup>25</sup>

Kahn was also Executive Secretary of the American Council Against Nazi Propaganda, which advocated unabashed censorship, and published *The Hour*, a watchdog-type newsletter “devoted to investigating and exposing fifth-column activities.”<sup>26</sup>

Another “anti-fascist” journalist was John L. Spivak, author of *Secret Armies: The New Technique of Nazi Warfare*, which promoted fanciful ideas of Nazi underground armies in America and “links and ties” between American isolationists and the German Nazis.<sup>27</sup> Not only were these “links and ties” often few and fleeting, even the notorious German American Bund itself was creation of a single individual and not an official branch of the German Nazis.

According to Susan Canedy, PhD., a U. S. Army historian and faculty member at Old Dominion University, research reveals that:

The German American Bund was a small, isolated, yet vocal sociopolitical group. Its greatest attraction was not of a revolutionary nature – at no time did it advocate the forcible overthrow of the American government...This is not to deny its stance, however. It did heartily echo National Socialism.

However, the German American Bund was created and sustained by Fritz Julius Kuhn – not the German government. Despite Kuhn’s braggadocio and [House Un-American Activities Committee chairman] Martin Dies’ convictions, confirmed administrative or financial links are not to be found between the [Nazi] Party structure in the Third Reich and the bund.<sup>28</sup>

Nevertheless, Spivak proceeded to exaggerate the strength of Nazi support in the United States, sometimes citing anonymous sources for his allegations and was widely believed at

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<sup>23</sup> Francis MacDonnell, *Insidious Foes: The Axis Fifth Column and the American Home Front* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 129.

<sup>24</sup> Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn, *The Great Conspiracy: The Secret War Against Soviet Russia* (Boston: Little Brown, 1946).

<sup>25</sup> *Fifth Report of the Senate Fact-Finding Committee on Unamerican Activities* (Sacramento: State of California, 1949).

<sup>26</sup> Sayers & Kahn, 1941, dust jacket.

<sup>27</sup> John L. Spivak, *Secret Armies: The New Technique of Nazi Warfare* (NY: Modern Age, 1939).

<sup>28</sup> Susan Canedy, *America’s Nazis, A Democratic Dilemma: A History of the German American Bund* (Menlo Park, CA: Margraf Publications, 1990), 223-224.

the time. Even some scholars, such as David H. Bennett, author of two influential books on American right-wing movements, have quoted him as a reliable source.<sup>29</sup> According to the authors of *The Secret World of American Communism*, which analyzes recently released Soviet documents concerning American Communist Party activities:

Spivak specialized in exposing the activities of right-wing organizations.

Spivak later published frequently in the *Daily Worker* and other Communist publications. The U. S. Justice Department identified him as a Communist in 1942, and in 1945 Elizabeth Bentley, a former Soviet spy, told the FBI in a secret statement that Spivak did investigative work for her espionage ring. In 1952 a former CPUSA official, John Lautner, identified Spivak as a secret member of the party's security apparatus.<sup>30</sup>

Perhaps the most influential watchdog book of World War II was *Under Cover*<sup>31</sup> by John Roy Carlson, a pseudonym for Arvedis Derounian. According to historian Richard Gid Powers:

Carlson claimed that the book demonstrated the “tie-in” between far-right anti-Semitic pro-Nazis and a group of ten representatives.... and fourteen senators, and his technique was just like that of the red web countersubversives like Richard Whitney, Elizabeth Dilling, and J. B. Matthews: interlocking letterheads and chains of associations (some of them requiring Carlson himself as an essential link) that tied together into an ominous conspiracy individuals who may have never met.<sup>32</sup>

Not content to let a good thing fade away after the Nazis had been defeated, in 1946 Carlson published a sequel entitled *The Plotters*, in which he continued his earlier rhetorical style of guilt-by-association and “links and ties.” According to Powers, “*Under Cover* and *The Plotters* were probably written (or at least edited) by ADL ghosts.”<sup>33</sup>

## HUAC and COINTELPRO

The United States government has sponsored two major “watchdog” programs in recent decades. One of these was the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), which was empowered to hold congressional hearings and issue subpoenas compelling testimony. Another was the FBI's counter-intelligence program (COINTELPRO), brought to light in March 1971 when a group after the burglary of the FBI office in Media, Pennsylvania. COINTELPRO had become the primary tool for a massive program against dissident groups ranging from the Communist Party to the various Ku Klux Klans.

COINTELPRO was different in that it took a proactive stance against its targets, often engaging in massive infiltration and even illegal activities, such as burglaries and break-ins. Most of its targets were Marxist-Leninist and extreme left organizations, but it also targeted far right organizations. Phillip Finch describes it thus:

“Counterintelligence” is a tepid term, actually, for a variety of tactics to harass, disrupt, confuse and impede the Bureau's targets. Acts within left-wing groups – principally the Communist Party USA and the Socialist Workers Party – roughly

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<sup>29</sup> David H. Bennett, *Demagogues in the Depression: American Radicals and the Union Party* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1969), 72.

<sup>30</sup> Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, Fredrikh Igorevich Firsov, *The Secret World of American Communism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 126.

<sup>31</sup> John Roy Carlson, *Under Cover: My Four Years in the Nazi Underground in America* (NY: Dutton, 1943).

<sup>32</sup> Richard Gid Powers, *Not Without Honor: The History of American Anticommunism* (NY: Free Press, 1995), 184.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, 293.

85% of COINTELPRO, according to FBI statistics... The remaining 15% against what the FBI termed “white hate groups” have received less attention.

Beginning in 1964, FBI headquarters or field offices proposed 404 different programs of action against 17 Klan groups and 9 white racist groups then under investigation by the bureau. Of the 404 proposals, 289 were actually approved and used. Many were legal – like a series of interview programs to show Klan members that their affiliation were not secret. Some were petty disruptions - like mailing 850 copies of a faked letter, apparently from the national office of the Minutemen, requesting that members of the group withhold their dues and contributions because of a security leak. Some were of questionable legality and of even more questionable morality.<sup>34</sup>

Finch details some of the COINTELPRO activities against the far right, including the setting up of a phony far right organization and the publishing of counterfeit far right periodicals. He notes that a September 2, 1965, letter from the FBI to a White House assistant mentioned:

Nearly two thousand of our informants and sources...being operated to obtain up-to-date intelligence data concerning racial matters which we disseminate on a continuing basis...Particularly significant has been the high-level penetration we have achieved of Klan organizations. At the present time, there are 14 Klan groups in existence. We have penetrated every one of them through informants [and] currently are operating informants in top-level positions of leadership in seven of them.<sup>35</sup>

According to Richard Gid Powers, in his biography of J. Edgar Hoover:

Hoover had precedents for the counterintelligence program against the Klan (COINTELPRO - White Hate Groups). Most obvious, of course, was the COINTELPRO that the Domestic Intelligence Division had directed against the Communist Party since 1956 and the Socialist Workers Party since 1961. For the first time, however, the Bureau’s counterintelligence techniques of harassment and disruption were directed against groups that did not have, even tangentially or theoretically, contact with foreign intelligence or an international revolutionary movement.<sup>36</sup>

So intrusive and illegal was the FBI’s COINTELPRO program that the Justice Department, following a massive expose’ of FBI activities, curtailed it considerably. New guidelines subsequently were created:

On April 5, 1976, Attorney General Edward Levi’s guidelines for domestic security and intelligence investigations became the bureau’s standard operating procedure. The Levi guidelines were intended to prevent a recurrence of COINTELPRO-type operations.

According to the comptroller general’ assessment of November 9, 1977, “they remedied many problem areas because they clearly distinguished between the different phases of an investigation - preliminary, limited and full field - in terms of the duration and scope of investigation, and the investigation techniques permitted.

Under the Levi guidelines, the FBI could initiate a domestic intelligence investigation “of groups or individuals whose activities are directed toward the overthrow or serious impairment of Government operations or the obstruction of citizen’s civil rights with slightly less substantive information than is required to

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<sup>34</sup> Phillip Finch, *God, Guns and Guts: A Close Look at the Radical Right* (New York: Seaview-Putnam, 1983), 157-58.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

<sup>36</sup> Richard Gid Powers, *Secrecy and Power: The Life of J. Edgar Hoover* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 413.

initiate a criminal investigation.” However, Levi specified that “government monitoring of individuals and groups because they hold unpopular or controversial political views is intolerable in our society.”<sup>37</sup>

## **Report: “*FBI Undercover Operations*”**

In 1984 the Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights of the House Committee on the Judiciary issued its long-awaited report, *FBI Undercover Operations*.<sup>38</sup> What prompted the hearings that led to this report were a number of high-profile cases in which the FBI had relied on “stings,” in which the alleged criminal activity itself is bogus.

The best-known example of this tactic was “Operation Abscam,” in which the FBI attempted to induce several Senators and Representatives to accept illegal money from bogus Arab front men. The issues in this and other related cases, of course, relate directly to current sting operations against political radicals of the far right and far left. Among the problems with FBI undercover activities noted by the Subcommittee include the following:

Many of the values reflected in our Constitution are directly threatened by these operations. The proper limit of government intrusion into individual’s lives and privacy, reflected in the Fourth and Ninth Amendments; the protection of privileged relationships reflected in the First Amendment; and the requirements that criminal investigations and prosecutions be conducted in a fundamentally fair manner, commanded by the Fifth Amendment, are all endangered by the undercover technique as it is being used today.

The infiltration by government agents, or criminals who are financed by the government, into the private lives of citizens; the spectacle of the United States Government spending large sums of money to tempt people into committing crimes; and the atmosphere of fear, suspicion and paranoia which develops as the use of the technique expands, are all anathema to the values protected and cherished in our Constitution.<sup>39</sup>

Among the issues investigated in this report were the harmful effects of undercover operations themselves, particularly with respect to innocent third parties. Among their comments were:

The FBI’s use of elaborate, lengthy, and deceptive practices and the need to avoid discovery have resulted in severe harm befalling totally innocent citizens, either through a failure to monitor informants or as a result of careless (even callous) neglect on conscious design on the part of the undercover agents.

...the Subcommittee, in its review of undercover cases, has found that the undercover technique carries with it the potential for subjecting the innocent of opprobrium, prosecution and even convictions. Because agents create the crime [in sting operations], rather than merely detect it, they hold the power to create the *appearance* of guilt. Moreover, the technology associated with many undercover operations - i.e., video and audio tape recording - can readily be manipulated to create false impressions of guilt.

The public often tends to equate investigation with guilt. Thus, the mere fact of being mentioned in an undercover operation has led to great professional and personal difficulties for the targeted individuals...

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<sup>37</sup> James Kirkpatrick Davis, *Spying On America: The FBI’s Domestic Counter-Intelligence Program* (NY: Praeger, 1992), 173-174.

<sup>38</sup> Committee On The Judiciary, *FBI Undercover Operations: Report Of The Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights*: 98th Congress, Second Session, H. Doc 98-267 (April 1984).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

In short, once an undercover operation is unleashed, virtually any individual can be subjected to a full testing of his morality by investigators armed with the full panoply of power exercised by the FBI in its traditional law enforcement activities.

Moreover, undercover agents do not merely investigate specific crimes; they move into the entire life of a targeted individual or organization, including its most intimate and irrelevant aspects.<sup>40</sup>

If these problems are inherent in FBI undercover operations - where there is at least some semblance of oversight and monitoring - imagine the activities of private undercover operatives working for Watchdog organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center. These operatives are agenda driven, like the organizations they represent, and are powerfully motivated to “build a case” against the victim of their deceit.

While there may be some kind of congressional remedy against FBI and BATF excesses, there is nothing of the kind for the unprincipled and hostile operatives of the Watchdogs whose primary function is to obtain, and possibly create, information with which to defame and degrade their critics and opponents. This is a serious issue that has the potential for great injustice and needs to be thoroughly investigated by responsible and principled journalists.

## **No “Freedom of Information Act” for Watchdogs**

Any citizen can obtain their FBI files through the Freedom of Information Act. In fact, you can obtain your files from most government agencies, including the Internal Revenue Service. Information for obtaining one’s files is readily available on the Internet.

There is no such mechanism by which a private American citizen can obtain their files compiled by private Watchdog organizations such as the ADL and SPLC. You have no idea what information is kept on you, where it originated, who obtained it and how, and what implications it may have for your safety. You cannot correct errors or challenge information contained in Watchdog files. You have no control over how this information is disseminated, where it winds up and what decisions are made based upon it.

Moreover, when private, agenda-driven Watchdog organizations decide to share their information with government agencies, they may have obtained information that government agencies cannot legally collect on its own. This, as we shall see in the chapter on the Anti-Defamation League, is something that goes on all the time and represents a serious civil liberties issue.

## **Undercover Influences on Extremist Groups**

What has not been dealt with sufficiently, in my opinion, is the role of government and private watchdog infiltrators in formulating the policies and activities of extremist groups, particularly with respect to illegal, or even violent, activity. This can happen in several ways. One of these is by direct suggestion, as when an FBI informant suggests violent action to the subjects of his infiltration. This was the case with Ku Klux Klan infiltrator Gary Thomas Rowe, who was implicated in a bombing and the killing of a civil rights worker. In 1978, the *Birmingham Post-Herald* reported:

A renewed investigation by Alabama authorities into murders during the 1960’s civil rights movement has indicated that the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s chief paid informant in the Ku Klux Klan might have been an agent provocateur who participated in and helped plan the incidents that the FBI hired him to monitor.

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

...Gary Thomas Rowe has failed two polygraph lie detector tests in which he denied involvement in the 1963 bombing that killed four black children at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, according to records compiled by the Alabama attorney general's office and the Birmingham Police Department.<sup>41</sup>

A less ambiguous account appeared in a *New York Times* dispatch:

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's chief paid informant in the Ku Klux Klan in the early 1960's has told Alabama authorities that, while on the bureau payroll, he shot a black man to death, then kept quiet about the killing at the instruction of an FBI agent, according to investigative documents.<sup>42</sup>

A 1982 Associated Press story reported:

The Justice Department has revealed that FBI agents covered up the violent activities of Gary Thomas Rowe, Jr., its key informant in the Ku Klux Klan in the early 1960s.<sup>43</sup>

Rowe published a highly sanitized account of his career in 1976.<sup>44</sup>

The problem of the agent provocateur grew so large in domestic neo-Nazi and Ku Klux Klan circles by the 1980s that members were advising one another to be highly suspicious of other members who advocated violence or illegal activity. In a surprising number of cases they turned out to be government informants.<sup>45</sup>

James Mitchell Rosenberg, a career infiltrator for the Anti-Defamation League, regularly attended and was a speaker at Ku Klux Klan rallies and meetings of the Mountain Church in Cohoctah, MI, considered a gathering place for neo-Nazis of all kinds. He had the confidence of Robert Miles and other figures in Klan circles.

According to BATF informant Roy Frankhauser, a close associate of Rosenberg, his job was to promote disharmony and suspicion among violence-prone Klansmen and provide information on who was susceptible to illegal activities. Even the Marxist-oriented anti-racist group People Against Racist Terror (PART) commented on Rosenberg's activities:

James Mitchell Rosenberg, a paid operative for the ADL, was involved in numerous white supremacist groups including the KKK, and his activity crossed over the line from collecting information, which is vital and necessary in dealing with violence-prone racists, to acting as an initiator of racist organizing and proponent of racist violence.<sup>46</sup>

More details on Rosenberg's career as an agent provocateur are found in the chapter on the Anti-Defamation League.

In the course of the investigation of the ADL's 1993 San Francisco spy case, detailed in the ADL chapter, it was revealed that ADL operative Roy Bullock had actually encouraged members of the Institute for Historical Review, a holocaust revisionist organization, to join an Arab civil rights group so the ADL could "out" its members as neo-Nazis. According to Jane Hunter:

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<sup>41</sup> Howell Raines, "FBI Informant is Linked to '63 City Church Bombing," *Birmingham Post-Herald* (10 July 1978), 1.

<sup>42</sup> "Informant Of FBI Says He Killed Black," *New York Times* (11 July 1978).

<sup>43</sup> "FBI Covered Up For KKK Informant," *Associated Press* (29 October 1982).

<sup>44</sup> Gary Thomas Rowe, *My Undercover Years With The Ku Klux Klan*, (New York: Bantam Books, 1976).

<sup>45</sup> For a more detailed account of this phenomenon see: John George and Laird Wilcox, *Nazis, Communists, Klansmen and Others on the Fringe*, (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books), 1992.

<sup>46</sup> "ADL Complicit in Police Spying," *Turning The Tide* (May-June 1993), 9.



Roy Bullock, the ADL agent, began to raise the suspicions of leaders of the Northern California branch of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), the nation's leading Arab civil rights group - but not until after he had participated in the group's activities for several years. Finally, in 1986, after Bullock distributed ADC literature at a neo-Nazi meeting and urged participants to join the ADC, some San Francisco activists unmasked him as an ADL agent.<sup>47</sup>

The amount of this kind of skullduggery that goes on in the swampy world of the watchdogs and the far right and the far left is, in my opinion, vastly underestimated.

## **The Watchdogs and Law Enforcement**

The most troubling aspect of watchdog opportunism is their infiltration of law enforcement. Watchdog organizations feed law enforcement agencies information in order to prompt them to go after their enemies, real and imagined. By alleging "dangerousness" on the basis of mere assumed values, opinions and beliefs, they put entirely innocent citizens at risk from law enforcement error and misconduct.

For example, following the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995 the Southern Poverty Law Center gave the FBI a list of several thousand alleged members of militias and "hate groups" culled from its files. None of them had anything to do with the bombing. These names came from letters to newspapers expressing right-wing political views, lists of "members" supplied by informants, names from license plate numbers collected outside public meetings, pilfered mailing lists, and so on.

The possibility of a mere curiosity seeker or an individual with no criminal intent whatsoever being suggested to the FBI or BATF as "dangerous" seems inevitable. Along these lines, watchdog influence on law enforcement policies in tragedies from Ruby Ridge to Waco needs to be examined in detail.

In the case of Waco, the ADL "interfaced" closely with both BATF and the FBI. Writing in the 17 May 1993 edition of *Heritage*, a weekly serving the Jewish community in the Los Angeles area, editor Herb Brin commented on the ADL's role:

U. S. and Texas authorities have precise documentation [from ADL of course] on the Branch Davidian cult in Waco and how it operated in the past.<sup>48</sup>

Watchdog groups can have a profound influence on law enforcement tactics in a number of ways. Both the Anti-Defamation League and Southern Poverty Law Center publish newsletters and other material directed at law enforcement, often giving these agencies names from their files accompanied by suggestions of dangerousness.

Like all witch hunting operations, they occasionally find a real witch - which enhances their credibility, especially in high-profile media cases. But mixed with those few witches are thousands upon thousands of people whose politics may be extreme, but with no illegal intent whatsoever.

No reliable statistical comparisons are available, but one wag observed that it was rough equivalent to surveilling all Black males on the grounds that a certain percentage may commit violent crimes. In the sense that targeting minorities for special surveillance is called "racial profiling," the watchdogs engage in "political profiling." Major watchdog groups, particularly the ADL, hold law enforcement conferences, seminars and training sessions on this "profiling" behavior.

The issue of serious watchdog impropriety arises in the context of any alliance with the police agencies of government, especially when dealing with unpopular political minorities, by agenda-driven private interest groups - which is what all watchdog organizations are regardless of whether their particular agendas are popular and their opponents are

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<sup>47</sup> Jane Hunter, "More Zionist Agents, *Middle East International* (5 February 1993).

<sup>48</sup> Herb Brin, *Heritage* (16 April 1993).

unpopular. This is no less true today as it was when right-wing super-patriotic watchdog organizations were advising our leaders on potential subversives and communists.

## **The End Justifies the Means**

In addition to obsessive preoccupation with their enemies, watchdog organizations tend to adopt the position that the end justifies the means. Although ostensibly oriented toward human rights and democratic concerns, Watchdogs frequently venture far afield from these in the service of their crusade. This is most notable in their intrusive and sometimes illegal intelligence-gathering activities, their propaganda and disinformation campaigns, and in their highly questionable legal offensives against their opponents and critics.

The Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center's use of civil law to accomplish defacto criminal prosecutions without the benefit of appropriate constitutional guarantees, is simply wrong, and would be wrong no matter who did it. The rules of evidence and procedural practices in criminal cases are far more protective of civil liberties than those civil cases.

In civil prosecutions, for example, a defendant is not entitled to legal counsel unless he can pay for it, whereas in criminal prosecutions legal counsel is guaranteed, regardless of ability to pay. It has not gone unnoticed that most of the defendants in civil cases brought by the Southern Poverty Law Center are either indigent or of very modest means.

While they may give lip service to freedom of expression and other constitutional guarantees, Watchdog groups often operate just on the edge of those protections, often advocating formal censorship or government reprisals against their ideological opponents simply because of their values, opinions and beliefs. Their uniform policy is to avoid debate and make every effort to keep their opponents' views out of the marketplace of ideas.

They appear to regard their opposition and critics as sub-human and not deserving the amenities ordinarily afforded to other human beings. This is not the behavior of someone wanting to promote civil liberties and bona fide human rights, but rather that of militant special interest groups with an agenda to fulfill.

## **Manipulation and Propaganda**

The role of political language in mystifying and distorting meaning has been the subject of countless books and articles. Nowhere is this practice more prominent than in adversarial political organizations including the Watchdog groups. Murray Edelman observes:

The critical element in political maneuver for advantage is the creation of meaning: the construction of beliefs about the significance of events, of problems, of crises, of policy changes, and of leaders. The strategic need is to immobilize opposition and mobilize support. While coercion and intimidation help to check resistance in all political systems, the key tactic must always be the evocation of meanings that legitimize favored courses of action.

In short, it is not "reality" in any testable or observable sense that matters in shaping political consciousness and behavior, but rather the beliefs that language helps evoke about the causes of discontents and satisfactions...<sup>49</sup>

The whole vocabulary of the radical Watchdog milieu tends to be self-serving and designed to sanctify their actions while demonizing those of opponents and critics. The terms "racism" and "anti-Semitism" have a near-magical power to stop thinking and start

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<sup>49</sup> Murray Edelman, "Political Language and Political Reality," *Political Science* (Winter 1985), 10-11.

feeling, to suspend critical judgment and empower strong symbolic images of lynching and gas chambers.

In certain respects it resembles the language of Marxism-Leninism, where radically different things are meant by identical words or phrases depending upon who is being referred to or in the use of terms like “reactionary.”

For example, when most of us think of “freedom” we think in terms of personal liberty, lack of restraint and free choice. Among anti-racist fanatics of the radical watchdog milieu it may mean only the “freedom” to submit to the identity and needs of their group and its version of political correctness. Consider this from *The Penguin Dictionary of Politics*:

## **Reactionary**

Reactionary is one of those political terms invariably used pejoratively, though there is nothing in its basic meaning that requires this. A reactionary is, literally, one who reacts against some development or change, or opposes some proposed change in society. It is normally used almost interchangeably with ‘Conservative,’ though it is highly relative. Thus propaganda inside Communist societies often refers to ‘reactionary’ movements, those who are holding up true socialist progress, though even the propagandists would not seriously hose that those they are attacking are actually conservative.<sup>50</sup>

## **Irrational Guilt as a Manipulator**

Irrational guilt is a powerful manipulator. It takes terrible advantage of the tendency to be trusting, helpful and sympathetic – all necessary traits if we’re to get along with one another. The implicit and explicit use of guilt as a motivator is commonplace in Watchdog literature.

The implication is that somehow *you* are responsible for the actions of others who you have absolutely no contact with, and for the plight of others where no rational basis for such responsibility exists. All of us have helped the genuinely unfortunate from time to time, but the Watchdogs attempt attach these feelings to a political agenda that goes far beyond basic human sympathy.

Anthony Pratkanis and Elliot Aronson explain the role of artificially induced guilt in their excellent book, *The Age of Propaganda*:

Guilt sells - a fact of persuasive life that seems to be intuitively grasped by parents, teachers, clergy, charities and life insurance agents. But guilt, the feeling that we are responsible for some wrongdoing, can be used to sell more than cookies and life insurance.

The power of guilt to...persuade stems, as with most emotional appeals, from its power to direct our thoughts and to channel our energies. When we feel guilty we typically pay little attention to the cogency of an argument, or to the merits of a suggested course of action. Instead, our thoughts and actions are directed to removing the feeling of guilt – to somehow making things right or doing the right thing. We fall into the rationalization trap.<sup>51</sup>

## **Stereotyping by Watchdogs**

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<sup>50</sup> David Robertson, *The Penguin Dictionary of Politics* (London: Penguin Books, 1985), 283.

<sup>51</sup> Anthony Pratkanis and Elliot Aronson, *Age of Propaganda: The Everyday Use and Abuse of Persuasion* (New York: W. H. Freeman, 1991), 174, 178.

Stereotypes, although troublesome, are not necessarily inherently sinister *per se*. Rather, they are a normal “shortcut” to the work of understanding the many things in our environment. Inappropriately understood and maliciously used, stereotyping can have negative consequences. According to Stuart Oskamp in his 1977 text *Attitudes and Opinions*:

Stereotypes develop because they are useful. They reduce the tremendous complexity of the world around us into a few simple guidelines which we can use in our everyday thought and decisions.<sup>52</sup>

The most frequently condemned stereotyping in Watchdog literature are cases of religious, ethnic, racial or gender stereotyping and there is no question that those practices are unfair. However, the stereotype of the violent, crude, abusive white supremacist bears no more relationship to reality than does the stereotype of the dull, shiftless, happy-go-lucky black person.

Both types occur, but are uncommon and hardly representative of their respective group. Although Watchdog groups speak out against stereotyping, it is always against the stereotyping by their opponents and never by themselves. They are quick to resort to stereotyping when necessary for their purposes.

Sam Keen’s wonderfully written and illustrated account of hostile propaganda, *Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination*, details common motives in the designation of an enemy:

In all propaganda, the face of the enemy is designed to provide a focus for our hatred. He is the other. The outsider. The alien. He is not human. If we can only kill him, we will be rid of all within and without ourselves that is evil.<sup>53</sup>

The purpose of propaganda is to paralyze thought, to prevent discrimination, and to condition individuals to act as a mass.<sup>54</sup>

We scapegoat and create absolute enemies, not because we are intrinsically cruel, but because focusing our anger on an outside target, striking at strangers, brings our tribe or nation together and allows us to be a part of a close and loving in-group. We create surplus evil because we need to belong.<sup>55</sup>

Do not misunderstand this point: Certainly the targets of Watchdogs - the “hate groups” - are very prone to these behaviors themselves. However, in objecting to these the Watchdogs have developed a certain blindness toward their own behavior that invalidates their claims to objective moral virtue.

## Piggybacking and Transfer

In propaganda terms, “transfer” or “piggybacking” means an attempt to carry the reputation or prestige of an accepted value, opinion or belief held by the individual or group over to something else in order to make the latter acceptable and legitimate. This is a potent trick. In a society where equality is paramount, to be able to associate a cause or crusade with equality is quite helpful in gaining acceptance.

A description of the transfer device appears in Hy Ruchlis’s *Clear Thinking: A Practical Introduction*:

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<sup>52</sup> Stuart Oskamp, *Attitudes and Opinions*, (1977)

<sup>53</sup> Sam Keen, *Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 16.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 25.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

People are emotional about their flag, their country, mothers...helpless children... they are also emotional about well-known, well-liked people... In the *transfer device* public relations experts try to connect emotional symbols to whatever ideas, products or candidates they are publicizing. They seek to “transfer” the favorable emotion from the symbol to the product, person, or idea.<sup>56</sup>

Another description comes from the journal *Propaganda Analysis*:

“Transfer” is a device by which the propagandist carries over the authority, sanction, and prestige of something we respect and revere to something he would have us accept...If the propagandist succeeds in getting church or nation to approve a campaign on behalf of some program, he therefore transfers its authority, sanction, and prestige to that program. Thus we may accept something that otherwise we might reject.<sup>57</sup>

Virtually all of the Watchdog groups have a private, often hidden, agenda. Although the alleged focus of their program may be to combat racism, close study reveals that, to varying degrees, they have much more in mind. It may be to transform certain ethnic or racial minorities into a privileged class one criticizes at one’s peril or, in the case of groups with a Marxist background, the complete reconstruction of society along some kind of collectivist paradigm.

The ADL, for example, has an agenda that focuses primarily on Jewish interests and support for Israel. Recent years have seen the growth of a significant neo-conservative orientation in the ADL. Some ADL officers regard the far left as ultimately more of a threat to Jews than the far right, although typical ADL literature wouldn’t suggest that.

The Southern Poverty Law Center is obviously “leftist” but not patently ideological. Some of their contributors have probably been moderate conservatives who simply sympathized with their lawsuits against Klansmen.

In the case of the Center For Democratic Renewal and Political Research Associates, however, their history suggests that some form of class struggle-based Marxism is central. In order to defeat the evils of racism, etc., society itself must be overhauled and reformulated along socialist lines. Rather than present socialism or some form of class struggle-based Marxism as their goal, they “piggy-back” it onto anti-racism, which is far more popular.

This pattern exists among most Marxist organizations where there is less talk nowadays about revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat and more about racism, sexism and homophobia as a manifestation of decadent capitalism. The distinction between “civil rights” organizations and ideological movements dedicated to ideological “class struggle” politics has blurred considerably. Frederick Lynch, professor of government at Claremont McKenna College in California observes:

The civil rights movement’s original aspirations to color-blindedness and its admonition to treat people equally “without regard to race, color, or creed” are regarded and laughable and delusionary in diversity circles.... Marx’s class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat has been converted to identity politics’ cultural war between white males and everyone else.<sup>58</sup>

## Models of Intolerance

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<sup>56</sup> Hy Ruchlis, *Clear Thinking: A Practical Introduction* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1990), 208.

<sup>57</sup> “How To Detect Propaganda,” *Propaganda Analysis*, Vol. 1., No. 2 (1937).

<sup>58</sup> Frederick R. Lynch, “The Diversity Machine,” *Society* (July-August 1997).

In certain important aspects watchdog groups have become models of intolerance, despite their public pronouncements to the contrary. Militant anti-racist and anti-fascist groups, like militant groups of all kinds, including those that are patently racist, tend to see themselves in terms of their intentions, which they claim are selfless, noble and altruistic. A much clearer picture emerges when one views them as interest groups which, like virtually all interest groups, are engaged in benefiting a particular constituency.

By claiming the so-called moral high ground, and by appearing to act “for the good of others,” they often manage to elude the kind of critical examination that befalls other less fortunately situated interest groups. Hence, a distortion, hoax, fabrication, or just plain lie is easily overlooked and forgiven, and attributed to an over-enthusiastic zeal to “do good.” This is an enviable position to be in.

Moreover, because they claim to be anti-racist and anti-fascist, they can easily call into question the motives of those who are critical of them. It’s as if to say, “We’re anti-racist and anti-fascist and if you complain about us or something we are doing, your motives are suspect. Perhaps you’re racist or fascist!”

Having known bona fide racists and anti-racists through both the civil rights movement of the 1960s and my many years of research, I have never felt the latter to be enormously more tolerant in the literal sense than the former. They use the language of tolerance, including all the buzzwords, slogans and clichés, but when push came to shove, their hatred and contempt for those who feel differently is very obvious.

## **Problems for Journalists and Academics**

Watchdog organizations represent a special problem for journalists and academics. Often they are the only source for quotable information about the groups they monitor. Where does one go for information on the paramilitary militia groups or so-called “hate groups?” Sociologists and authors Drs. Betty A. Dobratz and Stephanie L. Shanks-Meile observe that Watchdog groups engage in claims making in which they draw attention to certain causes in order to promote their agendas:

We relied on the SPLC and ADL reports for general information, but we have noted differences between the way events were sometimes portrayed in *Klanwatch Intelligence Reports* as more militant and dangerous with higher turnouts than we observed. Also, “watchdog” groups promote “claims” that are compatible with their political agenda and neglect other ones as they attempt to wield political influence among policymakers.<sup>59</sup>

In a general message sent out to an internet newsgroup in September 1996 Shanks-Meile also observed that the SPLC has a tendency to depict racist rallies as more virulent than she observed and that they claimed individuals had attended a July 1996 Aryan Nations meeting who were actually not there. She noted that either their surveillance was bad or they had some other agenda, or both.

With respect to the huge media feeding frenzy following the Oklahoma City bombing, writer Adam Parfrey comments:

The ADL and SPLC boast that they are the media’s primary sources on information regarding militias and patriot groups. Their information is usually absorbed whole into establishment news sources as unimpeachable and objective news sources.

In truth, the coffers of the ADL and SPLC bulge when constituents are led to believe they’re fighting an enemy of enormous evil and mounting strength. Despite their

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<sup>59</sup> Betty A. Dobratz and Stephanie L. Shanks-Meile, *White Power, White Pride!: The White Separatist Movement in the United States* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1997), 2-3.

altruistic claims, the ADL and SPLC profit directly off the sensationalism that acts as a sparkplug for Hollywood and the weekly tabloids.<sup>60</sup>

The December 1994 edition of the SPLC's *Klanwatch Intelligence Report* contains a headline, "Racist Extremists Exploit Nationwide Militia Movement," and contains a photo of Ray Southwell, a leader in the Michigan Militia, with the allegation that "according to sources in Michigan, Southwell recently traveled to Tennessee for a meeting with Bobby Norton, the Southeastern Director for Aryan Nations."<sup>61</sup>

Southwell adamantly denies this as a "bald-faced lie." "I never left the state of [of Michigan] in 1994," he said, adding "...one thing I'm not is racist or anti-Semitic. We've been recruiting blacks, Jews, Hispanics, and other minorities into the militia. We sure wouldn't be doing that if we were racist."

When the SPLC's researcher Mike Reynolds was confronted with a request for the source of the allegation, he refused to provide it. Moreover, the entire account of this affair never made the national media. The only outlet that covered it was *The New American*, the monthly magazine of the John Birch Society.<sup>62</sup>

In another case involving a Michigan Militia group, the anti-racist watchdog group "HateWatch" had the Michigan Militia Corps listed as a "Hate Group" on their web page, a fact that was noted by the group's leaders in August 1997. An email to Sam Macy, director of HateWatch from the Michigan Militia Corps dated 3 September 1997 in which they threatened to sue brought the following apology from Hate Watch:

I, Samuel Macy, as director of HateWatch, wish to apologize to the Michigan Militia Corps and all its members. HateWatch listed the Michigan Militia Corps as a hate group when indeed there is no evidence that the Militia Corps is.<sup>63</sup>

In fact, much "watchdog" information proves to be problematic. In Canada, for example, Warren Kinsella, author of an 1994 "expose" of Canada's far right entitled *Web Of Hate*<sup>64</sup> found himself in court over allegations he made against Roger Rocan, whom he had attempted to "link and tie" with "every single fascist, Klansmen, Jew hater and Hitler freak in British Columbia." Rocan sued for libel and was awarded a five-figure settlement in July 1998.<sup>65</sup>

Earlier that same year a British Columbia court ruled against David Lethbridge, founder of the Salmon Arm Coalition Against Racism and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada, following false statements he made against Claus and Eileen Pressler, who had been active in right-wing politics. Lethbridge charged that the Presslers were building a paramilitary compound on heir property, complete with extensive security measures, guarded perimeter fences, underground bunkers, and so on. In fact, the Presslers were building a retirement home. Several of their neighbors testified on their behalf. Also found guilty of libel was the Westcom TV Group, Ltd., which

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<sup>60</sup> Adam Parfrey, *Cult Rapture: Revelations of the Apocalyptic Mind* (Portland, OR: Feral House, 1995), 327.

<sup>61</sup> *Klanwatch Intelligence Report*, "Racist Extremists Exploit Nationwide Militia Movement," (December 1994), 1.

<sup>62</sup> William F. Jasper, "Dubious Charges Raise Questions About Klanwatch Credibility," *The New American* (6 February 1995).

<sup>63</sup> Samuel Macy, letter, posted on the HateWatch web page from 10 to 20 September 1997 ([www.hatewatch.org](http://www.hatewatch.org)).

<sup>64</sup> Warren Kinsella, *Web of Hate: Inside Canada's Far Right Network* (Toronto, Harper Collins, 1994), 68.

<sup>65</sup> Roger Rocan v. Warren Kinsella and Harper Collins Publishers, Ltd., Supreme Court of British Columbia, Victoria Registry, No 94 2574.

broadcast the story. The Presslers were awarded a total of \$71,500.00 in damages from all parties.<sup>66</sup>

Encouraged and supported by radical anti-racist and Marxist-Leninist groups, Lethbridge appealed the judgment. In November 2000 the Court of Appeal for British Columbia handed down its opinion in favor of the Presslers that they had, in fact, been seriously and grievously libeled. Moreover, the judge assessed an additional \$15,000 in punitive damages against Mr. Lethbridge. The three appeal judges said:

No one has any right to drive anyone, no matter what his views, out of town. [The punitive damages were awarded] to warn off others...who assert that they may take the law into their own hands. A lynch mob is still a lynch mob...<sup>67</sup>

An interesting aside on the Lethbridge case is that B'nai B'rith's League for Human Rights, the equivalent of the United States' Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, actually used its tax-exempt status to raise money for Lethbridge's defense, and in spite of his extensive Marxist-Leninist background as a Communist Party officer. Lethbridge supporter Ben Dayson wrote in the *Western Jewish Bulletin* of 26 December 1997 that:

All funds raised...for Dr. Lethbridge's defense, which I might add are badly needed, are being done under the auspices of B'nai B'rith. Checks (tax-deductable) are to be made out to The Zikaron Society, c/o B'nai B'rith Manor, 1260 Howe St., Vancouver, B.C.<sup>68</sup>

For journalists and writers the issue is the perennial one of "Who watches the watchman?" and not "what does the watchman have for me today?" It's like going to a militant anti-Communist group such as the John Birch Society for reliable information on Communist subversives, knowing that their definition of a subversive is much broader and far more inclusive than a more objective and less interested analysis might reveal. They admittedly know a lot about subversives, but they have a view of subversion distorted by their strident hostility toward their subject.

## **The issue of "Links and Ties"**

The *fallacy of composition* consists in reasoning improperly from a property of a member of a group to a property of the group itself.... It occurs in two varieties: First, it falsely extrapolates a quality of one group member to all group members.... Second, it is possible to transfer a quality of a member to the group itself.

The *fallacy of division* is the converse of the *fallacy of composition*. It occurs when somebody reasons falsely from a quality of the group to a quality of a member of group.

The *converse fallacy of difference*, on the other hand, renders a special judgment upon a group for a quality which is not special to it.

The *fallacy of the perfect analogy* consists in reasoning from a partial resemblance between two entities to an entire and exact correspondence.<sup>69</sup>

Consider the following account of the "links and ties" of U. S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas offered by Chip Berlet of Political Research Associates. Berlet notes correctly that Thomas is on the editorial board of the *Lincoln Review*, a quarterly black

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<sup>66</sup> Baila Lazarus, *Western Jewish Bulletin*, "Anti-Racist Advocate Loses Case," (29 May 1998); *Press Release*, Council on Public Affairs (21 May 1998).

<sup>67</sup> Court of Appeal for British Columbia, *Pressler v. Lethbridge and Westcom TV Group, Ltd.*, 2000 BCCA 639, (Docket #CA024746, #CA024748, 11 November 2000).

<sup>68</sup> Ben Dayson, letter, *Western Jewish Bulletin* (26 December 1997).

<sup>69</sup> David Hackett Fisher, *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1970), 219-223.



conservative publication of the Lincoln Institute. Berlet claims “it is a far right group that has worked in coalition with... fascist and anti-Semitic groups.”

He goes on to “link” Lincoln Institute head J. A. Baker with the Indiana Ku Klux Klan by virtue that Baker is on the board of the Council for National Policy and another board member is allegedly a *former* member of the Indiana Ku Klux Klan! Finally, Berlet says,

The Lincoln Institute, with which Clarence Thomas has been affiliated in an official policy for close to ten years, was also a member group in the Coalition for Peace Through Strength. As author Russ Bellant discusses, the Coalition includes a number of racist, pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic groups.<sup>70</sup>

In point of fact, there are so many alternative explanations for each of these “links and ties” that the one that Berlet suggests is among the least likely. In other words, although it has the surface appearance of possible substance, it’s nothing more than calling someone a bad name.

## A close look at “links and ties”

“Links and ties” is another name for *argumentum ad hominem* or guilt by association, which has both legitimate and illegitimate uses. If someone has been an active member of an ideological organization for many years, or a regular writer for an ideological publication, or routinely and regularly associates with a particular ideological crowd while professing sympathy and solidarity with them, and this has bona fide bearing on a particular issue, then the “link” or “tie” is probably significant.

This kind of analysis is subject to abuse, however. It has a magical nature, as if one is contaminated or “marked” by the alleged association through some kind of metaphysical osmosis. For ideological thinkers, a mere hint of “links and ties” may lead to great intuitive leaps that have no basis in fact.

The literature of the McCarthy period is replete with cases where tangential and casual “links and ties” were inflated to alarming proportions. Mere attendance at a meeting, subscription to a periodical, or a letter to the editor was considered a “link” to a radical ideology or subversive organization. The anti-racist watchdog organizations have refined this technique and routinely apply it to their enemies.

Also it must be borne in mind that agreement with some issues on a group’s agenda does not necessarily imply agreement with all issues. Here again this depends upon the group. Some organizations demand considerable conformity from their membership while others do not.

The more “extreme” the group, the more conformity with doctrine is usually required. Marxist or Nazi groups often demand great compliance with doctrine. It is unlikely that Chicago Area Friends of Albania, for example, would let someone become a founding member unless that person had been in substantial agreement with its ideological program.

In most cases the existence of “links and ties” or past political associations should be viewed as a statement of where people were at that particular time in their lives. Some of the links and ties mentioned in this report occurred many years ago.

People change over as they mature, their ideas continue to evolve and a past membership or association should be taken in this context. Sometimes we say things we regret later, or sometimes we find that what seemed right at one point in our lives no longer fits. On the balance, if a person says that certain “links and ties” represent past associations and not present beliefs, I think it should be taken on good faith, absent convincing evidence to the contrary.

Another issue has to do with committees to protest alleged civil liberties violations or to organize the legal defense of a particular organization or its members. Many people,

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<sup>70</sup> Chip Berlet, “A Few Facts About Clarence Thomas,” published by Rock Out Censorship (1997).

myself included, have signed petitions in protest of civil liberties violations against political radicals, both left and right. The question is whether the object of interest is civil liberties, *per se*, or whether it is merely to defend the interests of a particular ideological organization or its members.

Those who regularly defend the rights of extreme leftists but not those of the opposition can hardly claim to be “just civil libertarians.” Under such circumstances it might be reasonably assumed that they are sympathizers interested in the legal defense of the particular groups, individuals or ideals they identify with rather than bona fide civil libertarians who are concerned about the rights of all.

Moreover, any “link” or “tie,” no matter how strong, should not divert attention from the truth or falsity of a particular statement by the individual or group. Fanatics or extremists are sometimes correct in their assessment and analysis. Each case has to be judged on its merits. Sometimes the “links and ties” of individuals may be cited in an attempt to divert attention from the more legitimate aspects of their message.

Over the years I have known people who were simply careless in choosing their friends and associations, or who have held certain beliefs for a time and then rejected or modified them. In addition, individual differences in the psychological makeup of members impacts upon how they might express their commitment to a cause. I’ve met members of extremist groups that represented virtually every personality type, and some of these seemed oddly out of place in the particular milieu they had placed themselves. Some people are rigid dogmatists, others might be ideological adventurers who “try on” belief systems, in a manner of speaking, before they finally decide - if they ever do. Most people who join extreme organizations stay members for a year or two and then leave. Life-long commitments are very unusual.

There have been many thousands of people who have associated with various extremist groups out of curiosity, because they had friends who were involved or because of a fleeting sympathy that was later reconsidered, but with no lasting involvement. A free society should not require undue vigilance in this regard. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas observed in 1958:

Among the liberties of citizens that are guaranteed are...the right to believe what one chooses, the right to differ with his neighbor, the right to pick and choose the political philosophy that he likes best, the right to associate with whomever one chooses, the right to join groups he prefers...<sup>71</sup>

The pre-eminent Jewish philosopher Baruch Spinoza observes the often-concealed motives of the opponents of this philosophy of openness:

Laws which prescribe what everyone must believe, and forbid men to say or write anything against this or that opinion, are often passed to gratify, or rather to appease the anger of those who cannot abide independent minds.<sup>72</sup>

In 1966 I signed a petition supporting the civil liberties of three members of the Socialist Workers Party at Indiana University who had been charged with criminal sedition by a local prosecutor. The same year I editorialized in my newsletter, *The Kansas Free Press*, supporting the right of a John Birch Society member to hold elective office in Kansas. So, am I a stooge for Marxists or a stooge for the John Birch Society?

The issue in each case was civil liberties, and not the particular ideological prejudices of the respective defendants. To claim status as a bona fide civil libertarian while merely supporting the legal defense of a particular cause or crusade to the exclusion of others is deceptive and opportunistic. Either we all have rights, or none of us do.

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<sup>71</sup> Quoted in Laird Wilcox and John George, *Be Reasonable: Selected Quotations for Inquiring Minds* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1994), 22.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 80.

If we accept the argument advanced by most of the present-day anti-racist Watchdog activists that anyone who has consorted with neo-Nazi organizations, “shared a platform” with a neo-Nazi, etc., can be justifiably “linked and tied” with them and bears a burden of guilt for the atrocities of Nazi and fascist regimes, then we might consider this argument: anyone who has aspired to be a Marxist-Leninist, or who has consorted with Marxist-Leninist organizations, or “shared a platform” with a Marxist-Leninist can be justifiably “linked” with and bears a burden of guilt for the atrocities of Marxist-Leninist regimes. In other words, “links and ties” cuts both ways -- a central underlying theme of this book.

## Watchdogs as Moral Crusaders

Watchdog-type organizations cover the entire political spectrum, and the religious spectrum as well. During the astounding accusations regarding alleged “Satanic” activities in the 1970’s and 1980’s, a synthesis has formed regarding the irresponsible and unfounded charges that destroyed careers and lives in daycare centers, schools and churches. Much of the feeding frenzy was incited by anti-Satanic “Watchdog” organizations and individuals, often (but not always) of conservative Christian origin.

Virtually anything could be said about alleged satanic organizations or “witches” and be believed by their fervent and misguided opponents. Over time this hysteria infiltrated popular culture in the form of movies, television shows and lurid books and pamphlets, most of which were hysterical, utterly without proof, or treated isolated and rare cases as though they were a growing trend. In time more sober voices prevailed and a number of studies were undertaken to explain what had happened.

One of the best books to come out of this period is *Satanic Panic: The Creation of a Contemporary Legend*, by Jeffrey S. Victor.<sup>73</sup> Victor describes the phenomenon of “moral crusaders” and how they operate to enhance their credibility and recruit others to their particular form of persecutory zeal.

When moral crusaders strive to arouse public awareness about a newly recognized social evil, they must be able to offer explanations of the causes of that evil and propose credible ways of getting rid of it. They must cut through the inevitable complexity and ambiguity by framing the problem in a way that can be widely comprehended.<sup>74</sup>

Victor readily acknowledges the potentially dangerous nature of moral crusades and their proclivity to turn into witch hunts. The zeal to discover and persecute “enemies” often takes on a life of its own.

Moral crusaders who are unfamiliar with the details of specific cases are likely to assume the guilt of those who are accused. In moral crusades, there is always social pressure to publicly dramatize the evil and to make symbolic examples of particular cases.

Symbolic crusades and politics are inevitably intertwined. Moral crusaders usually attempt to attack the evils they see in society by getting new laws passed to criminalize the behavior they regard as being deviant.<sup>75</sup>

Victor observes that moral crusaders strive to influence public opinion to accept their particular vision of “evil.” “In essence,” he says, “these activists are propagandists for a new vision of evil.”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Jeffrey S. Victor, *Satanic Panic: The Creation of a Contemporary Legend* (Chicago: Open Court, 1993).

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 217-218.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 209.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 207.

## Calling People Names

The primary function of Watchdog organizations seems to be to call people names in the hope of defaming, discrediting, marginalizing, stigmatizing or neutralizing them. What is particularly puzzling about this is that the Watchdog groups claim to be opposed to this practice, as in their opposition to “hate speech.” The choice of the term “anti-defamation” in the name of the Anti-Defamation League is almost a joke, since most of the output of the ADL is meticulously devoted to defaming its critics and carefully cultivated opponents.

The Institute for Propaganda Analysis describes the name-calling device:

“Name calling” is a device to make us form a judgment without examining the evidence upon which it should be based. Here the propagandist appeals to our hate and fear. He does this by giving “bad names” to those individuals, groups, nations, policies, practices, beliefs, and ideals that he would have us condemn and reject.<sup>77</sup>

“Redbaiting” has become the term of choice to describe attempts - sincere or misguided - to expose Communist involvement or membership in various causes, such as disarmament, civil rights or anti-nuclear movements. The equivalent smearing of those on the right is known as “brown smearing,” also known as “brown baiting” and “right baiting.” Prof. Richard Powers describes the practice as it was used prior to World War II:

This technique of “brown smearing” – discrediting conservatives by linking them with the brown-shirted Nazi movement - was so prevalent during the debate over interventionism and afterwards that these years until the end of World War II and the breakdown of the Soviet-American alliance have been called the American Brown scare.<sup>78</sup>

Powers describes the practice of brown-smearing as it was used by the ADL in the 1960s:

Furthermore, the effectiveness of the ADL’s attack on the right had long-lasting consequences, as moderate political groups - liberal democrats, moderate Republicans, Jewish defense organizations - all adopted that crude, blunt of imputing anti-Semitic guilt by association to their “extremist” opponents when the real offense of those “extremists” was to insist that the country had a moral obligation to keep faith with the victims of Communist regimes in Europe and Asia, and to prevent others from falling victim.”<sup>79</sup>

Prof. James A. Aho, in his *This Thing of Darkness: A Sociology of the Enemy*, makes an excellent observation on the process and ultimate power of name-calling:

A crucial step in social definition is naming, or as it is more popularly know, “labeling.” It is not uncommon in public (journalism) and private (gossip) discourse for defamatory labels to be flippantly imposed on persons, acts, or situations that are not what they supposedly “should” be.

Sometimes these labels are bestowed on the basis of a loose, intuitive “fit” between the person, as known through his actions and background, and the formal criteria for the label’s usage. During crises, defamatory labels are bandied about arbitrarily and may fix on anyone who chances to be in the way.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> “How To Detect Propaganda,” *Propaganda Analysis*, Vol 1, No. 2 (November 1937), 5.

<sup>78</sup> Richard Gid Powers, *Not Without Honor: The History of American Anti-Communism*. (New York: The Free Press, 1995) ,163.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, 294-295.

<sup>80</sup> James A. Aho, *This Thing of Darkness: A Sociology of the Enemy* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 29-29.

Among the many sources cited by Aho is Arthur Garfinkle, professor of sociology at the University of California. In a very insightful journal article entitled *Conditions of Successful Degradation Ceremonies* Garfinkle observes,

The paradigm of moral indignation is public denunciation. We publicly deliver the curse: "I call upon all men to bare witness that he is not as he appears but is otherwise and in essence of a lower species."

The social effects serve various functions for the person as well as for the collectivity. A prominent function of shame for the person is that of preserving the ego from further onslaughts by withdrawing entirely its contact with the outside. For the collectivity shame is an "individuator." For one experiences shame in his own time.

Moral indignation serves to effect the ritual destruction of the person denounced. Unlike shame, which does not bind persons together, moral indignation may reinforce group solidarity.<sup>81</sup>

The "collectivity" and "group" referred to, of course, is the organization or interest group doing the defaming and degrading. This process tends to enhance their sense of moral superiority with "better than" messages, i.e., "we are *better than you*," and by invoking images of "good guys" versus "bad guys" rather than recognizing the simple fallibility of all humans.

Indeed, this need to promote in-group cohesiveness, solidarity and loyalty is deeply enhanced by the right choice of "enemies," i.e., an appropriate choice of an out-group on which to focus contempt or even hatred. If a group fears marginalization by virtue of their own concealed radical agenda, as in the case of Marxist-oriented Watchdog groups, their persecution of a similarly marginalized group on the opposite end of the spectrum can have a legitimizing effect both inside the group and without. The utility of "enemies" to perform this function is obvious.

This tendency for watchdogs to help construct the menace they claim to fear is not necessarily irrational. It may, in fact, be deliberate. Sociologist Jeffrey Kaplan has studied marginal religious movements, including Odinism and the Asatru movement which tends to advocate a white ethnic religion. He quotes Asatru founder Stephen McNallen:

If watchdog organizations try to stigmatize all Asafolk or Odinists as haters or paramilitary types, they will hurt the very people within the movement who are a force for moderation. Reasonable individuals will be repelled, and the extremists will be attracted to what they perceive as like-minded folks. These groups - the watchdogs - will have created the very enemy they feared.<sup>82</sup>

## Watchdogs and Oklahoma City

An example of the above happened with the militia groups following the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, although one of the most extensive FBI investigations ever undertaken has failed to implicate any militia group (or *any* group of any kind). The FBI agent in charge of the Oklahoma City Bombing Task Force recently said:

The investigation, as thorough as it was, was not able to identify other individuals involved other than those who admitted their knowledge or were convicted through two trials.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Harold Garfinkel, "Conditions of Successful Degradation Ceremonies," *American Journal of Sociology*, 16 (1956): 420-424.

<sup>82</sup> Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far Right to the Children of Noah* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 163.

<sup>83</sup> Diana Baldwin, "Some Still Hunt For John Doe 2," *Sunday Oklahoman* (13 December 1998), A-8.

During the early days of the media feeding frenzy following the bombing, militia organizations were widely suspected and even charged with complicity in the crime. Watchdog groups were regularly quoted by the media as “experts” on the militias and made fantastic claims of vast membership and influence.

Militias had absolutely nothing to do with the bombing, but the incredible media onslaught had a part in further marginalizing them, and changing their composition in the process. Some militias folded and many of their less committed members quit. This had the effect of “radicalizing” the movement, increasing their paranoia. Before long - in a typical self-fulfilling prophecy - some militias began to mimic the journalism that described them.

This widely publicized stereotype of the violence-prone right-wing extremist attracted individuals of that disposition. Combine that with harassment by police agencies from the FBI to the local sheriff, incessant negative media publicity, pressures on family and friends, and you have a prescription for disaster. In certain respects it’s surprising there hasn’t been more violence from militias than there has. Watchdogs have a part in creating the very monsters they claim are out there.

There are hard-core extremists in the movement, including some of the Jew-haters and racists the ADL and SPLC have attempted to portray as commonplace. In any event the evidence is now in and as far as Oklahoma City was concerned, the militias got a bum rap at the hands of the Watchdogs. A week after the bombing the op-ed section of *Newsday* contained my contribution in which I made the following points:

Not since the Red Scare of the 1920’s has a political minority been under as much hostile scrutiny as the right-wing militia movement is today. The Oklahoma City bombing -- the worst incident of domestic terrorism in American history -- quickly focused on a man with ephemeral links to a militia group in Michigan.

This link, however, consists largely of the fact that he was denied membership in the group, not that he was an active member acting under its direction. The bombing, in fact, appears to be the action of a psychopathic ex-soldier and a few confederates acting on their own.

It’s difficult to imagine what the average militia member felt as events unfolded last week, but it must have been excruciatingly uncomfortable for them. Sure, militia members spout conspiratorial rhetoric and uniform hostility toward a federal government they feel is getting out of hand. But I think it’s safe to say virtually none of them condoned the bombing and all were horrified to find their movement linked to it.... Already they are being called “baby killers” and treated like pariahs in some communities.

Right now, we’re at a dangerous crossroads. The media linkage of the Oklahoma bombing with right-wing politics has the makings of a witch-hunt on a scale we haven’t seen since Joe McCarthy. Even our president has tried to link conservative talk-show hosts to the bombing. This means that anyone with an American flag on the lawn may soon be suspect, and this kind of paranoia is not something to inflict on the already afflicted.

I hope we take some time to think this through before we start making mistakes, but so far I’m not encouraged.<sup>84</sup>

## ***The Dark Side of the Left***

As one who was involved with the student left during the early 1960s, I was very pleasantly surprised to find one of those books I wish I had written. Leftist intolerance and authoritarianism were the primary reasons I drifted out of leftist activism and into a more quiescent support for a few carefully selected causes, such as abolition of capital punishment and support for freedom of expression. I am not alone in this transition.

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<sup>84</sup> Laird Wilcox, “Don’t Fear Militias, Fear Their Fringes,” *Newsday* (27 April 1995).

Other former campus radicals have made similar transitions from the doctrinaire leftism of their youth to a more mature and realistic liberalism. This process is detailed in Richard J. Ellis's *The Dark Side of the Left: Illiberal Egalitarianism in America*.<sup>85</sup>

In the preface Ellis points out his own moderate leftist credentials in order to forestall the usual false charges of right-wing sympathies. I was pleased to learn we even share membership in the ACLU.

Ellis begins by quoting historian Richard Hofstadter, who commented on the seeming paradox of illiberalism in movements that claim to espouse liberal reform:

One of the most interesting and least studied aspects of American life has been the frequent recurrence of the demand for reforms, many of them aimed at the remedy of genuine ills, combined with strong moral convictions and with the choice of hatred as a creed.<sup>86</sup>

Ellis notes that in the *Age of Reform* Hofstadter differentiated sharply between the rational, interest-based politics and a non-rational, emotional, and symbolic politics. Hofstadter was not without his shortcomings, according to Ellis. He was quick to engage in psychologizing, especially in his *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*<sup>87</sup>, and succumbed to a kind of good guys vs. bad guys moralizing. Ellis's aim is to attempt to avoid this predicament and to render as reasonably unbiased an account of his subject as he can. Quick to define his terms, Ellis states, in part:

By "illiberal" I mean, as Webster's dictionary defines it, "intolerant; bigoted, narrow-minded," but I also have in mind a broader collection of related attitudes and behaviors, including disregard for civil liberties or individual autonomy...a Manichean view of the world as a battleground between absolute good and absolute evil, demonization of the enemy or moral absolutism...<sup>88</sup>

Although he does not specifically describe any of the organizations and movements he analyzes as "Watchdog" groups, several clearly fit that description in some respects. His analysis of the abolitionist movement, for example, reveals that it had a much broader agenda than the simple opposition to slavery commonly associated with it, including a number of collectivist and utopian social reforms.

The 1960s New Left movement, from which a number of present-day Watchdog personnel come, is revealed to have a terribly dubious record with respect to bona fide civil libertarian concerns, as well as its readiness to resort to violence:

...because theirs was a violence to end all violence, a liberating and righteous violence that would rid the world of a system that deformed and destroyed people. Such glorious ends justified, even ennobled, violent means.<sup>89</sup>

Ellis observes a similar behavior in the radical environmentalist movement which, taken as a whole, very closely follows the "watchdog" paradigm:

...having embarked on a crusade against evil, they find it difficult to make room for skeptics or to tolerate doubters. Fanaticism sets in.<sup>90</sup>

Observing that although millenarianism and apocalyptic visions have become more closely associated with right-wing religious fundamentalism, Ellis notes that they hardly have a

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<sup>85</sup> Richard J. Ellis, *The Dark Side of the Left: Illiberal Egalitarianism in America* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1998).

<sup>86</sup> Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to FDR* (New York: Vintage, 1955).

<sup>87</sup> Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York, Vintage, 1967).

<sup>88</sup> Richard J. Ellis, preface, ix.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, 137.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, 268.

monopoly on them. Few, he says, have devoted themselves to an apocalyptic vision more diligently than radical environmentalists. He also observes that both the militia groups of the right and Earth First share certain styles of thought, namely “a mind-set characterized not by the lively doubt of radicalism but by the dead uncertainties of the alienated fanatic.”<sup>91</sup>

Another critic of the 1960s left is Jeffrey Herf, who had been a member of Students For a Democratic Society (SDS) and a participant in many of the events of the time. Commenting on the effect of extreme leftist groups on the broad radical student movement he says:

The Marxist-Leninist sects exacerbated tendencies evident in the New Left from the beginning. They did not create qualitatively new phenomena. They made basic assumptions more explicit, but the assumptions were not qualitatively new. They enforced conformity with an unprecedented vigor....

The decisive advantage of the Marxist-Leninist groups over the more diffuse New Left they sought to dominate was that they had “positions” on “questions,” no matter that they were invariably expressed in Orwellian language and absurd on the face of it.<sup>92</sup>

Psychologist Paul Watzlawick’s collection of essays, *The Invented Reality*, deals with the contradictions and illogic of the Marxist-Leninism and other hard ideologies. He observes that the primary attraction of such ideological constructions is to explain the world:

We human beings...appear to be psychologically unable to exist in a universe without meaning and order. Thus it follows that there is a need to fill the vacuum... But when so much is at stake, the interpretation of the world must be invulnerable and must not leave any questions unanswered.<sup>93</sup>

It follows from the assumption of a universally valid ideology, just as the night follows day, that other positions are heresy...The idea of possessing the ultimate truth first leads to a messianic attitude that clutches the belief that truth *qua* truth will prevail in the end.<sup>94</sup>

The actual content of the given ideology is of no consequence in regard to the reality created by acceptance of that ideology. It may completely contradict the content of another ideology. The results, however, are of a terrifying stereotypy.<sup>95</sup>

With respect to Marxism-Leninism, Watzlawick quotes philosopher Monique Hirschhorn:

The connection between the gulag and Marx is obvious. It is not an accident that can be explained by bureaucracy, Stalinist deviation or Lenin’s errors. Rather it is a direct and ineluctable logical consequence of Marxist principles. The classless society is not a messianic vision, but rather another name for terror.<sup>96</sup>

## **Marxism-Leninism: A Hidden Agenda?**

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 269.

<sup>92</sup> Jeffrey Herf, in John H. Bunzel, ed., *Political Passages: Journeys of Change Through Two Decades, 1968-1988*, (New York: The Free Press, 1988), 113.

<sup>93</sup> Paul Watzlawick, *The Invented Reality :How Do We Know What We Believe We Know?* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), 209.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, 220.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, 206,

<sup>96</sup> Monique Hirschhorn. “Le Nouveaux Philosophes: L’Ecume et la vague,” *Stanford French Review* 2, 1978, 301-313.



Marxism-Leninism is not just Marxism, nor is it just “socialism” as in social democracy. It is the “Leninism” in Marxism-Leninism that distinguishes it from the former. Admittedly, many western Marxist-Leninists have been critical of one Communist regime or another, usually for ideological deviations of various kinds. Pro-Beijing Marxist-Leninists, for example, were critical of the Soviet Marxist-Leninists, and pro-Albania Marxist-Leninists tended to be critical of all others. Nevertheless, Marxist-Leninists have shared certain characteristics in common, particularly in their denigration of “bourgeois” individual rights such as freedom of speech.

As for Lenin the person, in recent years, particularly following the fall of Marxism-Leninism in the Soviet Union, the extent of Lenin’s almost inhuman cruelty behind the rhetoric of equality, social justice and collectivism. In 1996 *The Unknown Lenin: From the Secret Archive*, edited by Richard Pipes, appeared. These English translations of original Russian correspondence and documents in the Soviet archives shocked even many of his most deluded supporters. In the introduction Pipes observes:

For humankind at large Lenin had nothing but scorn: the documents confirm Gorky’s assertion that individual human beings held for Lenin “almost no interest” and that he treated the working class much as a metalworker treated iron ore.<sup>97</sup>

Concerning Marxism-Leninism generally, 1997 saw the publication of the *Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, and Repression*, authored by several French scholars. It contains a litany of crimes by Marxist-Leninist regimes. The author’s note:

The book’s second point is that there never was a benign, initial phase of Communism before some mythical “wrong turn” threw it off track. From the state Lenin expected, indeed wanted, civil war to crush all “class enemies”...<sup>98</sup>

Some form of Marxism-Leninist ideology, suitably adapted to the circumstances, is common in many Watchdog organizations, either as a characteristic of their members and supporters or as a general organizing principle. This becomes more apparent when one understands that Marxism-Leninism is best understood as a theory of organization, i.e., a political program for victory in the sense of overthrowing a traditional complex of values, opinions and beliefs and establishing a new regime based on opposing values, opinions and beliefs, whether these are political, economic, religious, gender or racial in nature.

To the extent that these revolutionary changes are absolute in nature and do not permit dissent or the organization of criticism and opposition, they are inherently repressive and dictatorial, whatever the original rationale may have been. The eradication of unfair and unjust practices has frequently been used to justify the practice of even great unfairness and injustice.

Anti-racist watchdog organizations seek to purge the culture of opposition, of heresy, and of “subversion” by impure “racist” communication and thought, which is defined in increasingly broad terms that take in more and more behaviors. Speaking of the class-based Communist version of Marxist-Leninist practice, *Black Book* editors observe:

The adversary is first labeled an enemy, and then declared a criminal, which leads to his exclusion from society.... After a relatively short period, society passes from the logic of political struggle to the process of exclusion, then to the ideology of elimination, and finally to the extermination of impure elements...<sup>99</sup>

Motivated by causes and concerns they feel are imperative, radical Marxists tend to adopt the position that the end justifies the means, hence their reputation for stealth and secrecy. Individuals may differ in their personal approach, but certain themes tend to prevail

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<sup>97</sup> Richard Pipes (ed), *The Unknown Lenin: From the Secret Archive*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 10.

<sup>98</sup> Stephanie Courtois, et. al. (eds), *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), xviii.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

among Marxist-Leninists. Frederick M. Watkins discusses one of Lenin's first writings on political organization:

In one of [Lenin's] more notable early writings, *What Is To Be Done*, he laid down the specifications for a new and truly revolutionary type of political entity.... The functions of this well-disciplined elite would be to infiltrate and gain positions of leadership in more popular organizations, using them as 'transmission belts' for the exercise of power. In this way a small nucleus of party members would be able to control the activities of a vastly larger number of outsiders, and use them for revolutionary purposes.<sup>100</sup>

It should be made clear that the "Leninism" in "Marxism-Leninism" refers to a theory of organization that may or may not reflect its traditional meaning when used casually. In popular usage, particularly on the campus in the 1960's, it may, but not necessarily, include secrecy and stealth.

This may have meant different things to different people. Where there may be a scholarly consensus about the meaning of Leninism, in actual practice among individuals it may be interpreted much more loosely. The more extreme implications such as "subversion" or "conspiracy" may not be held by any of the individuals mentioned herein. Some people may take the term simply to mean, "militant."

In a society like our own where traditional "class struggle" Marxism-Leninism has failed to attract any significant following, the adaptation of Marxist-Leninist organizing theory to anti-racism, gay rights, or radical feminism is a natural phenomenon. For one thing, a constituency already exists in the form of the civil rights, homophile and radical feminist movements.

The appeal that Marxism-Leninism, or any other collectivist ideology, has to intellectuals lies primarily in its advocacy of a "system." Intellectuals tend to have an abhorrence of the unpredictable and especially the uncontrollable event. They need a "system," a plan, an ideology to guide them with understandable components that can be conceptualized in buzzwords, platitudes, slogans and clichés.

Anti-racism and anti-fascism serve these needs well since there are problems of racism in the world and something they can call "fascism" hangs on in the form of small groups scattered around the world. Although Marxist-Leninists usually advocate some form of class hatred, this is often overlooked when they oppose racial hatred.

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<sup>100</sup> Frederick M. Watkins, *The Age of Ideology - Political Thought, 1750 to the Present*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 86.

It should be born in mind again, however, that individuals -- including Marxist-Leninists -- often reject and disavow those views at a later time. People do make mistakes. I think claims of change have to be given the benefit of the doubt, but they are more convincing when accompanied by a public apology and a specific rejection of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. When former extremists continue to function in a milieu populated, in part, by representatives of the ideology they claim to disavow, I think a certain skepticism is justified.

Although most American devotees of Marxism-Leninism had but a brief association with it, some have been steeped in its doctrines and deeply committed to its dogma for many years. For these people, it's not credible to say they were duped or deceived or that it merely represented a youthful indiscretion, a harmless "mistake," or a bad time in their lives. They were true believers and often too intelligent not to have known what they were promoting and its deadly implications. At some point accountability needs to be demonstrated.

What would be convincing evidence that a person with a deeply held long time commitment of this nature has rejected Marxism-Leninism? For starters, an apology would help. Perhaps something like this:

I apologize to the civilized world for having embraced a murderous ideology that has enslaved millions of human beings, that has accounted for more deaths than nazism, that has destroyed nations, communities and families on a scale unprecedented in human history, and which operated by subversion and brutality."

I wonder how long we'll have to wait?

## **The Criminalization of Dissent**

Individual and collective attitudes toward race and ethnicity are implicitly political because they are directly involved in the timeless political questions of who wins, who loses, and why. They involve issues of representation, taxation, and allocation of resources -- all traditional political issues.

They are also quasi-religious to many people, inasmuch as religious values usually include how we treat each other. They involve social considerations in the sense of how they relate to crime and delinquency, public welfare policies, neighborhoods, jobs, and so on. If we cannot speak our minds on these issues - which profoundly affect the way we live - we are in serious trouble.

In a free society all issues are open to examination and debate, yet the Watchdog groups unanimously oppose open and free discussion of issues related to race and ethnicity outright, or at best unless they control the agenda. What is implicit in the workings of Watchdog groups is their belief that ordinary people are undeserving of making decisions about race and ethnicity based on their own experiences.

"Hate crime" laws have the effect of making it much easier to charge and convict individuals primarily on the basis of their reading matter and associations. More than one commentator has noted that this practice has a vaguely Nazi ring to it.

Consider Stephen Schafer's observation in *The Political Criminal* that the more plagued by ideology the government, and the more difficult it is for ordinary people to participate in the decision-making process, the more easy it is to regard all crimes as political:

The German *Taeterstrafrecht* (criminal law as it involves the criminal) in the Third Reich, for example, tended to disregard the formalistic definitions of crimes and to establish the degree of responsibility in accordance with the political personality of the criminal.

Capital punishment under this concept would not necessarily be inflicted on a person who actually committed a murder, but on any individual who, in view of his

total personality, should be regarded as a “murderer type,” regardless of whether he committed a homicide or not.

In this kind of elastic concept, which so strongly disregards any distinction between ordinary and political crimes, not the personal drama of the criminal and his victim, but the drama of the offender and the ideology is of paramount importance, and all crimes are actually confused with political sins.<sup>101</sup>

In recent years anti-racist Watchdog groups have dealt with the objective decline of racism in American society by simply expanding the definition of racism to meet their needs, to include more and more behaviors, and to require more and more invasive remedies. Indeed, some professional anti-racists maintain that racism has become even more pervasive, usually adding the claim that it is increasingly “subtle” as well.

The anti-racist watchdog movement is understandably reluctant to give up its great source of employment and self-esteem enhancing operation when redefinition can give it a new lease. Consider this definition of racism by Chip Berlet of Political Research Associates:

...the entire superstructure of oppression erected during European colonialism to justify domination of so-called inferior peoples who were identified and made the ‘other’ by assigning the idea of race and skin color.<sup>102</sup>

If you have the feeling that this describes a burden that is essentially impossible to overcome that will keep Mr. Berlet employed for a long time with ample opportunity to promote his agenda, you are certainly right. In *The Racist Mind* Raphael Ezekiel claims:

As we grow up within a society that is saturated in white racism, year after year we pass through interactions in which white racist conceptions are an unspoken subtext. We make lives in institutions in which this is true. We cannot live from day to day without absorbing a certain amount of white racism into our thoughts. (We similarly absorb homophobia and sexism). It is foolish to say, “I am not racist.”<sup>103</sup>

Ezekiel admits that his book contains “no analysis here of any group but the extremists who come out of white American culture.”

The intransigent ethnocentrism and hateful resentment that gush from the fringes of ethnic minority subcultures in America are not considered. Could not some white racism be a response to anti-white racism? Of course not. Only the reverse is true. There’s no winning this argument and whatever one says is merely evidence one is “in denial” and trying to conceal one’s racism. Pretty clever, isn’t it?

## **The Watchdog Marketplace**

The Watchdog community has evolved through the 90’s from a few major organizations to a diverse collection of groups - some quite small and marginal - embracing elements of a political movement attempting to revise Marxist theory, a psychobabble cult attributing and explaining the guilt of its followers, and a device for career advancement. Some of these groups have been as violence-prone as their adversaries on the racist right.

In August 1999 reporter Maria Padilla reported that the number of small Watchdog organizations was growing exponentially.

There are now 300 anti-racist groups nationwide, according to a recent University of Florida study. That compares with about 400 racist and neo-Nazi groups, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center, which monitors hate groups.

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<sup>101</sup> Stephen Schafer, *The Political Criminal: The Problem of Morality and Crime* (New York: The Free Press, 1974), 22-23.

<sup>102</sup> Chip Berlet, “Anatomy of the Right,” *The Progressive* 59 (12): 40-42.

<sup>103</sup> Raphael S. Ezekiel, *The Racist Mind: Portraits of American Neo-Nazis and Klansmen* (New York: Viking, 1995), 322.

‘We are seeing an explosion of anti-racist organizations. They run the gamut, from individuals with a web site to real concerted efforts by organizations,’ said David Goldman, founder and director of the Boston-based Hatewatch.

New groups are also making the typical end-run around civil liberties protections ordinarily afforded subjects of government repression

Anti-racist groups can gather information about their opponents without some of the constraints imposed on the FBI, which is not allowed to monitor a group unless it’s suspected of a crime.

‘I would say there are certain restrictions that law-enforcement agencies operate under that organizations like the ADL do not have,’ said Art Teitelbaum, Southern-area director for the Anti-Defamation League (ADL).<sup>104</sup>

## **The Victim Industry**

Sociologist Joel Best, writing in the May/June 1977 issue of *Society*, there is an ideology of victimization that has taken on industrial proportions in the United States. He observes:

The ideology of victimization, when coupled with institutional support for that ideology, makes it possible to label large numbers of victims. Studies of witch-hunts and political purges speak of social control as an “industry,” engaged in the “manufacturing” or the “mass production” of deviants. Analogously, we may speak of a contemporary victim industry mass-producing victims.

Best also observes that there are few restraints on this ideology inasmuch as it is accepted by key institutions of society and supported by sympathetic laws. He also notes that victimization claims are rarely challenged. Best identifies the vested interests that propel the victim industry:

Participants in the victim industry often have a stake in the identification of victims. Advocates’ vested interests include enhanced prestige and influence for themselves and their professions, supportive validation from important social institutions. ...In addition, some people benefit from being identified as victims: they become professional ex’s, write books, travel on the lecture circuit, appear on talk shows, receive praise and favorable attention, and even get treated as experts in their own right.<sup>105</sup>

## **Cracks in the Watchdog Wall**

In the last few years a growing number of academics and journalists have confided suspicions about their Watchdog sources, and in cases where they have independently researched the “hate group” phenomenon they have found Watchdog groups guilty of serious disinformation of the sort I have documented here.

In July 1999 Arlene Levinson of the *Associated Press* wrote of a new skepticism, and quoted surprising statements from major Watchdog spokespersons.

The SPLC’s Mark Potok is quoted as saying:

The numbers are absolutely soft. We are talking about a tiny number of Americans who are members of hate groups - I mean, infinitesimal.

Compare this to the “growing numbers” the SPLC has been claiming for the last ten years. Perhaps it’s no longer possible to keep up the deception.

Nevertheless, according to Levinson, the SPLC estimates “more than 100,000 followers among the various hate groups.” What constitutes a “hate” group is interpreted very broadly by the Watchdog groups. A more sober and realistic estimate which counts only

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<sup>104</sup> Maria T. Padilla, “Racial Violence Leads to Rise in Anti-Racism Groups,” *Knight-Ridder News Service* (22 August 1999).

<sup>105</sup> Joel Best, “Victimization and the Victim Industry,” *Society*, May/June 1997, 9-17.

actual members and serious followers - not curiosity seekers, people on a mailing list, and people who wander in to meetings or write for literature - the actual number is far, far smaller.

Levinson cited the case of Benjamin Smith, a member of the admittedly racist World Church of the Creator who killed 2 and wounded 9 people, including 6 minorities. Quoting unnamed experts, Levinson notes, “His rampage remains a rarity and doesn’t reveal a new degree of danger.”

Levinson also quotes Jack McDevitt, professor of criminal justice at Northeastern University in Boston:

Ever fewer members of hate groups commit hate crimes. More than 95 percent of such crimes are committed by those with no hate-group ties.

Most hate crimes are not committed with guns. They’re committed with people’s hands, or rocks, bricks, bats.

The article also notes that of the over 8,000 “hate crimes” committed in 1997, only eight were killings.<sup>106</sup>

## Cultic Behavior

Watchdog organizations, whether dealing with political extremist groups or new and unusual religions, can easily take on a “cult-like” character themselves. Much of this has to do with the “holy cause” nature of the Watchdog milieu itself - often viewed in terms of a valiant battle between good and evil. Part of this has to do with their heightened sensitivity and in-group solidarity, as in Irving Janis’s concept of “groupthink.” Janis says:

I use the term “groupthink”...to refer to a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members’ strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action.

Groupthink refers to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment that results from in-group pressures.<sup>107</sup>

The more amiability and *esprit de corps* among the members of a policy-making in-group, the greater is the danger that independent critical thinking will be replaced by groupthink, which is likely to result in irrational and dehumanizing actions directed against out-groups.<sup>108</sup>

Janus writes of “The Groupthink Syndrome - Review of the major symptoms.” Among these are:

An unquestioned belief in the group’s inherent morality, inclining the members to ignore the ethical or moral considerations of their decisions.

Stereotyped views of enemy leaders as too evil to warrant genuine attempts to negotiate, or as too weak and stupid to counter whatever risky attempts are made to defeat their purposes.<sup>109</sup>

## Paranoid Thinking and the Watchdogs

All four of the groups to be profiled in this book take elaborate physical security precautions which enhance the belief that someone is out to “get” them, just as they are out to “get” someone themselves - which, after all, is what Watchdogs do. In the case of the

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<sup>106</sup> Arlene Levinson, “Hate Groups, Crimes Said Rare in U.S.,” *Associated Press* (8 July 1999).

<sup>107</sup> Irving Janis, *Victims of Groupthink* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), 9.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 198.

Southern Poverty Law Center they have constructed a special bombproof headquarters building.

There's a sense in the Watchdog milieu that "the paranoids are after us" without considering that they might have acquired a kind of paranoia themselves. This often appears in their heightened sensitivity to nuance and hidden meanings, the perception of "subtle" manifestations of bigotry and prejudice. According to Dr. David Shapiro, a psychologist:

[For the paranoid] a subjective world can be constructed in which facts, accurately enough perceived in themselves, are endowed with a special interpretive significance... Thus, the subject matter of his interest has to do with hidden motives, underlying purposes, special meanings, and the like. He does not necessarily disagree with the normal person about the existence of any given fact; he disagrees only about its significance.<sup>110</sup>

Psychologist Paul Watzlawick explains the role of paranoia in the ideological thinking of adversarial causes and crusades:

It is inherent to the concept of paranoia that it rests on a fundamental assumption that is held to be absolutely true. Because this fundamental assumption is axiomatic, it cannot and need not demonstrate its own veracity. Strict logical deductions are then made from this fundamental premise and create a reality in which any failures and inconsistencies of the system are attributed to the deductions, but never to the original premise itself.<sup>111</sup>

Watchdog groups regard themselves as the "protectors" of important values, which they believe, are seriously endangered by their "enemies." This heightened sense of righteousness promotes a kind of "crusader" mentality with all of its accompanying potential for abuse. Orrin E. Klapp, in his seminal *Collective Search For Identity*, observes:

The goal of a crusade is to defeat an evil, not merely to solve a problem. This gives it the sense of righteousness...The crusader may think of himself as a hero and define his opponents as villains. Indeed, the crusade classifies as a kind of vilifying movement.<sup>112</sup>

## Finally.....

In detailing the background of these Watchdog organizations I do not mean to imply their concerns are without merit, that they do not focus on groups and individuals that probably bear watching, or that they do not do valuable work in fostering improved interracial and inter-group relations. I have no quarrel with much of what they claim to stand for. A good example is the SPLCs position on capital punishment and prison reform, which I support wholeheartedly.

What I object to in the "Watchdog" organizations are their tactics, their often hidden agenda, and their contempt for the rights of those who disagree with them. My hope is that they will reconsider their behaviors and "humanize" the Watchdog milieu. Also, as a writer I believe other writers and journalists need to be aware of the questionable validity of Watchdog groups as primary sources.

Watchdog groups are agenda-driven special-interest groups, whose interests are economic as well as ideological, and not "experts" in the sense of objective and disinterested scholarship. Journalists, especially, need to be made aware of this.

Laird Wilcox

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<sup>110</sup> David Sapiro, *Neurotic Styles* (New York: Basic Books, 1965) 66.

<sup>111</sup> Watzlawick, *Op Cit.*, 223-224.

<sup>112</sup> Orrin E Klapp, *Collective Search For Identity* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, 1969) 274.

# Chapter One

## The Anti-Defamation League

- Among those who dislike oppression are many who like to oppress. Napoleon Bonaparte, 1815.
- What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow: this is the whole Law; all the rest is interpretation. Hillel, *Talmud*
- There is perhaps no phenomenon which contains so much destructive feeling as ‘moral indignation,’ which permits envy or hate to be acted out under the guise of virtue. Eric Fromm, *Man For Himself*, 1947.
- I doubt if the oppressed ever fight for freedom. They fight for pride and for power -- power to oppress others. The oppressed want above all to imitate their oppressors; they want to retaliate. Eric Hoffer, quoted in Calvin Tompkins, *Eric Hoffer: An American Odyssey*, 1968.
- Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And if you gaze long enough into the abyss, the abyss will gaze back at you. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 1886.
- If you can’t answer a man’s arguments all is not lost; you can still call him names. Elbert G. Hubbard, *The Notebook*.

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) was established in Chicago, Illinois, in 1913 as a subdivision of B’nai B’rith, a Jewish fraternal order. Over the years the tax-exempt organization has grown enormously and maintains offices in 31 cities through the United States and overseas offices in selected European cities. It has an annual budget of \$34 million and over four hundred employees including an extensive legal staff.

The primary mission of the ADL is, and has always been, to expose and combat opposition to Jewish interests and anti-Semitism, as defined by the ADL.

In November 1991 the ADL held a two-day conference in Montreal, Canada, which produced a consensus that “Anti-Semitism, both in North America and abroad, is on the rise, and Jews have to stop keeping quiet about it.” According to ADL executive director Abraham Foxman:

..... we have reason to be concerned and frightened by what seems to be a rising tide of anti-Semitism here and around the world.... The virus has become more active. The restraints and taboos have disappeared.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> *Canadian Jewish News* (14 November 1991).



In addition to its community, civil rights, public relations, and lobbying activities, and reports on various organizations, the ADL is widely known for its annual audit of anti-Semitic incidents in the United States.

In January 1994 for example, the ADL reported over 1,800 anti-Semitic incidents involving threats, harassment, assaults, vandalism, graffiti, and other behaviors, or one incident per 140,000 Americans. These included one arson, one attempted arson and one attempted bombing.<sup>114</sup>

The ADL annual audit claimed 788 acts of vandalism (one per 330,000 Americans or slightly over two per day in a country of over a quarter billion people), down 8 per cent from the previous year. Of these, 325 involved graffiti on bridges, buildings and signs. Nationwide, according to the ADL, in 1993 there were only sixty arrests in these 325 cases, revealing that the vast majority of these incidents were unsolved and no identified culprits were apprehended. Vandalism is always a criminal offense and could be prosecuted if there was anyone to prosecute. The ADL lobbies hard for prosecution when the perpetrators are identified.

## **The ADL's Perception of Anti-Semitism**

While these incidents no doubt were distressing to those who experienced them, these figures do not support any claim of a serious and significant trend toward anti-Semitism in the United States. A critique of alarmist tactics was circulated by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in 1993. Debra Nussbaum Cohen noted that:

The reality, experts say, is that Jews no longer face serious discrimination in American society -- not in the community, the workplace, politics or academia.... But American Jews are convinced more than ever that anti-Semitism remains a serious threat, although few have encountered any real bias themselves.<sup>115</sup>

This dilemma, Ms. Cohen avers, is occasioned by the very organizations that promote awareness of anti-Semitism and solicit funds to combat it. With apparent reference to the ADL's annual audits, she says:

The very lumping together of graffiti and epithets with occasional acts of violence in order to emphasize an upward trend in anti-Semitism may obscure the issue and raise undue alarm.<sup>116</sup>

Ms. Cohen quotes a source, which she identifies as a "senior staffer" at a mainstream Jewish organization:

By focusing on small and dramatic expressions of anti-Semitism which don't mean much, they're sending an alarmist message which is, at bottom, irresponsible.<sup>117</sup>

In January 1992 the American Jewish Committee released a report, based on detailed survey data, that racial and religious tolerance is increasing and anti-Semitism is declining. According to their data:

The study found that anti-Jewish attitudes are at historic lows....Jews were even perceived in the 1990 General Social Survey as leading whites in general, Southern whites, Asian-Americans, Hispanic-Americans and Blacks in terms of who was

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<sup>114</sup> "Harassment of Jews Rose in '93, Anti-Defamation League Reports," *New York Times* (25 January 1994).

<sup>115</sup> Debra Nussbaum Cohen, "Paradox of Anti-Semitism in America: Perception vs. Reality," *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* (8 January 1993).

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

regarded as harder working, richer, less prone to violence, more self-supporting and more intelligent.<sup>118</sup>

The American Jewish Committee said “the report should come as a relief to American Jews who fear a possible increase in anti-Semitism.”

This problem of perception versus reality is not a recent phenomenon. In 1988, J. J. Goldberg, writing in *Jewish Week*, observed:

A majority of the Jewish community’s professional experts insist there is no detectable jump either in the rate of anti-Semitic acts or in the level of anti-Jewish feeling among the American population at large.<sup>119</sup>

Goldberg’s article quotes sociologist Steven M. Cohen, who believes that an increase in reporting anti-Semitic incidents fuels the claim that they are increasing. Cohen says:

Jews are more sensitive to anti-Semitism than they’ve been in the past. So one of the reasons we may be seeing a rise in reports of anti-Semitism is that local people see incidents as anti-Semitic more readily. And secondly, the national media give it more prominence than in the past.... You have to conclude that to some degree, Jews construct anti-Semitism.<sup>120</sup>

Five years later, writing in *The New Republic*, Goldberg said that the very definition of “anti-Semitism” had been changed by some Jewish groups in order to support their agenda.

Before World War II, anti-Semitism was defined as wanting to harm Jews. In the post-war era, it was broadened to include prejudice that might lead one to wish Jews harm. More recently, it’s come to mean any stereotype - or disagreement - with the Jewish community. The very term has become a weapon.<sup>121</sup>

Goldberg commented on the hyping of anti-Semitism by Jewish organizations, noting that people give money when motivated by fear.

In private, some Jewish agency staffers insist the alarmist tone set by a few national Jewish agencies, mainly for fundraising purposes, is a key cause of Jewish anxiety. Fingers point most often at the ADL and the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center, both of which specialize in mass mailings warning of impending doom and urging donations.<sup>122</sup>

The ADL’s own literature hyping the threat of neo-Nazis sometimes borders on the ridiculous. In 1990, for example, they ran an advertisement showing two scrawny teen-age skinheads giving a straight-arm salute that was captioned, “In 1941, America Declared War On The Nazis. It’s Time To Do It Again.” The largely adolescent racist skinhead movement is admitted by the ADL to amount to 3,000 nationwide, or one per 80,000 Americans. These are the Nazis on whom we need to declare war?<sup>123</sup>

Another example is an ADL leaflet entitled “What the Haters, Bigots, and Anti-Semites Are Saying About ADL.” It features statements by various extreme rightists complaining

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<sup>118</sup> *New York Times* (8 January 1992).

<sup>119</sup> J. J. Goldberg, “Tide of Anti-Semitic Acts Exposes ‘Perception Gap,’” *Jewish Week* (18 November 1988).

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> J. J. Goldberg, “Scaring The News,” *The New Republic* (17 May 1993).

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> Stewart Ain, “ADL Launches Ad Campaign Aimed at ‘Organized’ Hate in U.S. “ *Washington Jewish Week* (14 September 1990).

about the ADL in some fashion, as though they were the ADL's only critics.<sup>124</sup> The implication is that if you're critical of the ADL, you can be sure they know why!

The issue of an obviously interested organization compiling its own statistics to justify its own agenda and to raise funds is highly questionable in itself. Moreover, it's not widely known that the ADL actually solicits reports by circulating questionnaires to its own mailing list - a group that it has carefully sensitized to the very subject of anti-Semitism.

A 1997 version of the form has check-off squares for verbal harassment, written threats, physical assaults, and so on.<sup>125</sup> If a commercial polling firm engaged in such practices it would be regarded as highly unethical and fraudulent.

## **“Danger On The Right - 1964”**

In 1964 ADL officials Benjamin R. Epstein and Arnold Forster published a widely-circulated book that played a major role in that years presidential election, which was precisely what it was intended to do. *Danger On The Right* is a detailed exposé and strident attack on virtually the entire leadership of the American conservative political movement and their several organizations.

Some of these, like the John Birch Society, had made themselves sitting ducks for criticism and the ADL was not wrong in criticizing JBS founder Robert Welch's bizarre conspiracy theories. Even there, however, 36 years of hindsight shows that the JBS was almost wholly ineffectual in translating its doctrines into national policy in spite of the ADL's alarmism. Moreover, the JBS was diligent in keeping anti-Semites out of the organization. Historian Richard Gid Powers notes:

Robert Welch was far from the devil he was painted, and the John Birch Society was not the Nazi-style menace it was made out to be. Welch was not a hater, nor a fascist, nor, as charged by the ADL a covert anti-Semite. His ideas were bizarre and an offense to common sense, but no real threat to the commonwealth.<sup>126</sup>

Most of the other organizations listed in *Danger On The Right* withered and died having accomplished but enough to put them in obscure history books of the period, in spite of Epstein and Forster's alarmism. These include the multi-cultural and anti-racist Christian Anti-Communism Crusade; Christian Crusade, led by Billy James Hargis who was eventually outed as gay; the National Education Program; the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Reformation Hour; the Manion Forum; Life Line Foundation and the *Dan Smoot Report*, the Church League of America, whose leader, Edgar Bundy, was also outed as gay; the Conservative Society of America and the Liberty Amendment Committee. To regard any of these groups as having been a “threat” to anything is as laughable today as it was irresponsible then.

Another section, dealing with “The Extreme Conservatives,” includes Americans For Constitutional Action, *Human Events*, the Intercollegiate Society of Individualists, Young Americans for Freedom and *National Review* magazine. *Human Events* and *National Review* persist to this day and, along with the ACA, ISI and YAF often side with the ADL on issues pertaining to Israel.

What the book does reveal, however, is quite a bit about the ADL's mindset. A veritable feast of “links and ties” thinking, *Danger On The Right* reads like a paranoid brainstorm where everything is “linked” to everything else in a vast network of perfidious superpatriotic wrongdoers and conspirators. “A” knows “B,” who knows “C,” who in

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<sup>124</sup> Anti-Defamation League, “What The Haters, Bigots, and Anti-Semites are Saying About the ADL (flyer), 1987.

<sup>125</sup> Anti-Defamation League, “Reporting Anti-Semitic Incidents,” (form), 1997.

<sup>126</sup> Richard Gid Powers, op cit, 286-287.

turn knows “D” and therefore “A” and “D” are “linked” and somehow responsible for one another in an interlocking web of guilt by association. Consider this sentence, referring to the founders of the National Layman’s Council of the Church League of America:

Early in 1937, when Hitler was building his war machine and he had already marched into the Rhineland, Robnett and two other men concluded that the Communist movement in the United States was a perilous threat to American security.<sup>127</sup>

This type of rhetoric is an astounding confession in itself. To connect these two events as though they were connected somehow is entirely irresponsible, yet this kind of “links and ties” permeates ADL literature, albeit usually in less florid forms. Here is how historian Richard Gid Powers characterizes *Danger On The Right*:

*Danger On The Right* tied one organization to the next until it created an overall impression of an unbroken network of dangerous right-wingers ranging from anti-semites, racists, and Birch Society paranoids to mainstream figures like Barry Goldwater and William F. Buckley, Jr.<sup>128</sup>

## **“Anti-Semitism Without Anti-Semites”**

In April, 1998, David Klinghoffer, writing in the respected religious magazine *First Things*, coined this term with respect to the state of anti-Jewish sentiment today. He said:

For many of us Jews lately, everything and anything is “remindful of the Holocaust.” The truth is that anti-Semitism has become an obsession with us. You’ve heard the phrase “anti-Semitism without Jews,” to describe the hostility to Jews felt in countries like Poland that don’t have any Jews.

In the American Jewish community, we’ve got anti-Semitism without anti-Semites. Or almost without anti-Semites. In a country as big as American you are inevitably going to find nuts and cranks, haters and despisers, of every description - if you look hard enough.<sup>129</sup>

Klinghoffer is critical of fund-raising appeals sent out by the ADL and the Simon Wiesenthal Center. He quotes an ADL mailing that contains “a photo of two mangy-looking teenage skinheads with a Nazi flag in the background and the caption ‘We protect your kids from these kids.’” Klinghoffer observes that the chance of a Jewish child being harmed by a neo-Nazi is extremely small. He also quotes Prof. Leonard Dinnerstein, author of *Anti-Semitism in America*:

Today anti-Semitism in the United States is neither virulent nor growing. It is not a powerful social or political force... The obvious conclusion is that it has declined in potency and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.<sup>130</sup>

Nevertheless, according to Klinghoffer:

It seems that every month the Anti-Defamation League denounces some piddling Army bureaucrat who said “Jew” out of the wrong side of his mouth or some evangelical religious group that had the temerity to hire one man and a secretary to

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<sup>127</sup> Arnold Forster and Benjamin R. Epstein, *Danger On The Right* (New York: Random House, 1964), 144-145.

<sup>128</sup> Powers, 294.

<sup>129</sup> David Klinghoffer, “Anti-Semitism Without Anti-Semites,” *First Things* (April 1998), 10-13.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

undertake the quixotic task of converting every Jew in America to Southern Baptist Christianity.<sup>131</sup>

Rabbi Michael Lerner, editor of the liberal Jewish magazine, *Tikkun*, also testifies to the ADL's preoccupation with "enemies":

The ADL, like the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, has built its financial appeal to Jews on its ability to portray the Jewish people as surrounded by enemies who are on the verge of launching threatening anti-Semitic campaigns. It has a professional stake in exaggerating the dangers, and sometimes allows existing racial or political prejudices in the Jewish world to influence how it will portray the potential dangers."<sup>132</sup>

## ADL Survey on Anti-Semitism

In 1992 the ADL commissioned a survey of anti-Semitic attitudes in America that are sharply divergent from the findings of Mr. Klinghoffer and Dr. Dinnerstein. According to the ADL, it has its work cut out for it for a great time to come. Nearly a fifth of Americans, it seems, hold attitudes that the ADL considers "strongly anti-Semitic."

The national poll on American attitudes toward Jews, ADL first such major study since 1964, revealed a hard-core group that embraces a wide range of stereotypes about Jews....Respondents degree of anti-Semitism was measured against what ADL calls the "index of anti-Semitic belief," a series of 11 statements with which the person being surveyed was asked to agree or disagree.<sup>133</sup>

Among these statements were "Jews stick together more than other Americans" and "Jews always like to be at the head of things," traits that are confirmed again and again in books on Jewish themes and are nothing more than the behavior of a highly creative people who feel a need for communal identification by "sticking together."

In other words, these are not bona fide anti-Semitic attitudes at all. Nevertheless, to agree to both of these statements made one "moderately anti-Semitic," according to the ADL's guidelines. Also lamented was the large number of Black Americans who fell into the hard-core category (34%) as compared to white Americans (17%).

Does the ADL actually believe that this is a reliable index on anti-Semitism? Not likely. In 1997 the ADL offered J. J. Goldberg's book, *Jewish Power: Inside the American Jewish Establishment*, for sale through its bi-monthly publication, *Frontlines*. The ADL's advertisement for Goldberg's book is as follows:

*Jewish Power* uncovers a powerful Jewish political machine - created in just the past quarter century - one far more powerful than many Jews realize.<sup>134</sup>

Is J. J. Goldberg anti-Semitic? A casual reading of his book reveals that he would probably fail the ADL's anti-Semitism test. Things like this are the reason why journalists need to carefully scrutinize pronouncements by this organization, although doing so will probably earn them the epithet "anti-Semitic."

## Academics Question

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Michael Lerner and Cornel West, *Jews and Blacks: Let the Healing Begin* (NY: World Publications, 1995).

<sup>133</sup> Debra Nussbaum Cohen, "One in Five Americans 'Hard-Core' Anti-Semites: Survey," *Jewish Week* (20-26 November 1992), 4.

<sup>134</sup> *Frontlines*, Anti-Defamation League (September/October 1997), 14.

## Hate Crime Laws.

The ADL and SPLC have come in for criticism from academic sources as well. Professors Jessica Henry and James B. Jacobs of New York University are sharply critical of the alarmist pronouncements from these two organizations, among others. They note that law enforcement officials and academics have accepted the claim of a hate crime “epidemic” without critical analysis. In an article entitled “The Social Construction of a Hate Crime Epidemic” in the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* they observe that claims that crimes of violence motivated by race or ethnicity have never been greater are “patently false.”<sup>135</sup>

The existence of a hate crime “epidemic” may be functional for groups like the ADL and [Southern Poverty Law Centers’] Klanwatch... Whatever the actual number of hate crimes, these groups’ assertion of a hate crime *epidemic* effectively gains them political support.<sup>136</sup>

A group uses the term “epidemic” to focus public attention and resources and create social and behavioral changes.<sup>137</sup>

Commenting on the compilation of data on anti-Semitic incidents by the Anti-Defamation League, the authors note:

The ADL....include[s] non-criminal verbal harassment and distribution of anti-Semitic literature....Thus, on its face, one cannot rely on the ADL audit as in indicator of hate *crime*.

Thus, the ADL audit will necessarily be dominated by “low-end” incidents such as anti-Semitic comments, literature and graffiti.<sup>138</sup>

Professors Henry and Jacobs also take note of the scarcity of bona fide hate crimes when compared to other crimes in society. They observe:

Does it make sense to say that 4,588 reported hate crimes constitutes an epidemic when more than 14,872,833 index crimes were reported to the FBI in 1991. Should an epidemic be inferred from less than .039% of all reported crimes?

The uncritical acceptance of a hate crime epidemic is unfortunate. It distorts discourse about the allocation of scarce resources both within and without the criminal justice system. Further, this pessimistic and alarmist portrayal of a divided conflict-ridden community may create a self-fulfilling prophecy and exacerbate societal divisions.<sup>139</sup>

Jacobs has expanded on this theme in considerably more detail (with Kimberly Potter) in his seminal *Hate Crimes: Criminal Law and Identity Politics*.<sup>140</sup> Comments on the book jacket by civil libertarian Jonathan Rauch observe:

At last, a book that thinks clearly and carefully about laws that have been too close to motherhood and apple pie to get the scrutiny they need. *Hate Crimes* shines with the authors’ passion for justice, and its meticulously argued verdict ought to make

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<sup>135</sup> Jessica S. Henry and James B. Jacobs, “The Social Construction of a Hate Crime Epidemic,” *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* (Vol 86, No 2, Winter, 1996), 366-391.

<sup>136</sup> Henry and Jacobs, 368.

<sup>137</sup> Henry and Jacobs, 378; Eric Zorn, A Trend that’s.... Well, Epidemic, *Chicago Tribune* (23 March 1994)..

<sup>138</sup> Henry and Jacobs, 386.

<sup>139</sup> Henry and Jacobs, 391.

<sup>140</sup> James B. Jacobs and Kimberly Potter, *Hate Crimes: Criminal Law and Identity Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

even the staunchest supporters of hate crimes law think twice. This will - or should - be a touchstone for future debate.<sup>141</sup>

## Concern for Palestinian Rights as “Anti-Semitic”

It’s been a fairly constant criticism in human rights groups that the ADL is blind to the rights and civil liberties of Palestinians, both in the United States and Israel, whenever Israeli brutality and repression of Palestinians becomes an issue. They have labored long and hard to defame and stigmatize Palestinian and Arab human rights groups in the U. S. and elsewhere as being “linked” with stereotypical “Arab terrorism.”

In 1988 the ADL used its annual Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents to further this agenda. Along with the obvious cases of vandalism, graffiti and name-calling, the ADL included cases of “distribution of pro-Palestinian literature on several occasions.” According to Leonard Larson of the Scripps Howard News Service:

Included...are a few incidents which, in the ADL view are “anti-Semitic” only because they recount brutal acts of repression against Palestinians by the Israeli government.

One ADL account of “anti-Semitism,” for example, arrives from Palm Beach, Fla, where it was reported there had been “distribution of pro-Palestinian literature on several occasions.

Another incident in the ADL special report came from East Tennessee State University in the distribution of “anti-Israel and anti-Semitic literature featuring pro-Palestinian sympathies.”

From Boston, the ADL said, came more “anti-Semitic” conduct by the person or persons who set out for public display “pro-Palestinian/anti-Israeli graffiti throughout the subway system.”<sup>142</sup>

In other words, the expression of a point of view that the ADL doesn’t like becomes a defacto “hate crime” merely on that account alone. It need not involve shouting or unkind epithets, any incitement to violence, or hateful conspiracy theories.

## Scholars Protest ADL Blacklist

In January, 1985, the Middle East Studies Association passed a resolution condemning the ADL for circulating a list of Academics whom the ADL said were “pro-Arab propagandists” who “use their anti-Zionism as merely a guise for their deeply felt anti-Semitism.” According to the *New York Times*:

The document listed Arab, Iranian, Islamic and other organization....together with dozens of individuals. Among them are Prof. Michael C. Hudson of Georgetown University; former Senator James Abourezk; Prof. Edward W. Said of Columbia University; Dr. Lawrence O. Michalak, deputy director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of California in Berkeley, and former Representative Pete McCloskey of California.

The resolution protested the “creation, storage or dissemination of blacklists, ‘enemy lists’ or surveys that call for boycotting individuals” or intimidating scholars.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Jacobs and Potter, jacket.

<sup>142</sup> Leonard Larson, “ADL Report Diminished Its Reputation,” *D. C. Observer* (13 June 1988).

<sup>143</sup> Colin Campbell, “Middle East Group Wants Anti-Defamation League to Disown List,” *New York Times* (30 January 1985).

Jeffrey Ross, the ADL's director of campus affairs admitted that the ADL list was an "unfortunate incident" and will not happen again. The ADL list, marked "confidential" on every page, was mailed to several dozen student leaders in November, 1983.

Characteristically, the ADL then questioned the motive of the Middle East Studies Association in an attempt to deflect responsibility. Incredibly, Jeffrey Ross said that the ADL has "an unimpeachable record for free speech over the years."<sup>144</sup>

At least one academic, Dr. Lawrence O. Michalak...has demanded an apology from the ADL for the inclusion of his name in the 16-page document.

According to Prof. Bonine, Michalak was included in the list based on his role as a moderator of a panel discussion sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee which featured harsh condemnation of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.<sup>145</sup>

Prof. Bonine said that the Middle East association had "some very angry members who have been associated by their inclusion on this list to the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization]. Given the ADL's propensity for making issues that affect them into either a law enforcement matter or an issue of potential terrorism it's reasonable to assume that all parties on the ADL list have been flagged by the government. This is a very typical ADL "links and ties" operation used to defame and degrade critics and opponents.

## **ADL Suppresses Smithsonian Exhibit**

In 1997 the Smithsonian Institution planned a large exhibit on Israel and its settlement. One of its backers was the New Israel Fund, a liberal, human rights-oriented group that provides grants to Israeli groups promoting civil rights of its citizens and residents. According to news reports:

The program, which was tentatively titled, "Israel at 50: Yesterday's Dreams, Today's Realities," was billed as a look at the "difficult challenges that Israel must meet if it is to fulfill its founders' vision of a nation based on the concepts of freedom, justice and peace," according to a program provided by the New Israel Fund.<sup>146</sup>

Program topics were scheduled to include: "Peace: The Price of Occupation," "Full and Equal Citizenship?" "The Place of Israel's Palestinian Citizens," and "The End of the Zionist Dream? The Rise of Post-Zionism."<sup>147</sup>

However, the exhibit and accompany educational program was not to be. Both the Anti-Defamation League and Americans For A Safe Israel lobbied to cancel the program, claiming it was biased. A letter-writing and lobbying program resulting in negative editorials in the *Washington Post*, *New York Post* and *Boston Herald*. Norman Rosenberg, executive director of the New Israel Fund, commented:

We are deeply disappointed that the Smithsonian has been forced by a fringe group of Jewish McCarthyites...to back out of the lecture series.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Lawrence Harmon, "Middle East Scholars Cry 'Foul' to Local Anti-Defamation League Office," *Jewish Advocate* (7 February 1985).

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Matthew Dorf, "Bowing To Pressure, Smithsonian Nixes 'Israel at 50' Series," *Jewish Bulletin of Northern California* (9 January 1998).

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.



Smithsonian officials rejected an offer by the ADL to become a co-sponsor of the program and to revamp the program in line with its own biases. According to Abe Foxman, the ADL's National Director:

While I do not expect the Smithsonian to have a birthday party, there was very little they were celebrating.<sup>149</sup>

The ADL has carefully cultivated a reputation within and without the Jewish community as a major defender of civil rights for Jews and other minorities, a staunch opponent of bigotry in all forms, a fearless watchdog over racist and anti-Semitic groups and a major educational resource on human rights issues. Less well known are its espionage, disinformation and destabilization operations, not only against neo-Nazis and Ku Klux Klansmen, but against leftist and progressive groups as well.

## **A World of “Indifference!”**

The ADL's portrayal of itself as a civil rights/human rights organization has a long history dating back almost to its formation. Healthy informed skepticism about this claim has been present for many years but recent events have brought it to attention once again.

In 1989 the ADL tried to establish its “A World Of Difference” program in the San Francisco area. The program was originated by the Boston chapter of the ADL, followed up by the Houston chapter and then developed into a well-funded operation consisting largely of televised statements against racism by sympathetic characters and statements about the value of multiculturalism and the evils of racism. The San Francisco project, however, unmasked another side of the ADL:

The acrimonious breakup of a northern California community coalition organized to promote a “massive school, media, and community-based campaign to reduce prejudice” has again raised charges that the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith (AD) has become the kind of hate group it originally was organized to combat.

The ADL was heavily criticized earlier this year for a fund-raising letter by the then president of B’nai B’rith Seymour Reich which alleged that the “Arab presence on the college campus is poisoning the minds of our young people.” Reich...subsequently withdrew the letter which he called a “mistake,” even though he had used almost identical language in a fund-raising letter a year earlier. ADL has also been criticized for issuance of a “black list” naming educators, diplomats, and other speakers on American campuses who fail to toe the pro-Israel line.

Now, human rights and community groups have publicly disassociated themselves from an ADL-directed project [A World of Difference] aimed at schools in the San Francisco area.<sup>150</sup>

Officials of an umbrella group set up to administer the project drew up a letter to school districts and the general public announcing their disillusionment with the ADL presentation:

The section on the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II is so horrifying in its brevity as to be disrespectful. Its treatment of an Iranian child reinforces negative stereotypes of Muslims and Middle Eastern peoples.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Audrey Shabbas, “Coalition Raises Doubts About ADL,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (June 1989), 37.

<sup>151</sup> Letter, Ibid.

## **The San Francisco ADL Spy Case**

The ADL's "other side" came to light in January 1993, when a rapidly developing investigation by the San Francisco, CA, Police Department into the activities of police intelligence officer Tom Gerard produced evidence of an extensive network of illegal ADL penetration into confidential police files in San Francisco and elsewhere. According to news reports:

In 1991, Gerard joined other law enforcement officials on an "ADL law enforcement mission" to Israel, [ADL regional director Richard] Hirschaut said. "The law enforcement missions further ADL's mandate of monitoring and exposing extremist and anti-Semitic groups."<sup>152</sup>

The investigation quickly focused on Roy Bullock, a paid ADL operative and well-known figure in the San Francisco homosexual community, who had possession of an extensive ADL "enemies" list of some ten thousand individuals and 1,000 organizations. Bullock, who had worked for the ADL for 35 years and who was regarded as their "top spy," had developed an illegal "intelligence sharing" relationship with Gerard, who regularly took information from police files for transmittal to the ADL and in some cases to Israeli intelligence agencies, with whom the ADL works closely. Other information developed throughout the course of the investigation that Bullock and Gerard "clones" were positioned in or close to police departments throughout the country.<sup>153</sup>

What was striking about the ADL "enemies list" was that most of the individuals and organizations listed were of leftist persuasion. It is not surprising that pro-Palestinian human rights groups would be listed. What was shocking was the range of left groups, including many civil rights organizations ordinarily counted among the ADL's allies.

Groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the Black United Front, the Center for Investigative Reporting, the Asian Law Caucus, and the San Francisco Anti-Apartheid Committee were on the list. This produced a chorus of protest. According to news reports:

A small group of undercover operatives throughout the nation is being paid by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to spy on pro-Palestinian, black nationalist and white supremacist groups, according to a San Francisco law enforcement official.

The operatives rely on local police and sheriff's deputies to provide access to confidential law enforcement and motor vehicle information, in probable violation of criminal law...

"This Gerard-Bullock thing is the tip of the iceberg - this is going on nationwide," another law enforcement official said. Capt. John Willett of the Police Department's special investigations division said officers examining evidence in the case already had discovered from up to 20 police departments and other law enforcement agencies throughout the state...

"The ADL uses techniques to monitor hate groups that make you cringe," said Boston lawyer Harvey Silverglade, a Jew who belongs to the civil rights panels of both the ADL and the American Civil Liberties Union.

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<sup>152</sup> Phillip Matler and Andrew Ross, "Former S. F. Cop Focus of Probe," *San Francisco Chronicle* (15 January 1993).

<sup>153</sup> Rachel Gordon, "Supervisors Seek Probe in Spy Case," *San Francisco Examiner* (27 January 1993); K. Bradley Hudson, "Big Brother In San Francisco," *San Francisco Sentinel* (4 February 1993); "San Francisco Cop Probed For Sale of Intelligence to Israel," *Israeli Foreign Affairs* (5 February 1993); Richard C. Paddock, "San Francisco Probes Private Spy Network," *Los Angeles Times* (26 February 1993).

Some 12,000 computerized files were seized Dec. 10 [1992] in searches of ADL offices in San Francisco and Los Angeles...<sup>154</sup>

Why did the ADL spy on leftist groups, including traditional civil rights organizations? One reason might be the specter of an alliance between civil rights movements in the United States and the Palestinian cause in Israel, which in certain respects resembles the plight of American blacks. There are few things that the ADL fears more than a popular civil rights movement on behalf of the Palestinians.<sup>155</sup>

Some of the best coverage of the ADL scandal appeared in the *San Francisco Examiner*, where reporters Dennis Opatrny and Scott Winocur covered the story almost daily from its inception. In an April 1993 article, they quoted a [presumably police] source close to the case.

The ADL is doing the same thing all over the country. There is evidence that the ADL had police agents in other cities. The case just gets bigger every day. The more we look, the more people we find are involved.<sup>156</sup>

Detailed overviews appeared in April and May 1993 by George Cothran and Peter Hegarty in the *SF Weekly*, a San Francisco tabloid, and by Robert J. Friedman in the New York weekly, *The Village Voice*. Cothran and Hegarty observed:

Examples abound of the ADL's brazen invasion into the lives of people who happen to disagree with its political views. In 1983, the group disseminated a "blacklist" to Jewish campus leaders around the country that smeared scores of respected academics and Middle East peace activists as "pro-Arab sympathizers and propagandists who use their anti-zionism as merely a guise for their deeply felt anti-Semitism."<sup>157</sup>

Although the ADL claimed it was cooperating with police, apparently this was not entirely the case. On 8 April 1993 police armed with warrants searched ADL offices in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

San Francisco police raided the offices of the Anti-Defamation League yesterday looking for illegally obtained law enforcement information used in a nationwide political spy network.

An affidavit by Inspector Ron Roth said the searches were necessary because ADL officials did not turn over files as they had promised in December. Roth said "ADL employees were less than truthful with regards to the employment of Roy Bullock and other matters."<sup>158</sup>

When ADL National Director Abraham Foxman went on a damage control mission to West Coast news media offices and Jewish organizations he attacked critics of the ADL, calling them "anti-Semitic, undemocratic, and anti-American bastards."<sup>159</sup>

Many of the ADL's most persuasive critics came from the liberal Jewish community, however. Michael Lerner, editor of *Tikkun*, a progressive Jewish magazine said that the

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<sup>154</sup> Dennis J. Opatrny and Scott Winocur, "Police Said To Aid Spying On Political Groups," *San Francisco Examiner* (9 March 1993).

<sup>155</sup> James Zogby, "Harassment and Surveillance of Arab-Americans," *San Francisco Examiner* (4 March 1993).

<sup>156</sup> Opatrny and Winocur, "A New Target In S.F. Spy Probe," *San Francisco Examiner* (1 April 1993).

<sup>157</sup> George Cothran and Peter Hegarty, "Spies for Zion," *SF Weekly* (28 April 1993).

<sup>158</sup> Ken Hoover, "Anti-Defamation League Raided by S. F. Cops," *San Francisco Examiner* (9 April 1993).

<sup>159</sup> Garth Wolkoff, "ADL Chief Lashes Out At Critics, Press, D.A.," *Jewish Bulletin of Northern California* (7 May 1993).

ADL's spying activities were "a tremendous shame and embarrassment for American Jews." He continued:

The ADL is part of that sector of American Jews that believes that everybody is against us and anti-Semitism is likely to pop out at any moment at any place. They have no boundaries for their fears.<sup>160</sup>

The evidence that developed against the ADL was very strong. Not only did their paid agent take part in stealing police records -- a felony -- but there were numerous other infractions as well. There was active speculation that felony indictments against prominent ADL officials would be forthcoming. The *Detroit Jewish News* reported:

The Anti-Defamation League, the major national Jewish organization committed to fighting racism and anti-Semitism, could face multiple felony charges for eavesdropping and other illegal activities carried as part of an alleged nationwide intelligence network.<sup>161</sup>

The *Los Angeles Times* revealed that David Gurvitz, whom the ADL employed as a "fact-finder" in its Los Angeles office, was talking to police and the media about his role in the organizations spying operations.

Among other things, he told San Francisco authorities the Los Angeles ADL office kept a records of any Arab-American who had "anti-Israel leanings" or who wrote a letter to a newspaper expressing such sentiment.<sup>162</sup>

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, the ADL especially targeted Arab and Palestinian organizations for surveillance, including attempts to obtain confidential information

...on a vast number of people, including as many as 4,500 members of one target group, the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee.

Each case of obtaining such data from a law enforcement officer could constitute a felony, San Francisco Police Inspector Ron Roth noted in an affidavit for a search warrant.<sup>163</sup>

The ADL responded to the adverse publicity with an intense media campaign, claiming that it had done nothing wrong in "sharing information on violence-prone groups with law enforcement officials," and that it "will not countenance violations of the law on the part of anyone connected with the agency."<sup>164</sup> This was met with skepticism by many of those concerned, including Robert J. Friedman, who had this to say in the liberal *Village Voice*:

That's what the ADL says for public consumption. But morale is so low that its employees complain of sleepless nights and crying fits. And even as other Jewish groups circle the wagons around the ADL in a show of solidarity, many do so holding their noses. More than a few Jewish officials privately say that the ADL has to decide whether it is a human rights group or a secret police agency.<sup>165</sup>

Another issue is the way in which the ADL compromises law enforcement agencies in the United States. According to Friedman:

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<sup>160</sup> David Tuller, "Fury At Spying By Jewish Group: Anti-Defamation League Kept Data on Friends as Well as Foes," *San Francisco Chronicle* (10 April 1993).

<sup>161</sup> "ADL Could Face Felony Charges," *Detroit Jewish News* (16 April 1993).

<sup>162</sup> Richard C. Paddock, "Spy: 40 Years of Undercover Work For ADL," *Los Angeles Times* (13 April 1993).

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Robert J. Friedman, "The Anti-Defamation League is Spying On You," *Village Voice* (11 May 1993).

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

The ADL frequently sponsors trips for American law enforcement officials to Israel, where they are wined and dined and meet their counterparts in various intelligence agencies. According to an affidavit by San Francisco police inspector Roth, the “all-expense paid trip [to Israel] was more or less a thank-you gift and a liaison gesture by the ADL to continue the close relationships it has with specific law enforcement officers in the United States.”<sup>166</sup>

Friedman noted that the ADL’s spying on right-wing groups was widely known and that there was no outcry against it. What shocked leftists was that the ADL also spied on groups that were non-violent and of a “progressive” persuasion. He observed that the ADL:

...faces possible criminal prosecution on as many as 48 felony counts, including an indictment for gaining illegal access to police computers.<sup>167</sup>

One of the items stolen was a classified FBI report on the Nation of Islam, a black extremist group. According to Friedman, Mira Boland, director of the ADL’s “fact-finding” division in Washington, DC, evidently used this classified file to prepare an article criticizing the organization.

Boland, who played a large part in the ADL’s campaign against Lyndon LaRouche which resulted in several questionable convictions of security fraud, illustrates the interplay between government intelligence agencies and the private and tax-exempt ADL.

Boland, who had arranged the ADL police junket to Israel attended by Gerard, testified in a criminal trial in Roanoke, Virginia, that she had worked for the CIA for 14 months and later was a subcontractor for the Defense Department before joining the ADL. During the trial, Boland admitted to sharing information with a CIA official at an invitation-only ADL conference.<sup>168</sup>

## **The ADL Gets Minimal Penalties For Its Spying**

In addition to eavesdropping, the charges awaiting the ADL included tax violations, conspiracy and receiving confidential files from police agencies. They were not forthcoming. Why not? Consider this:

Some close observers believe that political pressure will make it impossible to prosecute the respected Jewish organization. “Mark my words, this is going to be obfuscated, obliterated...” said one veteran inspector. “It’s going to be a classic study in how things get covered up. You don’t do Jewish people in San Francisco. It’s not PC. Especially when you have two U. S. Senators who are Jewish (Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein) and the city’s Chief of Protocol is Dick Goldman (a prominent fund-raiser in the Jewish Community.)”<sup>169</sup>

The inspector was prophetic. The ADL and its spy, Roy Bullock, were dropped from the criminal investigation in April, leaving only Tom Gerard, against whom prosecution would be very difficult. In December 1993 the San Francisco District Attorney reached a settlement with the ADL.

After a yearlong investigation into charges that the Anti-Defamation League built a national intelligence network using illegal spying, [San Francisco] District Attorney Arlo Smith agreed Monday not to prosecute the organization in exchange for its payment of up to \$75,000 to fight hate crime.

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Cothran and Hegarty, Op Cit.

The [ADL] had been accused of illegally receiving confidential data from police sources. As part of the agreement, the group pledged not to engage in improper information gathering in California. The case highlighted the Anti-Defamation League's intelligence operation and its infiltration of political and ethnic groups.<sup>170</sup>

## **The ADL's Misuse of Journalist "Shield" Laws**

Over the years several organizations and individuals have filed lawsuits against the ADL. The San Francisco spy case was no exception. In April 1993 *San Francisco Examiner* reporters Opatrny and Winocur announced that

Eighteen people - including the son of former Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens - planned to file a lawsuit Wednesday charging the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith with invasion of privacy... Yigal Arens...said in a telephone interview that he has seen the file the ADL kept on him in the 1980s, presumably because of his criticism of the treatment of Palestinians...

My understanding is that they consider all activity that is in some sense opposed to Israel or Israeli action to be part of their responsibility to investigate... The ADL believes that anyone who is an Arab American...or speaks politically against Israel is at least a closet anti-Semite.<sup>171</sup>

The ADL's strategy in these and the many other lawsuits it has faced over the years is, if it can't overwhelm the plaintiffs with its enormous resources to keep a suit from coming to trial, to claim "journalistic privilege" when faced with questioning about their activities, including the source of allegedly false information. The ADL claims to be a "news and information gathering organization," and as such it is entitled to protection under the journalist "shield" laws used to protect the working press from having to reveal their news sources.

In no sense, however, is the ADL on a par with the *New York Times* or *Time* magazine, nor is it even remotely part of the working press. Its publications are designed to support the ideological agenda of the organization and its constituency, and not to provide "news."

More importantly, its publishing activities are only a small part of its overall program, most of which is lobbying, public relations and fundraising, along with developing and maintaining its extensive enemies files. Yet, time after time judges have bought this argument so that it exists as a legal precedent:

The Anti-Defamation League won a major legal victory Wednesday [6 October 1993] when a San Francisco Superior Court judge ruled the organization does not have to open its files to a group of individuals suing it for invasion of privacy.

Judge Barbara J. R. Jones declared the ADL, in effect, a fact-gathering enterprise with a journalistic purpose whose First Amendment rights should be recognized, including the protection of confidential sources.<sup>172</sup>

Once again the ADL avoided potentially damaging discovery proceedings that would have provided ample ammunition for both criminal prosecution and private lawsuits by the numerous individuals and organizations that claim to have been damaged by it. Robert J. Friedman comments on this in the *Village Voice*:

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<sup>170</sup> Los Angeles Times, "Deal Lets Anti-Defamation League Escape Trial on Spy Charges," *St Louis Post-Dispatch* (17 November 1993).

<sup>171</sup> Opatrny and Winocur, "18 Litigants Draft Suite Charging ADL Spying," *San Francisco Examiner* (14 April 1993).

<sup>172</sup> Opatrny and Winocur, "Judge Rules ADL Need Not Open Its Files In Civil Suit," *San Francisco Examiner* (7 October 1993).

But the difference between the practice of journalism and the ADL's method of gathering information couldn't be more striking. Journalists place information in the public domain where they are held accountable for falsehoods, distortions, and libel. And for the most part, journalists don't share their files with domestic police agencies. The ADL has no such inhibitions. Because many of its files are not open to public scrutiny, false information collected by ideologically biased researchers cannot be corrected. Once a proud human rights group, the ADL has become the Jewish thought police.<sup>173</sup>

In 1996 the ADL reached an out-of-court settlement with some of the groups it had spied upon, including the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee and 11 other civil rights groups:

Again claiming innocence, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) has agreed to pay \$175,000 toward the legal fees of plaintiffs in a civil rights lawsuit filed three years ago by Arab-American and other groups in Los Angeles that charged the organization with spying on their members. In a settlement reached in early September, the league also promised to contribute \$25,000 to improving relations between Jews and other minority groups.<sup>174</sup>

A more detailed and updated account of the settlement and the issues surrounding it appeared in the December, 1999, *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*:

Under the permanent injunction issues by Federal Judge Richard Paez, the ADL is permanently enjoined from engaging in any further illegal spying against Arab-American and other civil rights groups.

A court-appointed Special Master will supervise the removal of illegally obtained information from the ADL's files. Those documents will be held by the Special Master for a maximum period of 10 years, time to allow the adjudication of other, related civil suits still pending against the ADL.<sup>175</sup>

Journalist David Gillespie explained the background of the ADL's domestic espionage activities:

After COINTELPRO, a still controversial FBI operation to destabilize black nationalist and other groups in the '60s and '70s, the FBI, state and local law enforcement authorities were ordered out of the business of fathering information about legitimate political activity by American citizens. But in some major American cities, law enforcement files relating to legitimate and Constitutionally protected political activities that had been ordered destroyed instead found their way to the offices of the ADL, which quickly became a clearinghouse for such illegally obtained and illegally retained information.

The absence of the FBI, state, and local police investigators in the field therefore created a void the ADL rushed to fill, with remarkable success, by increasing its in-house "fact finding" assets and capabilities and developing enhanced working relationships with "official friends" – government officials, investigators, and intelligence officers. Some of these were the officials who had not destroyed files of illegally obtain materials, or had made private copies of the official files before they were destroyed in compliance with the court order.

The ADL favored many of its "official friends" with expense-paid trips to Israel, where they met with and were entertained by friendly officers of Israel's espionage and counter-intelligence organizations, Mossad and Shin Bet, thus creating a major

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<sup>173</sup> Friedman, op cit.

<sup>174</sup> Rachele Marshall, "ADL Pays Up Again For Stealing Police Files and Spying on U. S. Citizens," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (October 1996).

<sup>175</sup> Michael Gillespie, "Los Angeles Court Hands Down Final Judgment in Anti-Defamation League Illegal Surveillance Cast," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (December 1999), 43, 127.

conduit for the flow of sensitive and useful U. S. domestic intelligence to Israel's spymasters in Tel Aviv.

Knowledgeable observers have characterized the San Francisco district attorney's 1993 investigation of the ADL as a continuation by proxy of an investigation more than two years earlier by FBI counter-intelligence officials. Their apparent aim was to impede if not halt the activities of the ADL's sophisticated nation-wide espionage and intelligence gathering network.<sup>176</sup>

Gillespie quotes Peter Schey of the Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law:

The ease with which the ADL moved into a position of gathering information on groups not threatening them was insidious. They really got sucked into this intelligence subculture and went into the service of war policy, especially in Central America.<sup>177</sup>

There may be more to this aspect of the ADL spy scandal that meets the eye. Writing in the liberal *Village Voice* Robert I. Friedman notes:

In 1987, the ADL came under FBI scrutiny in the wake of the Pollard spy scandal. While assigned to the Navy's Anti-Terrorist Alert Center, where he had access to the most closely guarded U. S. secrets, Jonathan Pollard stole thousands of pages of classified documents for Israel, which, according to federal prosecutors, "could fill a room the size of a large closet...ten feet by six feet by six feet." Pollard's handler was Avi Sella, an Israeli air force colonel whose wife worked for the ADL as a lawyer. Pollard later wrote to friends that a prominent ADL leader was deeply involved in the Israeli spy operation.<sup>178</sup>

## **ADL "Journalistic" Status Probed In Bizarre Colorado Case**

Seldom is the legal rule of innocent until proven guilty so ignored by the public as in cases of ethnic and racial hate crimes. The charges are toxic enough to begin corroding the accused immediately, and for a crime that is enormously difficult to prove....the allegations alone can tarnish a defendant permanently.<sup>179</sup>

In 1994 two neighboring families in Evergreen, Colorado, began feuding over what seemed to be small things, such as one neighbor's dog in another neighbor's yard. This escalated dramatically in the ensuing months, including name-calling. Feuds like this are not uncommon to police, or even to most neighborhoods. Most of them pass with time, either as someone moves or matters are just laid to rest.

What made this different is that one set of neighbors, Candice and Mike Aronson were Jewish, and the other set, Dorothy and William Quigley, were not. The Aronsons secretly taped private conversations over the Quigley's portable telephone in which they vented their outrage and frustration at the Aronson's behavior. These tapes of Mr. & Mrs. Quigley talking to each other and to a neighbor - illegally recorded under federal law - became the basis for a felony charge of ethnic intimidation against the Quigley's - ten separate counts, in fact. Also charged was a Quigley neighbor, Joy Mudd.

The Aronson's had contacted the Anti-Defamation League with their claims of anti-Semitism on the part of the Quigley's. An ADL attorney apparently encouraged them to

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<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Robert I. Friedman, "The Enemy Within," *Village Voice*, 11 May 1993.

<sup>179</sup> Eric Dexheimer, "War Of The Words," *City Limits: Westwood. Com* (13 June 1996), <http://westword.com/1966/051396/awards/quig.html/>



continue tape recording the telephone conversations and, in typical ADL style, the organization coordinated a ritual defamation of the Quigleys on a scale seldom seen in cases of this nature. The Quigleys became pariahs in their community. Within days they began receiving death threats. Joy Mudd became so frightened that she left town.

The original charges were brought on the strength of the Aronsons own transcript of the tapes, which proved to be quite selective. A closer examination of the tapes revealed that most of what was said, was said in jest. Nevertheless, the charges filed against the Quigleys and the subsequent lawsuit thoroughly destroyed their reputation. A media frenzy further vilified them, quoting Saul Rosenthal of the ADL, who called the incident “one of the most astonishing cases of anti-Semitic harassment our office has ever confronted.”<sup>180</sup>

On 6 December 1994 the Aronsons filed a civil suit against the Quigleys at the ADL’s behest. The next day the Aronsons and the ADL held a press conference. On the very next day - as though by remarkable coincidence - the Quigleys were arrested and charged with the felonies. Their nightmare was just beginning.

The Quigleys responded with a suit of their own, using a Jewish lawyer, Jay Horowitz. According to news sources:

The Quigleys quickly counter-sued for millions of dollars. In yet another \$5 million dollar lawsuit, the Quigleys named the Aronsons, their attorneys, the ADL and Rosenthal, claiming that the defendants participated in a wiretapping plot to damage the family’s reputation.<sup>181</sup>

The ADL, of course, was right in the middle of all this. Following the Aronsons initial contact with the ADL, the ADL - through an intermediary - contacted the Jefferson County’s chief deputy district attorney, Mark Pautler. The ADL’s contact, ADL state chairman Gary Lozow, and Pautler were neighbors and friends. News reports note:

Between October and December [1994], the Anti-Defamation League made certain the district attorney’s office knew of its interest in the Aronson/Quigley case. DA [David] Thomas vigorously denies that the organization pressured his office in generating criminal charges against the Quigleys. Yet, if the ADL didn’t have a direct influence, it appears to have enjoyed remarkable timing.<sup>182</sup>

But then things began changing. First, all charges of ethnic intimidation were dropped against the Quigleys and Joy Mudd. After reviewing the actual tapes, and not the Aronsons partial transcripts, investigators found that no ethnic intimidation had actually taken place. According to DA Thomas:

It turns out that [the Quigleys’] intent was not racially and ethnically motivated. This was a neighborhood dispute, and some of the comments were made in a humorous vein. When that kind of doubt exists, we have an obligation, ethically, to drop the charges. Listening to the tapes, you get nuances, emotional stuff that doesn’t come across in the transcripts. Obviously, you could call this a mistake in the way we handled the evidence.<sup>183</sup>

Second, the Aronsons admittedly taped the Quigleys illegally, and even if the tapes had contained bona fide evidence, the tapes could not be used in a criminal prosecution. Thirdly, the DA would have probably reviewed the case more carefully had it not been for pressure from the ADL.

The Quigleys eventually settled with Jefferson County DA David Thomas for \$75,000, based on his hasty prosecution at the urging of the ADL. In 1998 the Quigleys settled their

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<sup>180</sup> Dexheimer, op cit.

<sup>181</sup> Ginny McKibben, “Aronsons File Suit Against Lawyer, Couple claim Legal Advice Lacking,” *Denver Post* (11 August 1997), B5

<sup>182</sup> Dexheimer, op cit.

<sup>183</sup> Dexheimer, op cit.

claims against the Aronsons' attorneys, Stuart Kritzer and Gary Lozow, for \$350,000. The Quigleys and Aronsons have agreed not to pursue their suits against one another. According to news reports:

As a result, what remains...is the Quigleys' lawsuit against the Anti-Defamation League. Central to that claim is a December 1994 press conference organized by Rosenthal, at which the ADL president declared that the Quigleys' behavior toward their neighbors constituted the worst instance of anti-Semitism since the notorious murder of Denver Jewish talk-show host Alan Berg in 1984.

In their suit against the ADL, which has seriously and permanently wronged the Quigleys, they are asking for discovery in order to prove their case. This is common in civil cases of this type, and parties are almost always required to produce documents and other evidence so that the court can get to the truth of the matter. The ADL's claim of "journalistic privilege," however, is their trump card that keeps lawsuits against them from being successful. The ADL claimed that privilege again in this case. The Quigleys attorney, Jay Horowitz, notes:

If you call any organization that puts out a newsletter a journalist, you will have a total revolution in the law.<sup>184</sup>

In an ironic twist to the case, the Aronsons have also filed suit against their lawyer in the case. Stuart Kritzer, they claim, should have protected their interests in the case rather than serving the cause of the ADL. The accuse Kritzer of encouraging them to tape the Quigleys, which proved to be illegal. The tapes were only useful to vilify the Quigleys for their alleged anti-Semitism and may have resulted in the charges being dropped and the civil case floundering.

As for the "journalist privilege" claim of the ADL, the March, 1999, the *Rocky Mountain News* reported:

A federal judge has refused to dismiss a lawsuit accusing the Anti-Defamation League of defaming an Evergreen couple as anti-Semitism. The ADL had asked that the judge dismiss the case brought by William and Dorothy Quigley against the league and director Saul Rosenthal. U. S. Judge Edward Nottingham ruled...that enough issues exist for the case to proceed.<sup>185</sup>

Earlier, Judge Nottingham had decided that the ADL did not qualify as a journalistic organization.

## **ADL Victims Awarded \$10.5 Million in Libel Case**

Finally, in May 2000 a Colorado jury awarded the Quigleys the considerable sum of \$10.5 million in damages against the Anti-Defamation League. According to news reports:

In a four-week trial that ended last month, the jury determined that Mr. Rosenthal had made more than 40 statements defaming the Quigleys; their lawyers asked the judge today to use his discretion to triple the jury's damage award.<sup>186</sup>

The Anti-Defamation League has said it would appeal the verdict to the U. S. District Court. On 4 April 2001 that appeal was denied.

A federal judge upheld a jury's findings that the Anti-Defamation League defamed a couple by publicly accusing them of being anti-Semitic, but reduced punitive damages against the organization. U. S. District Court Judge Edward Nottingham

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<sup>184</sup> Eric Dexheimer, "News and Jews: Do Newspapers and the Anti-Defamation League Have Anything In Common," *Westwood.com* (3 September 1998).

<sup>185</sup> "Suit Against Jewish League Stands," *Rocky Mountain News*, (3 March 1999).

<sup>186</sup> Michael Janofsky, "Neighbors' Spat Leads to a Huge Award Against the Anti-Defamation League," *New York Times* (13 May 2000).

said Tuesday that the evidence was sufficient to support the jury's conclusion that the ADL "acted recklessly..."<sup>187</sup>

The damage award was reduced from \$10.5 million to \$9.75 million because the Quigleys had already received compensation from another lawsuit involving the wiretaps. Unable to put the fix in at this stage of the appeal process the ADL pledged that it will appeal further.

In a long article on this case the *Foreward*, a Jewish weekly, made the following observations:

"Based on its position and history as a well-respected civil rights institution, it is not unreasonable to infer that public charges of anti-Semitism leveled by the ADL will be taken seriously and assumed by many to be true without question," the judge wrote on March 31 in a 46 page order and memorandum of decision obtained by the *Foreward*. "In that respect the ADL is in a unique position of being able to cause substantial harm to individuals when it lends its backing to allegations of anti-Semitism."

"The ADL seized an opportunity to aggrandize itself as the defender of the Jews by unjustly accusing a middle-class couple of being anti-Semitic crooks," said Jay Horowitz, the Quigleys' Denver-based lawyer. "And all along they showed an unbelievable arrogance."

To support his argument, the judge cited an internal ADL memorandum written by [Saul] Rosenthal in January 1995, in which the league official said he wanted "to be sure we are maximizing all opportunities that are available from the Aronson case and arrests.... In short, 'make hay while the sun shines' – graciously of course."

The Judge also noted that the impact these accusations would have on Mr. Quigley's career were actually raised in discussions within the Denver ADL. He said,

In that respect, Rosenthal's conduct could be perceived as even more egregious, given his awareness of the stigmatizing consequences attached to accusations of anti-Semitism."<sup>188</sup>

## **The ADL and the Investigators Leads File**

The infiltration of police and national security agencies to attack and marginalize caught the attention of the ADL's supporters on the left, in October, 1947 the Subcommittee of the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, House of Representatives, Eightieth Congress, First Session, conducted hearings:

To make inquiry as the authority of the Civil Service Commission to compile and to expend federal funds to compile and maintain an "Investigators Leads File," containing facts, rumor and gossip bearing on the views, opinions, and acts of individuals who were neither federal employees nor applicants for positions coming under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commission. Also to learn for what purpose the "file" was to be used.<sup>189</sup>

The information in the files was remarkably insubstantial. They included "links and ties," innuendo, unverified rumors, name-calling, guilt-by-association and, of course, defamation. The ADL and an allied Watchdog group, the Friends of Democracy, were the source of

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<sup>187</sup> "Anti-Defamation League Case Upheld," *Associated Press* (4 April 2001).

<sup>188</sup> Mark Perelman, "Judge Slams ADL for Hurting Couple Tarred as "Anti-Semites," *Foreward*, (13 April 2001).

<sup>189</sup> Investigator's Leads File, Subcommittee Of The Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, House of Representatives, Eightieth Congress, First Session, October 3, 6, and 7, 1949. United States Government Printing Office, 1948.

many of the files of information which the Subcommittee Chairman declared to be “all hearsay.” Here are some selected excerpts from the report:

**The Chairman:** It is my understanding that on many of those cards, or at least on some of them, there is a notation, or was a notation like this:

The above was copied from the subversive file in the possession of attorneys Mintzer & Levy, 39 Broadway, NYC, Room 3305. Their files were made up in cooperation with the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League. The sources of this information must not be disclosed under any circumstances nor be quoted. However, further information concerning above may be secured by contacting offices of Mintzer & Levy.

That notation is on the bottom of cards which carry information to the effect that the individuals named, Senators and Congressmen, were disloyal, belonged to subversive groups, engaged perhaps in traitorous activities.<sup>190</sup>

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**Mr. Snyder:** I want to clear this up in my own mind: The purpose of keeping these cards was that if some time in the future, some of these individuals applied for a Federal job you would have the information at hand, have certain information on them; is that true?

**Mr. Mitchell:** That is correct. We would have certain information on them that somebody had alleged them to be Communist, or something of that sort.

**Mr. Snyder:** Was there anything aside from Communist?

**Mr. Mitchell:** Oh, yes.

**Mr. Snyder:** What other categories in this activity?

**Mr. Mitchell:** There were Nazis, Fascists, and Japanese.<sup>191</sup>

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**Mr. Mitchell:** Well, I should say the things would not apply unless they applied for a job, or unless there were involved in some investigation incidentally. You must remember this, that there is no evidence against the names on the list.

**The Chairman:** No, but it furnishes a most admirable smear list, do you not see, because, for example, if Mr. Busbey is running for Congress against me, or if somebody is running against him and they can get this information and say that it is in the files of the Civil Service Commission and can make a charge against Mr. Busbey, when it appears that the only source of the information is the Friends Of Democracy or the Anti-Defamation League and it is all hearsay. Yet the people in the district in which he is running may not know any better than to say that it comes from the Civil Service Commission and must be true.<sup>192</sup>

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**Mr. Busbey:** Let us not stray away from the question: I am not talking about FBI files. I am talking about the files of the Anti-Defamation League and the Friends of Democracy.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Miss Perkins tells me that the Friends of Democracy---

**Miss Perkins:** They publish articles in which they mention names of people.

**Mr. Busbey:** That is something entirely different. I am not talking about publication of any names in articles or hearings. I am talking about a direct,

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid, 17

specific case where the file cards of your organization have a reference – not to publications – but to the files of these two organizations.<sup>193</sup>

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Mr. Busbey: Mr. Chairman, I urge that this committee subpoena before it the executive head of the Friends of Democracy, and the executive head of the Anti-Defamation League, and that they have Mintzer & Levy, 39 Broadway, New York City, subpoenaed, to ascertain what they had to do with getting that kind of information in this file, if anything.

Mr. Hardy: Mr. Chairman, I question the advisability or the feasibility of calling those people at that time.<sup>194</sup>

## **The ADL and the FBI**

The entire history of the ADL's relationship with government agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, has yet to be written. However, in working through a large stack of FBI documents obtained under a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)<sup>195</sup> request it becomes clear that the organization has labored long and hard to ingratiate itself with federal law enforcement authorities, ostensibly as "experts" on their own enemies.

Until the Reagan administration the FBI kept the ADL at arm's length, although they readily accepted ADL information in the same manner that they have always done from a wide range of informants. Under J. Edgar Hoover, the bureau was particularly reluctant to get into any kind of cooperating arrangement with the ADL. Hoover, for example, repeatedly declined offers to address ADL banquets, realizing that his presence would be a propaganda coup for an organization he did not entirely trust.

In a 4 January 1966 letter to Dore Schary, ADL national chairman from 1963 to 1969, Hoover declined attendance at an ADL dinner for U. S. Supreme Court Justice Arthur J. Goldberg. A note written by FBI researchers was later appended to file copy of Hoover's response to the ADL request which read:

NOTE: Mr. Schary is a Hollywood producer who is well known to the Bureau. He has never been investigated but Bufiles reflect that he has been a member or sponsor of, contributed to or was in other ways affiliated with a number of organizations cited as CP [Communist Party] front groups or which were designated as subversive pursuant to EO [Executive Order] 10450.<sup>196</sup>

Although factually correct, the FBI (in this case acting as a Watchdog group itself) may have been making too much out of these "links" and "ties." One group Schary was associated with was Hollywood Writers Mobilization, a "popular front" group of Communists and non-Communists drumming up support for the United States and its new ally, the Soviet Union, in World War II. Former Communist Party member Dorothy Healey observes:

With the Soviet Union as America's military ally, a new "popular front" was reborn on an even broader basis than in the 1930's....Locally organized groups like Hollywood Writers Mobilization drew support from all kinds of people, virtually across the political spectrum.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid, 23.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid, 36.

<sup>195</sup> Freedom of Information - Privacy Act request #312724, by Laird Wilcox (1988-1995).

<sup>196</sup> Ibid, File #100-530-455, Letter dated 4 January 1966 from J. Edgar Hoover to Dore Schary, National Chairman, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

<sup>197</sup> Dorothy Healey, *Dorothy Healey Remembers: A Life in the American Communist Party* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 87.

This characterization is correct in that there were non-Communist Party members involved in Writers Mobilization, but the organization was clearly under the influence of the party. It is unlikely that many who lent names to the organization were unaware of the role Communists played in its policies and daily activities.

According to Kenneth Billingsley, author of *Hollywood Party*, a study of Communist Party influence in Hollywood:

Party scribes came to control the Hollywood Writer's Mobilization... John Howard Lawson was one of the editors of its publication, *Hollywood Quarterly*, and also did his best to promote the Party publications which praised the movies Party writers had scripted.<sup>198</sup>

Hollywood Writers Mobilization was cited as a dangerous organization by government committees investigating subversion. According to a report to the California legislature in 1949:

#### Hollywood Writers Mobilization

1. Cited as subversive and Communist. (Attorney General Tom Clark, letters to Loyalty Review Board, released December 4, 1947, and September 21, 1948).
2. Cited as a Communist-front organization whose "true purpose" was "the creation of a clearing house for Communist propaganda." (California Committee on Un-American Activities, Report, 1945, p. 130).<sup>199</sup>

According to the FBI, Schary's "subversive affiliations went far beyond Hollywood Writers Mobilization. In documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. Under the heading of "Communist Infiltration of RKO Studios," we find the following:

Mr. Schary, as director of all production, would determine the type of picture produced, the personnel employed in the cultural preparation and direction of the picture; in fact, his power would determine the entire trend of the production of that major [motion picture] producing company.

Mr. Schary has a long record of activity as a strong Communist sympathizer. Some of his activities are as follows:

1. Former member of the League of American Writers.
2. Teacher in the Hollywood Writers School conducted by the League of American writers. This League of American Writers was affiliated with the International Union of Revolutionary Writers, headquartered in Moscow. This school is now known as the Peoples Educational Center and is still under Communist control.
3. Member of the "advisory committee" of the Fifth Writers Congress.
4. Member, Executive Council of the Hollywood Democratic Committee.
5. Member, Executive Council of Hollywood Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions. Was also vice-president of this organization.
6. Member of the Russian-American Club of Hollywood.
7. Supported the Council of Hollywood Guilds and unions, an organization set up to defend Communists in the motion picture industry.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Kenneth Lloyd Billingsley, *Hollywood Party: Now Communism Seduced the American Film Industry in the 1930's and 1940's* (Rockland, CA: Forum, 1998), 98.

<sup>199</sup> California Legislature, *Fifth Report of the Senate Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities, 1949*, Sacramento, California, 1949.

Schary stated when he appeared before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1947 “I am not a Communist. I have never been a Communist. I never contemplated becoming a Communist, and I am opposed to Communists.”<sup>201</sup>

John Sanford, a Communist Party member and Hollywood writer who taught with Schary at the Progressive Educational Center in Hollywood, CA, sees Schary as somewhat less principled. When Sanford’s wife, Maggie, refused to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee, Schary went after her: “Mention a few names. What does it hurt? Mention the names of people who’ve been named already.” Sanford observed that Schary was “one of the biggest pricks in the business.”<sup>202</sup>

FBI records reveal that Dore Schary was not the only ADL operative whose alleged communist “links and ties” caught the FBI’s attention. Other references are made in FBI internal documents to David Edelsburg, director of the ADL’s Washington office, as a member of the National Lawyers Guild<sup>203</sup> A reference to Gilbert J. Balkin, director of the Florida Regional Office of the ADL, and his wife Revy, alluded to “links and ties” with the Council for American-Soviet Friendship and the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, and noted that they are “alleged Communist front organizations.” It also noted that Revy Balkin was editor of a monthly newspaper called *The Miami Beacon* that “was always in accord with the Communist Party line.”<sup>204</sup>

An important point here is that while the ADL would almost certainly explain away Dore Schary’s associations (or anyone else connected with the ADL) as being circumstantial and tangential which, although unlikely, may be true. But in their publications the ADL almost never extends such consideration to individuals who may have had a similarly tangential association with a putative racist, neo-Nazi, or holocaust revisionist organization. Instead, they focus on exposing the “links and ties” of anyone who has even the most casual and peripheral involvement with a far right group.

## **ADL Disinformation Campaigns**

The reason for the FBI’s skepticism - aside from the backgrounds of certain ADL leaders - was the sheer opportunism evident in ADL tactics to compromise the independence of the Bureau, and also in the shoddy quality of some ADL investigative reports on its enemies. An internal FBI memorandum dated 12 August 1965 from Assistant Director William Sullivan to R. W. Smith made reference to an ADL pamphlet on the Ku Klux Klan. Sullivan noted that:

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<sup>200</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Communist Infiltration - Motion Picture Industry (COMPIC) (Excerpts)*, FOIA Number 100-138754, Serial 4, Part 1 of 15, “Communist Infiltration of RKO Studios,” p 30.

<sup>201</sup> Dore Schary, testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee, (29 October 1947).

<sup>202</sup> John Sanford, in Griffin Fariello (ed), *Red Scare: Memories of the American Inquisition* (NY: Norton, 1995), 290-291.

<sup>203</sup> FOIA-PA request #312724, File #100-530-365, Memorandum dated November 17, 1957.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid, File #100-530-152, Memorandum dated February 2, 1949, from SAC, Miami, to Director, FBI, Subject: Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith, Miami, Florida, Information Concerning.

It is stated on page 6 that a Klan plot to assassinate Martin Luther King early in 1965 leaked out, and the FBI and other law enforcement authorities threw a heavy guard around him. This is not true...

...the pamphlet erroneously lists James Venable's National Knights of the Ku Klux Klan as the second most important group, having the support of 7,000 to 9,000. Originally formed by Venable to bring a number of small Klans into one organization, the National Knights of the Ku Klux Klan has not realized its goal.<sup>205</sup>

## **ADL Inflates KKK Membership**

A year later FBI documents refer to another erroneous ADL report, this one inflating the strength of the Ku Klux Klan, which the ADL claimed was at about 29,500! The ADL also claimed in a September 1966 statement in the *New York Times* that KKK membership had increased by 10,000 since the first of the year. According to another FBI memorandum:

While the Klan has made organizational efforts in the North and Middle West, they have met with little success. There has been no indication that Klan membership has grown by 10,000 since the first of the year... The present Klan membership is between 14,000 and 15,000 active members.<sup>206</sup>

Inflation, even by 100%, is not uncommon in ADL membership claims even today. The more racists and anti-Semites the more the ADL is needed, the greater its prestige and the more political clout it has. Perhaps more significantly, however, the 1966 FBI memorandum contained the following, which is transparently evident to objective observers:

The Anti-Defamation League has vested interest in discovering and exposing anti-Semitic organizations such as the Klan and other hate groups.<sup>207</sup>

## **ADL Falsifies FBI Communist Party Membership Figures**

In 1961 an FBI memorandum noted that an ADL pamphlet, *The Profile of Communism - A Fact-By-Fact Primer*, contained a false reference to an alleged March, 1960 FBI estimate of Communist Party membership as "approximately 10,000." The Bureau noted that "no public statements on the size of the Communist Party, USA, have been issued by the Bureau since 1957, at which time the membership was placed at 17,000."<sup>208</sup>

During November of 1942 a number of FBI memoranda were produced relating to several disinformation operations by American Jewish organizations. One of these regarded a report in the 2 November 1942 edition of the *New York Times* quoting American Jewish Congress official Benjamin Levine commenting on anti-Semitism in the United States:

"The growth has been so rapid in recent months," Mr. Levine said, "that J. Edgar Hoover, F.B.I. chief, is greatly frightened by it." He disclosed that F.B.I.

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid, File #100-530-453, Memorandum dated 12 August 1965, from W. C. Sullivan to R. W. Smith, Subject: Review of Pamphlet, *Report on the Ku Klux Klan*, by Arnold Forster and Benjamin R. Epstein.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid, File #100-530-(final digits not shown), Memorandum dated 22 September 1966 from W. C. Sullivan to F. J. Baumgardner, Subject: Investigation of Klan Organizations, Racial Matters - Klan.

<sup>207</sup> Op Cit.

<sup>208</sup> FOIA-PA request #312724, File #100-530 (final digits now shown), Memorandum dated March 21, 1961, Subject: The Profile of Communism - a Fact-By-Fact Primer, Prepared by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, Book Review, Central Research Matter.



investigations had revealed that only 30 percent of the Nazi agents in the country were assigned to industrial sabotage.

“The others,” he said, “have but one instruction, and that is to spread hatred for the Jews. It is only by this method that they can undermine democracy.”

A memorandum from Assistant to the Director Louis B. Nichols to Assistant Director Clyde Tolson noted that a check of the files has been unable to find any statement by Hoover even approximating that used by Levine. Hoover had said no such a thing and the attribution was a hoax.<sup>209</sup>

In 1985, after years of attempting to gain access to the resources of the FBI, the Bureau succumbed to political pressure from the Reagan White House. An FBI memo was distributed to all FBI SACs (Special Agent in Charge) in cities where the ADL had a field office. It read:

Enclosed for each receiving office is a copy of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) 1984 status report for the Ku Klux Klan and Neo-Nazi and two (2) lists of ADL regional offices including identify of Regional Director.

Each office is requested to review the attached documents. The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (ADL) has undertaken to monitor and report the activities of domestic terrorists (sic) groups....

It was also established that each FBI office contact each [ADL] Regional Office to establish a liaison and line of communication to promptly receive all allegations of civil rights violations.<sup>210</sup>

Thus began the collaboration between a religious special interest group and the premier law enforcement agency of the United States. As years have passed the penetration of the FBI by the ADL has increased dramatically. The ADL stepped up its indoctrination of FBI personnel dramatically. A 1991 issue of an ADL publication bragged:

ADL Washington representatives have participated in FBI-sponsored regional hate crime training conferences for law enforcement officials from more than 300 of the nation's largest cities and counties.<sup>211</sup>

## **ADL Hoaxes**

### **Television Station WCCO**

My own interest in the Anti-Defamation League came from an experience I had involving the organization in 1981. Prior to that I was confident that the ADL was simply a human rights organization with a special interest in anti-Semitism. I had spoken with ADL representatives on a couple of occasions regarding right-wing groups that I regarded as dangerous. They were polite, concerned and tried to be helpful.

In July 1981 I was contacted by WCCO-TV in Minneapolis, MN, to assist them in producing a documentary on right-wing paramilitary groups. I responded with a number of leads and suggestions, and in October WCCO producer Jim Hayden, accompanied by cameraman Paul Henschel, arrived to interview me for their upcoming documentary, *Armies of the Right*, which was to air in several weeks. They had chosen me as the expert on the subject to provide background and commentary during their documentary, which was quite an honor.

During our visit we discussed the WCCO interview with the leaders of the New York City chapter of the Christian Patriot's Defense League, a right-wing quasi-paramilitary group

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid, File #100-530-82, Memorandum dated November 9, 1942 from L. B. Nichols to Mr. Tolson.

<sup>210</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, AIRTEL dated 4 February 1985, Subject: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (ADL) Information Concerning Civil Rights Violations.

<sup>211</sup> “ADL and FBI Collaborate on Hate Crime Reporting,” *Frontline Focus* (November 1991), 5.

headquartered in Flora, IL. The two subjects in this part of the documentary identified themselves as “Jim Anderson” and “John Austin.”

Hayden told me that they behaved strangely during the shot, often huddling together and whispering between themselves, and that Austin insisted on wearing a fake mustache. “They didn’t seem right,” Hayden said, noting that they seemed to be “acting” and trying to create the impression of the stereotypical right-wing racist. He wondered if they were legitimate. I replied that these movements are full of strange characters and that I could spend hours relating my own experiences interviewing them.

On 7 December 1981 WCCO-TV flew me to Minneapolis to attend the premier of *Armies of the Right* and to participate in a televised 90-minute Town Hall forum afterward. Also included were members of one of the groups covered in the documentary, the “CSA”---Covenant, Sword and Arm of the Lord), along with representatives of civil rights groups and Morton Ryweck of the Minneapolis field office of the ADL. It was the first time I had seen the video.

During their videotaped segment both “Jim Anderson” and “John Austin” did, indeed, fulfill the stereotype of the offensive bigoted racist. They had attended the CPDL’s 1981 “Freedom Festival” where they taught a course in street combat and techniques of hand-to-hand violence called “street action.” Interestingly, their course would probably fall within the definition of “paramilitary training,” which was subsequently outlawed in several states as the result of a nationwide campaign by the ADL.

When I returned to Kansas City, however, I began my own investigation into the matter, contacting several other researchers and journalist friends who follow extremist politics. I learned that “Jim Anderson” was no less than James Mitchel Rosenberg, an agent for the ADL in much the same manner as Roy Bullock. Moreover, I learned that on 8 October 1981, a month before the premier of *Armies of the Right*, Rosenberg was arrested along with “John Austin,” who turned out to be Kevin Reid, on a New York City rooftop. According to media accounts which included a photograph,

Kevin Reid...and James Rosenberg are handcuffed as they are taken into custody at Third Ave. near 44th St. yesterday. Police they found the men on roof of building at 686 Third Ave. with two rifles. Reid, of Manhattan, and Rosenberg, of Queens, said they were posing for a photograph. They were charged with possession of an unregistered rifle and carrying a weapon in public view.<sup>212</sup>

The two were posing as paramilitary extremists for a photographic fabrication exaggerating the threat from the paramilitary far right. The charges were subsequently dropped at the request the ADL’s Irwin Suall, Rosenberg’s direct supervisor.

In 1984 Rosenberg was also identified as an ADL agent provocateur in a major court case.<sup>213</sup> During a deposition of Irwin Suall, head of the ADL’s director of “Fact Finding,” the question of Rosenberg’s undercover work for the ADL came up. Suall’s testimony was evasive as an attorney tried to pin down his involvement with Rosenberg, although Suall did admit to having contact with him during “the last few weeks.”

ADL attorney Barbara Wahl, noting that the deposition is a public record which might fall into the hands of newspapers, directed Suall to refuse to answer questions about Rosenberg and invoked the New York “Shield” law, which protects bona fide journalists from having to reveal confidential sources of information. Suall, of course, was in no sense whatever a bona fide journalist. The irony of using the “Shield” law to keep information out of the pages of newspapers needs little comment.

By the late 1980s Rosenberg had become well known among neo-Nazi and Ku Klux Klan leaders who, surprisingly, both suspected and tolerated him to a certain extent. Among his closest associates was veteran government informant Roy E. Frankhauser, former Grand

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<sup>212</sup> “Nabbed With Weapons,” *Daily News* (8 October 1981), n.p.

<sup>213</sup> *Lyndon LaRouche vs. National Broadcasting Company*, Civil Action 84-0136-A, U. S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia (1984).

Dragon of the Pennsylvania Ku Klux Klan. Unknown to Rosenberg, Frankhauser routinely recorded his conversations with him. Patsey Sims, in her 1978 book, *The Klan*, also mentioned Rosenberg as an alleged ADL agent.<sup>214</sup> My own conversations with Rosenberg and his associates settled the issue for me.

This represents a clear-cut case of the Anti-Defamation League allowing one of its long-time undercover operatives to pose as a right-wing paramilitary extremist for an unsuspecting television station attempting to produce a legitimate documentary. Even worse, when this was discovered, the ADL said nothing about it - no admissions, no apologies. One might wonder just how often the ADL has done this. I suspect there have been more cases like this. This is but one more reason why journalists and others should be extremely wary of this organization.

## Hate Groups in America

It was not until Judge William Webster became its director in 1978 that the FBI bowed to political pressures from the White House and elsewhere and substantially stepped up its cooperation with the ADL. In 1980 the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) contracted with the Anti-Defamation League to produce a report on extreme right “hate groups” for a \$20,000 fee. The ADL hardly needed the fee, but was thrilled at having the implied endorsement of a government agency for one of its reports. This did not work out so well, however, for after the report, entitled *Hate Groups in America*,<sup>215</sup> was completed the USCCR rejected it and declined to publish it on several grounds, including the degrading and defamatory attitude expressed by the ADL against its critics and adversaries.

A March 1982 letter from Paul Alexander, acting general counsel of the USCCR, to John Hope, III, acting staff director, gave the following reasons:

I would like to raise several policy considerations. The ADL report does not in any way resemble a standard USCCR report. It is not a dispassionate attempt to present a balanced accounting of facts. The commission previously has had no difficulty in publishing reports containing defamatory information when it was verifiable and necessary to the report. Our Voting Rights Report is the most recent example. In that report, however, we did not find it necessary to mix epithets and emotionally-laden labels with the facts. The ADL report is rank with epithets and labels that only distort the factual accountings of the activities of the KKK and similar organizations.

The liberal use of hyperbolic epithets throughout the ADL draft sets a tone that probably precludes correction through simple adjectival laundering. The alleged inaccuracies and misrepresentations noted by the respondents present very serious problems... If [they] are at all representative, the report probably contains many inaccuracies. It is doubtful that the report could survive a source-check as there does not appear to be sufficient data to support the allegations.<sup>216</sup>

Alexander further noted that the ADL report “bordered on jingoism.” Like other ADL publications on the people and groups that it targets, its tone is one that encourages contempt for the civil liberties of its subjects and treats them in a dehumanizing manner—behaviors that the ADL purports to oppose.

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<sup>214</sup> Patsey Sims, *The Klan* (New York: Stein & Day, 1978), 334.

<sup>215</sup> Anti-Defamation League, *Hate Groups in America: A Record of Bigotry and Violence* (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1980).

<sup>216</sup> Paul Alexander, Acting General Counsel, Letter to John Hope, III, Acting Staff Director, United States Commission on Civil Rights, 8 March 1982.

When the USCCR declined to publish the report the ADL published it on its own, complete with “epithets, emotionally-laden labels” and “jingoism.” It has now appeared in several editions and is widely circulated to journalists and police agencies.

## ***“Illegal Tax Protester Information Book”***

Yet another example of an ADL publication raising serious questions about its credibility came to light when the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) published its “Illegal Tax Protester Information Book” in 1985, prepared by Intelligence Analyst Ruth E. Schweizer.<sup>217</sup> In fact, the book largely consisted of whole sections lifted from ADL reports, including “Extremism On The Right: A Handbook,” published two years earlier.<sup>218</sup>

So full of inaccuracies and innuendo was this book that when its existence became known to some of the organizations mentioned in it they threatened legal action against the IRS. In a letter dated 25 August 1986, A. W. Perretta, Tax Law Specialist of the Public Services Branch of the IRS wrote to Lois Peterson, secretary of the right-wing Liberty Lobby organization, stating:

This is in further response to your inquiries concerning Document 7072 (1-86), Illegal Tax Protester Information book.

The office that originated Document 7072 (1-86) has sent a memorandum to those offices having the document in their possession to destroy the document immediately.<sup>219</sup>

## **Terrorism and Extremism School**

In yet another case, a manual on “extremist groups,” obviously compiled from ADL sources, was circulated at a “Terrorism and Extremism School” attended by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) at the Lodge of the Four Seasons in the Lake of the Ozarks region of Missouri during February 8th & 9th, 1984.

The manual, prepared by BATF, in addition to including obvious and admitted “paramilitary” organizations such as Aryan Nations under the heading of “Paramilitary Groups Nationwide,” also listed groups who conduct no paramilitary activities whatsoever, such as the John Birch Society and Liberty Lobby.

The implications of an organization being falsely characterized as “paramilitary” can be chilling. Members and supporters may be subjected to harassment, surveillance and intimidation by law enforcement. Any encounter with police, such as at a routine traffic stop, can quickly escalate into a serious confrontation based on that stereotype and the expectations engendered by it. This is a stigma fraught with danger.

After a number of organizations complained (often through their attorney) the BATF admitted the error and withdrew the list. A letter dated 28 September 1984 from James W. Elder, Supervisor of the St. Louis office of the BATF, to conference attendees said:

In February 8-9, you attended a state conference for Law Enforcement on Motorcycle Groups, Extremism, and Terrorism at Lake Ozark, Missouri. This conference was sponsored by the Missouri Department of Public Safety and the Missouri Police Chiefs Association....

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<sup>217</sup> *Illegal Tax Protester Information Book, Document 7072 (1-86)*, prepared by Intelligence Analyst Ruth E. Schweizer, Washington, DC: Internal Revenue Service Office of Intelligence, 1986).

<sup>218</sup> Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith, *Extremism on the Right* (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1983).

<sup>219</sup> *Letter*, A. W. Perretta, Internal Revenue Service, to Lois Peterson, Liberty Lobby (25 August 1986).

As part of (our) presentation, we provided attendees, including you and members of your organization, with a handout to provide general background information on extremist groups.

The list....could erroneously be viewed as reflecting a law enforcement interest by the [BATF] in all of these groups. The [BATF] has no evidence these groups are “paramilitary” in the general sense of that term.

We, therefore, would ask that you disregard the paramilitary caption, and refrain from any redistribution of this material.<sup>220</sup>

## **New Mexico Grandmothers Targeted**

A particularly shocking and dangerous example of this kind of guilt-by-association occurred when two New Mexico women found themselves suspected of being terrorists after appearing on a radio talk show where they criticized the federal government and the United Nations. Kay Stone and Jean Vallance, both grandmothers, were investigated by New Mexico Department of Public Safety (State Police) after appearing on KINN radio in Alamogordo in June, 1998.

State police Lt. Bill Bowers called the station and spoke with talk show host Mike Shinaberry, who was asked about the couple and Maude Rathgeber, the Otereo Republican party chairwomen, who had also been on the show in the past. According to Shinaberry:

It bothered me that anyone would be the subject of an investigation simply because they got on the radio and said what they believed... None of them ever came close to espousing violence.<sup>221</sup>

According to *The Dallas Morning News*, which covered the story from the beginning:

Maj. Michael Francis, another state police officer...said the inquiries into Ms. Stone and Ms. Vallance sprang from the activities of a Domestic Terrorism Task Force, comprising local, state and federal agents.<sup>222</sup>

The two women were also investigated by the military officials at a nearby Air Force Base:

Six days later, on June 17, Mrs. Vallance said she received a phone call from Special Agent Amanda Finerty, from the office of special investigations [OSI] at Holloman Air Force Base.

Mrs. Vallance, a retired nurse who is married to a civilian employee at Holloman, said Agent Finerty asked about her religious affiliation and whether anyone was “planning something” against German pilots [stationed at the base].

All of this came about by the issuance of a manual entitled *The Extreme Right: An Overview* containing in large part material from the Anti-Defamation League to law enforcement agencies. According to news sources:

The 73-page document included profiles of fringe groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, as well as skinheads and extremists who believe each race should have its own land in the United States. Lumped into the manual’s description of terrorists, racists and other pariahs is an excerpt on the so-called “wise use” movement, which advocates more local control over federally owned lands.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Letter, James W. Elder, Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, St. Louis, MO, 28 September 1984.

<sup>221</sup> Scott Parks, “NM Women Worry They’re On Secret List ‘Radicals’”, *Dallas Morning News* (13 September 1998).

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

Shinaberry was spurred to investigate this manual. Speaking again with Lt. Bill Bowers he was told “that the federal government had asked state police to create a -- he used the term ‘intelligence database’ -- to make lists of people who might be radicals.” He also noted that the manual suggests an anti-government continuum of groups that apparently run from the most peaceful to those with a reputation for violence, with no distinction made between them. As it happened the contents of the manual were leaked to the public after the police inquiries into the two women.

Ranchers and loggers erupted in anger at the manual’s juxtaposition of the wise use movement with Nazi and Klan groups....Local government officials, concerned about the impact of federal policies on rural economies, also objected to the manual.

“They labeled us as dissidents when all we went to do is participate in decisions about how federal lands are used,” said Adam Polley, a Catron County official in western New Mexico.<sup>224</sup>

Darren White, the Governor’s cabinet secretary for the state police, apologized for the manual and issued a written apology dated 9 July 1998:

“I recognize that across New Mexico thousands of farmers, ranchers, miners, loggers and others are committed to preserving a way of life free from unnecessary regulation,” he wrote. “I believe free speech and the spoken word sustain our freedom.”<sup>225</sup>

The ADL-based manual and others like it continue to be circulated among law enforcement officials nationwide, even though its effect is to target ordinary American citizens on the basis of the values, opinions and beliefs.

## ADL and Book Censorship

Accounts of ADL book censorship and suppression are prolific so one almost does not know where to begin on this subject. The following example, however, illustrates the fact that many people in the Jewish community have a dim view of the ADL’s high-handed tactics.

In May 1992 the San Diego School Board was in the process of selecting new textbooks. Among those that were being considered was the text, *World History: The Human Experiment*, by Mounic Faran and Andrea Karls, published by a division of Macmillan/McGraw-Hill. The book had been adopted in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana and New Mexico. In April, the 19 teachers who volunteered to review the various titles submitted their selections, and the Faran-Karls book was their top choice.

At the meeting at which the committee of teachers gathered to discuss their choices, many were surprised when several local residents, who identified themselves as representatives of B’nai B’rith’s Anti Defamation League, vehemently objected to their first choice. The ADL’s regional director in San Diego, Morris Casuto, charged that the texts “leans over backward to provide a flattering portrait of Islamic civilization.”<sup>226</sup>

The ADL lobbied the school board heavily, to the point where several members were on the verge of caving in just to put the matter to rest. The teachers thought differently:

Unlike the school board, the teachers had no qualms about adopting the textbook, so long as they were satisfied that it was fair, unbiased, and accurate. Several [said]

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<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Andrea W. Lorenz, “Anti-Defamation League Backs Down Over Textbook Dispute,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, (July 1992), 12-13.

that although they thought some of the ADL's criticisms were valid, many were "petty" and "nit-picking."<sup>227</sup>

As the word got around that the ADL was conducting a campaign to have the book withdrawn, letters supporting the text began pouring in the Superintendent's office. Eventually, a group of Jewish scholars had their say in the matter:

Four prominent Jewish scholars of Middle East History, Don Peretz of the State University of New York at Binghamton, Joel Beinín of Stanford University, Zachary Lochman of Harvard University and Norton Nezvinsky of Connecticut State University, wrote to Superintendent Payzant expressing anger over the ADL's tactics. Professor Nezvinsky wrote: "Frankly and simply stated, I am antagonized as a scholar, teacher and Jew by the charges made against this book by the ADL."<sup>228</sup>

A number of other academics came to the book's defense. This included G. Simon Harak, a religious studies professor at Fairfield University, who wrote to Superintendent Payzant:

The book fairly presents the many views which encompass the whole human experience. For those who are accustomed to thinking of their own view alone as dominant, this can be threatening. I believe, however, that those of us in education have a larger duty to our students than to cater to special interest groups.<sup>229</sup>

In the face of so much outrage from teachers the ADL informed the School Board that they had decided to withdraw their protest. The Board of Education then voted 5-0 to include the book in their curriculum.

## **ADL vs. Chicago Public Library**

Another case of attempted ADL censorship occurred at the Chicago Public Library in 1990 when Social Sciences & History department librarian David L. Williams prepared an annotated bibliography on the Middle East for library distribution. The bibliography offered 150 listings from the library's extensive collection on Middle East affairs.

Shortly after its appearance, criticism began coming in that the bibliography tilted toward the Palestinian side and against the Israelis. Then the ADL got involved.

When the issue came to the attention of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the ADL made a concerted effort to have the bibliography revised. They appealed first to Cindy Pritzker, President of the Chicago Public Library Board of Directors. Pritzker referred the complaint to the library administration which addressed the ADL's concerns directly but indecisively.<sup>230</sup>

The ADL claimed that the bibliography contained too many books that were written from a pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel perspective. The ADL demanded that the bibliography be revised to suit their prejudices which:

started a fire storm among the library staff, many of whom regarded the ADL's efforts as an attempt to censor David Williams, the bibliographer.<sup>231</sup>

The library offered a compromise to the ADL. It offered to include three titles approved by the ADL and an ADL book catalog in the bibliography. This was not enough for the ADL, and they stepped up their attacks on David Williams, accusing him of past membership in a pro-Palestinian organization.

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Ted C. Fishman, "Balancing The Books," *New City* (March 15-March 28, 1990), 6-7.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

[Chicago] *Sun-Times* columnist Dennis Byrne wrote two columns on the issue, comparing the ADL with Joseph McCarthy, and claiming that it resorted to political channels to pressure the library.

The Chicago chapter of the National Writer's Union...send out a press release condemning the ADL and the library deploring the Chicago Public Library's attempt "to suppress...the work of David Williams" and saying "We condemn an attempt to compromise the integrity of a librarian's work through behind-the-scenes manipulation and administrative fiat."<sup>232</sup>

The issue was finally resolved when Williams' revised the bibliography to include twenty-nine of thirty-six titles suggested by the ADL (nine of which were already in the first version). He maintains his objection that an outside group was allowed to pressure the library in this manner. The lesson was not lost on many Chicagoans, however. James Duff, in a letter to the *Sun-Times*, commented:

...intellectual freedom specifies other obligations for libraries, in addition to vigilance against censorship...librarians have a role distinctly different from that of authors, professors or columnists. As defined by the American Library Association: "Intellectual Freedom...promotes no causes, furthers no movements and favors no viewpoint. It only provides for free access to all expression of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored."<sup>233</sup>

Many people continue to see the ADL as a "civil liberties" or "civil rights" organization even though it engages in compromising activities such as this. In point of fact the ADL is a powerful ethnic special interest lobby. The fact that it occasionally engages in activities that involve legitimate civil liberties or civil rights concerns should not draw attention away from its essential nature.

## Canadian "ADL" Loses Libel Case

It is a standard joke that if you don't like what the Anti-Defamation League says about you, you can always sue them and take on their huge legal staff and almost unlimited resources. Several lawsuits against the ADL for libel in the United States have failed, either because the plaintiffs ran out of money or the court upheld the status of the ADL as a news gathering organization therefore preventing sufficient discovery.

In Canada, however, which has more strict libel laws than the United States, false charges of anti-Semitism brought B'nai B'rith Canada and its League for Human Rights, the approximate equivalent of the ADL in the United States, a libel action that cost the organization \$400,000. The case, brought by Winnipeg teacher and former Progressive Conservative candidate Luba Fedorkiw in 1987, was the largest defamation award in Canadian history.<sup>234</sup>

The League falsely accused Fedorkiw of anti-Semitism and attempted to ruin her career by claiming that she had said an opposing candidate "was controlled by Jews." According to news accounts:

In its verdict, the four-woman, two-man jury found the B'nai B'rith maliciously responsible for writing and circulating minutes of an internal May, 1984, meeting. Those minutes alleged that Fedorkiw was engaged in "Jew-baiting" in the months leading up to the 1984 election.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Mary Jane MacLennan, "Fedorkiw Wins \$400,000 for Slurs," *The Winnipeg Sun* (26 November 1987), 5.

<sup>235</sup> David Roberts, "B'nai B'rith Guilty of Libel, Jury Finds," *Winnipeg Free Press* (26 November 1987).



When B'nai B'rith's allegations had been published, "anti-fascist" groups began a major harassment campaign. Fedorkiw began receiving obscene telephone calls, a swastika was painted on her campaign office and many of her political supporters withdrew.

Ms. Fedorkiw said that publicity over the allegations "exposed her to scorn and caused her to withdraw from public life."<sup>236</sup> This, of course, is exactly what a charge of anti-Semitism is supposed to do. This time it happened to someone whose resolve to fight back couldn't be stifled.

It would be interesting to actually know how much of the ADL's material is false. One cannot rely upon the potential victims because they might have reason to lie about their "links and ties." A ritual defamation is a terrible process to go through. In one case a Colorado libertarian protested an ADL misstatement of fact that could have made him subject to law enforcement surveillance and defamation and marginalization in the community he lived.

### ***"Armed and Dangerous"***

In 1994 the ADL published *Armed and Dangerous: Militias Take Aim At The Federal Government*. It's a typical ADL report, much along the lines of *Hate Groups In America*. The principle rhetorical tool is "links and ties," guilt by association.

Duncan Philp, a Colorado libertarian was amazed to read in *Armed and Dangerous* that he had been "linked and tied" to The LaPorte Church of Christ, a church that publishes anti-Jewish and racist literature.<sup>237</sup> Philp, who is curious about political movements, had a history of working with the Fort Collins, Colorado, black community and took part in civil rights marches in honor of Martin Luther King.<sup>238</sup> He was also head of Concerned Citizens on Police Matters, a group that monitors police conduct towards minorities and others in Fort Collins.<sup>239</sup>

Based on this record, there is no evidence that Philp is a racist or hates Jews. Philp complained to the ADL by telephone in December 1994. Jill Kahn Meltzer, Associate Director of the ADL's Legal Affairs Department, wrote to Philp:

You have communicated your concern with the following statement in the report, p.5," . . . Duncan Philp, who has been a member of Pete Peters' LaPorte Church of Christ. . . ." Specifically, you take issue with the statement that you are a member of that church.

We...have taken steps to insure that this statement in the report will be amended in all future printings.<sup>240</sup>

This was not the end of Philp's problems, however. Misinformation gets passed around and another false statement appeared under the authorship of Morris Dees of the Southern Poverty Law Center, who portrayed Philp as a militia leader and a racist in his new book, *Gathering Storm: America's Militia Threat*:

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<sup>236</sup> Geoffrey York, "B'nai B'rith Won't Change Despite Judgment," *Globe and Mail* (27 November 1987).

<sup>237</sup> Anti-Defamation League, *Armed and Dangerous: Militias Take Aim at the Federal Government, An ADL Fact-Finding Report*. (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1994), 5.

<sup>238</sup> Michelle Doyle, "Participants Help Keep The Dream Alive: Martin Luther King Jr. Week Ends With Memorial Service and March," *The Rocky Mountain Collegian* (29 January 1990), 1.

<sup>239</sup> Daphne Richards, "Citizens Group Works to get Watchdog for Police Activities," *The Rocky Mountain Collegian* (13 October 1989), 8

<sup>240</sup> Jill Kahn Meltzer, Associate Director, Legal Affairs Department, Anti-Defamation League, to Duncan Philp (12 December 1994).

In Colorado, Duncan Philp, who was closely aligned with Pete Peters, formed the White Patriots Militia in Fort Collins...<sup>241</sup>

Phelp, denied ever having been a militia leader, member or racist. He threatened to sue Morris Dees and the SPLC:

A Fort Collins man Tuesday threatened to sue nationally known civil rights attorney Morris Dees, who calls him a racist militia leader in his new book....Duncan Philp said he isn't a leader, or even a member, of any militia group.<sup>242</sup>

With resources exceeding even the ADL's, Dees had little to fear from a costly lawsuit from Duncan Philp and the statement still appears in current editions of the Dees' book.

## **The ADL and the Christian Right**

The Anti-Defamation League has committed defamation. There is no other conclusion to be reached after reading its new report, *The Religious Right: The Assault on Tolerance and Pluralism in America*. It is sad that an organization with a proud history of fairness should have descended to this kind of character assassination and name calling. Mona Charen.<sup>243</sup>

In my twelve Senate years I worked with many of the 'Religious Right.' They were active in the cause of Soviet Jewry (many Pentecostals and other Christians couldn't leave the Soviet Union either). They were fervent supporters for the State of Israel and we worked together often. Among the leadership of Conservative Christians I never experienced even a hint of anti-Semitism. Indeed, it was quite the opposite. From my experience I know their report to be ill-founded. Regrettably it will do more harm than good. Former U. S. Senator Rudy Boschwitz.<sup>244</sup>

An attempted political assassination....Instead of debating the issues like a gentleman, it [the ADL] stoops to implications of anti-Semitism to discredit a legitimate voice in the values debate. Don Feder, columnist, *Boston Herald*.<sup>245</sup>

These three statements were in response to the ADL's release of a new ritual defamation, this time against the Christian right: *The Religious Right: The Assault on Tolerance and Pluralism in America*.<sup>246</sup> Most religious right leaders were stunned because, as Senator Boschwitz alluded, they were among the most fervent supporters of Jewish interests. Not a word out of them about the civil rights of the Palestinians combined with an all-encompassing fascination for the Holy Land.

The ADL report claimed that the Christian right "movement leaders have demonstrated a disturbing insensitivity to Jews and Jewish concerns," that its agenda expresses "anti-Jewish and extremist sentiments," that the leaders make anti-Jewish pronouncements" and that their rhetoric is "reminiscent of traditional anti-Semitic thinking."

The Christian Coalition was understandably outraged at the "fabrications, half-truths, innuendo and guilt by association" in the report and responded with a report of its own, in which it noted that "the ADL never contacted the Christian Coalition to get its response to

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<sup>241</sup> Morris Dees, *Gathering Storm: America's Militia Threat*. (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 90.

<sup>242</sup> Kevin Flynn, "Man Threatens To Sue Over 'Militia' Label," *Rocky Mountain News* (1 May 1996), 18.

<sup>243</sup> Mona Charen, "ADL Playing Upon Old Fears?," *Washington Times* (7 July 1994), A17.

<sup>244</sup> Senator Rudy Boschwitz Op-Ed submitted to the New York Times (25 July 1994).

<sup>245</sup> Don Feder, "ADL Attacks Discredits Organization," *Boston Herald* (16 June 1994).

<sup>246</sup> .David Cantor, "The Religious Right: The Assault On Tolerance and Pluralism in America," (New York: Anti-Defamation League), 1994.

the unfounded charges.” Their counterattack was unusually strong and unlike the usual pleading denials victims offer when they are called names by the ADL. They said:

On June 9, 1994, the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith, an organization created to fight defamation, released a report that.... accuses numerous religious conservative organizations and leaders of anti-Semitism and bigotry. In so doing, the ADL itself has committed defamation.

The ADL frequently resorts to the very same kinds of guilt-by-association lines of argument patented by virulent anti-Semites.

The ADL has displayed neither tolerance nor respect. Instead it has engaged in a partisan campaign of innuendo, half-truths and outright falsehoods.<sup>247</sup>

The Christian Coalition observed that although the ADL has refused to back off from their overall attack, it did engage in some strategic backpedaling on some factual errors. A review of Elliot Abrams, *Faith Or Fear: How Jews Can Survive in Christian America*,<sup>248</sup> appearing in the Winter 1998 issue of *Issues Of The American Council For Judaism* had this to say about the controversy:

Jews who believe that evangelical Christians are likely to be anti-Semites, and that Christian religiosity is associated with anti-Semitism, are indulging in prejudice in the dictionary definition of the term.

Among the more egregious examples of errors in the ADL’s analysis which are cited is the criticism of the Rev. Pat Robertson for failing to denounce the Louisiana neo-Nazi David Duke. The ADL’s [Abraham] Foxman had to write to Robertson to apologize, admitting that “You did denounce Duke on your 700 Club broadcast...three days before the election.

The ADL report also declared that Robertson had said Jews were “spiritually deaf and spiritually blind.” Foxman acknowledged in his letter of apology that, “We have discovered you did not make these statements.”<sup>249</sup>

On 2 August 1994, 75 notable Jewish Americans signed a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* which condemned the ADL for “engaging in defamation of its own” in its attack on the religious right. They said:

We are a group of Jews who wish to make it known that we reject the implications of [the ADL] report and deplore its publication...<sup>250</sup>

Among those who signed the advertisement were Gary Pollard, Phillip Arnoff, and Fred Ziedman, who at that time were all active in the ADL. Pollard was a southwest regional director for the ADL. He was forced to resign his position.<sup>251</sup>

While it might initially seem that the ADL’s report was an exercise in overstatement and inherently self-defeating, there is method to this apparent irresponsibility. The social costs of merely being called anti-Semitic, whether or not its objectively true, are so serious that most victims eventually cave in. There are compelling reasons to make peace, whatever that entails, so the stigma will go away. This happened in April 1995 when Ralph Reed spoke before an ADL meeting in Washington, DC:

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<sup>247</sup> Christian Coalition, *ADL Report*, (Washington, DC: Christian Coalition, 1993).

<sup>248</sup> Elliot Abrams, *Faith or Fear: How Jews Can Survive in Christian America*, (New York: The Free Press, 1998).

<sup>249</sup> Allen C. Brownfeld, “Only As A Religious Community Is Jewish Survival Possible,” *Issues Of The American Council For Judaism* (Winter 1998).

<sup>250</sup> *New York Times* (2 August 1994).

<sup>251</sup> Op cit.

Ralph Reed, executive directory of the Christian Coalition, last night offered an olive branch to Jewish leaders by pledging to educate his constituency about gentile persecution of and insensitivity to Jewry.

Citing the Holocaust, Easter Sunday pogroms, ghettos and the “Christ-Killer slur,” he said, “We will never forget what you endured as a people.”<sup>252</sup>

ADL National Director Abraham Foxman told the meeting of 200 Jewish leaders that Mr. Reed’s talk was “courageous” and marked a “significant step” in a new beginning...<sup>253</sup> The ADL’s hostility remains, however, and no amount of contrition can erase it. Matthew Dorf of the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* observed 18 months later that:

ADL’s national director [Abraham] Foxman said the Christian Coalition’s influence “could be” dangerous down the road. But, he said, “we will keep fighting in the courts and in public to minimize any threat.”<sup>254</sup>

## **ADL Campaign Against Internet Freedom**

From its earliest years the Anti-Defamation League has been hostile to the idea of an uncensored forum for bona fide freedom of expression. In its continual campaign to keep what it regards as “hostile” criticism of Jewish institutions or individuals from public expression. The internet provides a special challenge to censors of this kind. In 1990, for example, the ADL attacked Prodigy Service for allowing what it called “anti-Semitic” messages online. A major computing magazine editorialized:

We dispute the tactics of the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith (ADL) in its attack on the Prodigy Service, which the league claims failed to censor anti-Semitic messages on an open-access bulletin board system. The ADL presented a sample inflammatory message to the media to point out the necessity for censorship of on-line services. In fact, the same message was submitted for posting and rejected by Prodigy 15 times in October 1990. Ironically, Prodigy has come under fire from the press for censoring its messages.<sup>255</sup>

Of particular interest to the ADL were internet messages disputing holocaust claims. According to Debra Nussbaum Cohen of the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, the following was posted:

Most of the exterminationist survivors’ tales have long been demolished as fantasy and exaggeration.

The Holocaust itself is really an edifice, a monument so to speak, to the naive gullibility of the world in which even the most outrageous survivor’s tales and the falsest testimonies are totally believed without the slightest doubt.<sup>256</sup>

This is a statement that would obviously upset and outrage Jews, many of whom lost relatives and friends in the Holocaust. Their anger is understandable, but the way to combat noxious speech or expression in a free society is by debate and discussion and not

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<sup>252</sup> Larry Witham, “Christian Activist Tries to Mend Ties With Jews: ADL Chief Welcomes ‘New Beginning,’” *Washington Times* (4 April 1995).

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> Matthew Dorf, “Opposing Goals: Christian Coalition’s Political Muscle Concerns Jews,” *Washington Jewish Week* (14 September 1995).

<sup>255</sup> Michael D. Espindle, “Up Front,” *Home-Office Computing* (January 1992).

<sup>256</sup> Debra Nussbaum Cohen, “ADL Charges Computer Service With Condoning Anti-Semitism,” *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* (25 October 1991).

censorship. Defending the principles of freedom of expression, Prodigy spokesman Steven Hein said:

The free and open nature of our bulletin board systems means that we will post notes on controversial subjects, to which some people may object at times. That is the essence of the lively and vital exchange of views which have come to characterize interactive electronic media.<sup>257</sup>

## **ADL Internet Blocking Software**

A major ADL threat to internet freedom began to materialize by 1997. The organization had developed “blocking software” that would prevent internet users from accessing prohibited internet sites. To support their case for the necessity of such software the ADL claimed that anti-Semites were now utilizing the internet to promote their views, as were millions of other Americans, and the most flagrant examples of race and Jew-hatred were cited as though they were typical. According to Abraham Foxman, the ADL’s national Director:

Shrewd bigots of all kinds are rushing to use the enormous power of this new communication, and we must match and surpass them. We must continue to expose them, to hold them up to public scrutiny and to counter their messages of hate.<sup>258</sup>

Barry Steinhardt, associate director of the American Civil Liberties Union observed that, “We of course have always believed that the best response to bad speech is more speech.”<sup>259</sup>

What is not generally appreciated about the ADL blocking software is that it does not merely keep an internet user from reaching but will turn them over to the ADL, presumably to be included in its massive enemies lists. Mere curiosity can bring potentially serious consequences. According to an ADL press release:

The League will compile a special list of hate sites to be embedded in the Cyber Patrol software. Internet users with ADL’s Cyber Patrol who attempt to access hate sites will be directed to ADL’s own Web site, [www.adl.org](http://www.adl.org), with educational content devoted to informing people about prejudice and hate.<sup>260</sup>

## **Hatewatch Contradicts the ADL**

On 16 January 2001 the website “Hatewatch,” established in 1995 by David Goldman, a law librarian at Harvard University, to combat right-wing “hate groups” on the internet, folded. Goldman originally believed that the World Wide Web - the internet - would be “an enormous boost to hate groups seeking to recruit new followers.” This theme was echoed by alarmist anti-racist Watchdog groups across the board, hysterical over the prospect that values, opinions and beliefs other than their own might get a substantial hearing. The ADL and Simon Wiesenthal Center both produced censoring software to block opposing viewpoints.

In spite of proclamations to the contrary, however, this has not been the case. Racist organizations, who have extremely limited constituencies in the first place, were generally unable to expand them even with the help of the internet. Goldman admits this in a goodbye letter.

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<sup>257</sup> Op Cit.

<sup>258</sup> Michael Fletcher, “Web Sees Hate Sites Spread,” *The Washington Post* (24 October 1997).

<sup>259</sup> Op Cit.

<sup>260</sup> Anti-Defamation League, Press Release, “ADL and the Learning Company Develop Educational Filter Software to Combat Hate on the Internet.” (16 December 1997).

Now, in 2001, the news is much more encouraging than any of us expected. Hate groups have done an extremely poor job of using the Internet to increase their membership. They have utterly failed to gain widespread acceptance for their belief that bigotry, hate and violence are viable responses to human diversity.<sup>261</sup>

Goldman, of course, adds that “this is not to say that we no longer have cause for concern.” In my view, however, anti-racist Watchdog organizations have seriously misjudged the appeal of right-wing extremism to the average American and particularly armed violence. The militias and patriot groups have failed to produce the wave of mass resistance that Watchdog groups were expecting (and perhaps hoping for) and bona fide racist and neo-nazi organizations have remained very small and ineffective. Most of the violence that has occurred has been by disaffected individuals and not the product of organized groups.

This fact has been known for several years, although one would not get this impression from Watchdog propaganda. In the late 1990s press reports began to reflect the reality of the situation. Jack McDewitt, a professor of criminal justice at Northwestern University in Boston observed that “more than 95% of hate crimes are committed by those with no hate group ties.”<sup>262</sup>

Superficial appearances to the contrary, the Internet is a negligible aid to any of these movements and Watchdog groups, including the ADL, were misrepresenting the facts when they said that they were.

## **The Megiddo Project**

In October 1999 the FBI issued one of the most bizarre publications in the history of the ADL’s penetration of the agency. *Project Megiddo*, named after an ancient Israeli battleground associated with Armageddon, outlined a massive supposed conspiracy between believers in “Christian Identity” doctrine, militias, patriot groups, tax protesters, neo-nazis, Ku Klux Klan and other widely disparate right-wing groups to commit massive violence and mayhem on a national at the stroke of midnight on 31 December 1999. The 40-page book was designed to “heighten awareness” among state and local law enforcement agencies to the threat from this sector of the American political spectrum.<sup>263</sup> Not uncoincidentally, the ADL released the same report on the same day.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Southern Poverty Law Center**

- There is no zeal blinder than that which is impaired with the love of justice against offenders. Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones*, 1749.
- There is always a type of man who says he loves his fellow men, and expects to make a living at it. Edgar Watson Howe, *Ventures in Common Sense*, 1919.
- The weakness of the fanatic is that those whom he fights have a secret hold upon him, and to this weakness he and his group will finally succumb. Paul Tillich.

<sup>261</sup> David Goldman, “Hatewatch Says Goodbye,” ([www.hatewatch.org](http://www.hatewatch.org)), 16 January 2001.

<sup>262</sup> Arlene Levinson, “Hate Groups, Crimes Said Rare in US,” *Associated Press*, (8 July 1999).

<sup>263</sup> Kevin Johnson, “FBI: Militias A Threat At Millennium,” *USA Today* (20 October 1999).

- The variety of repressive tactics includes indicting activists on criminal charges, using infiltrators to spy on or disrupt groups, physically attacking members and offices, harassing members and potential recruits by threatening their access to jobs and schools, spreading false information about groups and people, and anything else that makes it more difficult for the movement to put its views before relevant audiences. Frederick D. Miller, on *Social Movements in the Sixties and Seventies* (Jo Freeman, ed.), 1983.
- The most reckless and treacherous of all theorists is he who professes to let facts speak for themselves, who keeps in the background the part he has played, perhaps unconsciously, in selecting and grouping them, and in suggesting the argument *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. Alfred Marshall, *The Present Position in Economics*, 1885.

In February 1992 *USA Today* reported that Klanwatch, a division of Morris Dees' Southern Poverty Law Center, had identified a total of "346 white supremacy groups operating in the USA, up an alarming 27% from the past year." Included were 97 Ku Klux Klan and 203 alleged neo-Nazi groups.<sup>264</sup>

What Klanwatch apparently did was list any group they could find mention of, including groups only rumored to exist. These included the large number of "post office box chapters" maintained by Klan and skinhead organizations. Some Christian Identity "ministries" consist only one person and a mailing list and many "patriot groups" consist of but three or four friends.

They also listed many groups whose actual affiliation is neither KKK nor neo-Nazi and who would argue with the designation of "white supremacy." In short, they misleadingly padded their list. When the SPLC releases their list, either in print or on the internet, it fails to contain actual addresses that might be checked by journalists or researchers. Several listings refer to "unknown group" and the name of a city or town.

This writer publishes an annual directory (with addresses) of the American Right<sup>265</sup> as well as a companion directory of the American Left, and can attest to this irresponsible inflation of figures by Klanwatch. In terms of viable groups, i.e., groups that are objectively significant, are actually functioning and have more than a handful of real members - not post office box "groups" or two-man local chapters, the actual figure is about 50 - a far cry from 346!

It's not atypical for a couple of guys to begin a "new" Ku Klux Klan by photocopying some flyers and renting PO boxes in several cities to create the image of a viable movement. Most inquiries to these PO boxes go unanswered or are returned when the rent expires. In point of fact, a large number of "groups" in both Klanwatch files and my directories are either unconfirmed or they consist of a single individual.

One example is the Farmer's Liberation Army which received considerable press after the Oklahoma City bombing. Subsequent news accounts established that this "army" was the creation of one man - Keith Shive - and had no other "members." The SPLC still lists it as a "hate group." Unfortunately, this kind of exaggeration is typical.

A good example of SPLC disinformation occurred in June 1998 when SPLC spokesman Mark Potok responded to a newspaper request for background information on three accused cop killers. According to news reports

Alan "Monte" Pilon, one of the men suspected of killing a Cortez police officer and wounding three other officers, is a member of a local militia group linked to an extreme right-wing religion, a militia expert said Thursday.

Pilon, 30, of Dove Creek, is a member of the Four Corners Patriots, according to Mark Potok, spokesman for the Southern Poverty Law Center, a nonprofit

<sup>264</sup> Mark Mayfield, "Hate Groups Increase - As Do Their Crimes," *USA Today* (20 February 1992).

<sup>265</sup> Laird Wilcox, *Guide to the American Right: Directory and Bibliography* (Olathe, KS: Editorial Research Service, 1998).

organization that monitors hate groups. The Four Corners Patriots is an underground militia linked to the Christian Identity religion, a faith Potok described as “viciously racist and anti-Semitic.”<sup>266</sup>

Potok further claimed to have been tracking the group since 1995 and estimated the group had 25 members. These claims, along with this detailed information, clearly gives the impression that the SPLC knows what it’s talking about. Potok’s claims were picked up by wire services and repeated nationwide, including NBC *Nightly News* with Tom Brokaw

One small problem: There apparently is no “Four Corners Patriots” organization. It doesn’t exist. Nobody in the broader militia and patriot movement had ever heard of them.<sup>267</sup> My own efforts to pin down the organization were without success. Even local law enforcement couldn’t vouch for their existence and no evidence has developed that any of the suspects ever belonged to a militia organization.

The interplay between the SPLC and the media that depends upon them for information is complex and corrupt. Potok, a former writer for *USA Today*, was a consistent public relations agent for the SPLC during his tenure at the newspaper. Apparently pleased by Potok’s performance, SPLC recruited him into their direct employ where he engages in an endless litany of “linking and tying” people with one infamous doctrine or another.

Dees is the classic example of an opportunist waging a holy war against unpopular foes and profiting from it, both financially and ideologically. His primary talents have always been in the area of fundraising and promotion. According to a 1989 article in the *Atlanta Constitution*:

In 1972, he raised \$24 million as George McGovern’s finance director, then used the campaign’s donor list of 700,000 liberals for the law center. (He also recommended Richard Viguerie, the conservative direct-mail whiz, to friends in the Wallace campaign.) The law center now raises more than \$5 million a year and has a \$34 million endowment [in 1989]...

The harshest critic is Millard Farmer, the Atlanta death penalty lawyer who teamed up with Mr. Dees before ending their relationship with a lawsuit. “It’s a Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker operation,” he says flatly. “You read his letters and you’d think he’s on his last penny.”<sup>268</sup>

The article also quoted a former employee to the effect that Morris Dees marketed social consciousness in the same detached way that he once marketed cakes. “The Center is something he can sell. People want to contribute something to relieve their conscience.”<sup>269</sup>

## **The Questionable Fundraising of the SPLC**

In February 1994 the *Montgomery Advertiser* ran a series of articles exposing various aspects of the SPLC, including its highly questionable fundraising tactics. In 1993, the American Institute for Philanthropy ranked the Southern Poverty Law Center as the “fourth least-needy charity in the nation.”<sup>270</sup> Among the issues raised were:

The SPLC has reserve funds of \$52 million...Just what the Law Center does with all that money is a source of concern.

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<sup>266</sup> Joshua Moore, “Suspect Linked To Four Corners Militia Group,” *The Durango Herald* (5 June 1998).

<sup>267</sup> “Cop Killers Linked To Group That Doesn’t Exist,” *Media Bypass* (July 1998), 39.

<sup>268</sup> Drew Juber, “A Wealth of Contradictions,” *Atlanta Constitution* (26 October 1989).

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> Dan Morse and Greg Jaffe, “Charity of Riches,” *Montgomery Advertiser* (November 1994).



Some who have worked with Morris Dees call him a phony, the ‘television evangelist’ of civil rights who misleads donors...

For 15 years, people throughout the country have sent millions to the (SPLC) to fight the Ku Klux Klan and other supremacists. But critics say the law center exaggerates the threat of hate groups...<sup>271</sup>

The SPLC responded to the series with a number of veiled threats and charged that it was a “hatchet job.” When Morris Dees thought former SPLC attorney Dennis Sweet had spoken with reporters from the *Montgomery Advertiser*, he sent Sweet a note which said, in part:

You might do better to build yourself up instead of secretly trying to tear someone else down.\* I hope to hear *good* things from you in the future. Morris

\* Life is too short.<sup>272</sup>

Sweet had been the first and only black attorney in the first 13 years of the SPLC. He had told the *Montgomery Advertiser* that blacks had been treated in a patronizing manner at the SPLC headquarters.<sup>273</sup> Nevertheless, the *Montgomery Advertiser’s* series was widely praised and is regarded as a model for courageous, objective reporting.

The American Institute of Philanthropy rates charitable institutions according to several criteria, including percent of income spent on charitable purposes, excess assets and so on. The Southern Poverty Law Center was rated “F” on a scale A through F. By way of comparison, the ACLU Foundation was rated A- and the Anti-Defamation League was rated B+.<sup>274</sup> When this was information was published Dees responded by attacking the AIP in a letter to the *Advertiser*:

This letter is to put the *Advertiser* on notice of the AIP’s false statements and questionable practices.<sup>275</sup>

This was not the first time that the SPLC’s fundraising tactics had been criticized. In July 1988 no less of a liberal icon than *The Progressive* magazine published a five-page article critical of Dees’s operation that raised many of the same issues, including the matter of the loss of staff who were disillusioned with the course the SPLC was taking. According to John Edgerton:

[Randall] Williams, who left in 1986 along with four staff attorneys, says the Center had changed significantly by then.

“We were sharing information with the FBI, the police, undercover agents,” he notes. “Instead of defending clients and victims, we were more of a super snoop outfit, an arm of law enforcement.

“And the Klan had changed, too, from an active, growing, openly defiant, unchallenged threat in the 1970s to a much smaller and shrinking - though still violent and extreme - remnant in the mid-1980s. I thought we had done what we set out to do, but Morris was still writing donors about the Klan menace, and the money was still flowing in.”<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> Greg Jaffe and Dan Morse, “Rising Fortunes: Morris Dees and the Southern Poverty Law Center,” *Montgomery Advertiser* (November 1990).

<sup>272</sup> Letter, Morris Dees, Southern Poverty Law Center, to Dennis Sweet ( 5/9/91).

<sup>273</sup> Dan Morse, “Equal Treatment?,” *Montgomery Advertiser* (November 1994).

<sup>274</sup> American Institute of Philanthropy, *AIP Charity Rating Guide and Watchdog Report* (Spring 1998).

<sup>275</sup> Letter, Robert D. Segall, Southern Poverty Law Center, to Richard Amberg, *Montgomery Advertiser* (November 1994).

<sup>276</sup> John Edgerton, “Poverty Palace: How the Southern Poverty Law Center got rich fighting the Klan,” *The Progressive* (July, 1988).

In November 2000 yet another publication picked up on the increasingly questionable and flagrant ethical lapses in the SPLC's fundraising behavior. Writing in the November 2000 issue of *Harper's Magazine*, Ken Silverstein examined a recent SPLC mail promotional piece in scrupulous detail, showing the various propaganda ploys used, the misleading statements, accounting irregularities and outright falsehoods employed. Silverstein noted,

The center earned \$44 million last year alone [1999] -- \$27 million from fund-raising and \$17 million from stocks and other investments -- but spends only \$13 million on civil rights programs, making it one of the most profitable charities in the country.<sup>277</sup>

Silverstein documents the misleading solicitations of the SPLC by noting, among many instances, that on one occasion in 1995 the center complaining that "the strain on our current operating budget is the greatest in our 25 year history" at a time when they had \$60 million in reserve. As for their implied dedication to human rights and civil liberties, Silverstein observes,

The SPLC's "other important work for justice" consists mainly in spying on private citizens who belong to "hate groups," sharing its files with law-enforcement agencies, and suing the most prominent of these groups for crimes committed independently by their members -- a practice that, however seemingly justified, should give civil libertarians pause. The legal strategy employed by Dees could have put the Black Panther Party out of business or bankrupted the New England Emigrant Aid Company in retaliation for crimes committed by John Brown.<sup>278</sup>

The article also observes that Dees's salary of \$273,000 annually is more than one-quarter of the entire budget for the Southern Center For Human Rights, which handles dozens of death-penalty cases each year - a cause the SPLC steers away from because it would harm its fund-raising efforts.

## **The SPLC's Disinformation Campaign**

Former SPLC staffers have stated that aside from random acts of violence by a few members, the Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacist organizations are far more image than substance. According to the *Montgomery Advertiser's* series on the SPLC:

Mr. Dees chose to focus on the Klan to raise money for the law center, said three former staff attorneys: Mr. [Dennis] Balske, Deborah Ellis, and Dennis Sweet, now a Mississippi legislator. Going after the Klan has brought in tens of millions of dollars from throughout the nation. "The market is still wide open for the product, which is Black pain and white guilt," said Gloria Browne, one of only two black attorneys to work at the Law Center.<sup>279</sup>

Atlanta Lawyer Millard Farmer, who had worked with the SPLC in the mid-1970s until he parted ways with Morris Dees, said that filing lawsuits against white supremacists is merely a money-raising tactic:

Attacking the Klan: courageous, tough, hard, useful, beneficial, necessary work -- in 1930...In the 1990s, it plays on a mentality unconnected with reality. There's not a politician in the country who won't fight the Klan now. It's a scheme. It's a joke.<sup>280</sup>

Mr. Farmer refers to Morris Dees as "the civil rights movement's television evangelist."<sup>281</sup> Dees replied with "I wouldn't put any stock in anything Millard Farmer says about

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<sup>277</sup> Ken Silverstein, "The Church of Morris Dees: How the Southern Poverty Law Center Profits from Intolerance," *Harper's Magazine* (November 2000), 54-57.

<sup>278</sup> Op cit.

<sup>279</sup> Morse and Jaffe, *Charity of Riches*, op cit.

<sup>280</sup> Dan Morse, "Marketing the Klan," *Montgomery Advertiser* (November 1994).

anything. He's a bitter man."<sup>282</sup> Another Dees associate, Courtney Mullin, shares Mr. Farmer's view:

He's [Dees] not immoral, he's amoral. . .I hesitate to say the words that I want to say because they sound so far out, but I really think the Center --- in so far as Morris embodies the Center -- is evil....They pretend to be on the side that has moral underpinnings (but) they do damage by their dishonesty...<sup>283</sup>

In the mid-1980s SPLC mailings said "Armed Klan paramilitary forces freely roam our wooded hills from Texas to North Carolina" and that "massive voter registration drives planned by blacks...will cause Klansmen to resort to the nightriding tactics of the past."<sup>284</sup>

Former Harvard Law School intern at the SPLC Frederick Smith observed that Morris Dees' fund-raising letters distorted his view of the South. Smith had never been to the South and felt that "the threat of the Klan sounded like an imposing possibility." He observed that after he joined the SPLC staff and had talked to a number of people:

The picture I got...was more complicated than the way it was portrayed by Dees. Going after the Klan "is kind of like shooting fish in a barrel...The good thing about the Klan is you will find very few people out there who are going to disagree with you on anything like the Klan or any kind of organization like that," he said.<sup>285</sup>

Serious criticism of the opportunism of Morris Dees and the SPLC is generally suppressed and rarely vocal but more widespread than most media treatment suggests. His harshest critics are among the groups that make up the anti-racist community itself. Occasionally one of them gets quoted, as in the following case:

...some black civil rights leaders and others have criticized Dees for running a "poverty palace." They say he raises millions by exaggerating the threat of hate groups. For instance, in a recent report on arsons at black churches in the South, his Klanwatch newsletter included five 1990 fires in Kentucky. The article doesn't mention they were set by a black man.

"He's a fraud who has milked a lot of very wonderful, well-intentioned people," says Stephen Bright of Atlanta's Southern Center for Human Rights. "If it's got headlines, Morris is there."<sup>286</sup>

## **The Neiman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University 1999 Watchdog Journalism Conference**

In 1999 Jim Tharpe, then Deputy Metro Editor of the *Atlanta Constitution* (formerly of the *Montgomery Advertiser*) spoke on the difficulties he encountered in preparing the story on the SPLC. He related that the *Advertiser* was originally a major booster of the SPLC, noting that they "parroted their press releases...we were friends with people at the center" which was only a parking lot away from their office. He continues:

I always saw the center as a pyramid. At the very top are the five people who make all the money. In the middle are the young idealists...They work very long hours for very little money.

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<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Dan Morse and Elizabeth Hays, "The Right Buttons," *Montgomery Advertiser*, (February, 1994).

<sup>286</sup> Andrea Stone, "Morris Dees: At Center of the Racial Storm," *USA Today* (3 August 1996), 7A.

They were friends with people at the paper; we hung out with them. There aren't a lot of young liberals in Montgomery, as you might imagine, and those are the people we associated with. We went to their parties, they went to our parties, they dated people on our staff...

At the same time, there were indications all along that something wasn't quite right there....on several occasions they would come to me or come to somebody else at the paper and say, "You guys really ought to look into this place, something's just not right there. I came here thinking this place was one thing and I'm leaving thinking it's another."<sup>287</sup>

Tharpe began the investigation in 1991, the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the SPLC. The series was finally published in 1995 "after three years of very brutal research under the threat of lawsuit the entire time." He adds:

They hired an attorney who began first by threatening me, then my editor, and then the publisher, "And you better be careful of the questions you ask and the stories you come up with," and they would cite the libel law to us.

We published the series over eight days, in 1994, and it had very little effect, actually. I think the center now raises more money than it ever has... The story really didn't get out of Montgomery and that's a real problem.<sup>288</sup>

The simple fact is that anti-racist Watchdog groups are quite successful at containing unfavorable press, in the unlikely event it even occurs. Most reporters and editors would never consider questioning the tactics of an anti-racist organization and uncritically print their press releases as though they were bonafide news reports. This was true in the case of the 1993 ADL spy scandal. Only a few papers outside of California covered the story at any length. Interestingly, some of the best accounts of both the SPLC's and the ADL's misdeeds have occurred in nominally liberal or leftist journals.

## **The SPLC and Oklahoma City**

Not surprisingly, when two men were charged in the 19 April 1995 bombing of the Federal Building in Oklahoma City - a ghastly crime that killed 168 people - the SPLC was ready with its disinformation and fund-raising apparatus in place.

The SPLC began a massive mailing fourteen days after the Oklahoma City bombing. This was followed up two weeks later by letters stating, "We need your help now with the most generous special gift you can make to help us expand our Militia Task Force." Another SPLC mailing dated 27 April and which appeared to have been prepared before the bombing also asks for funds for their Militia Task Force. "You know, that's interesting. That was timely wasn't it. I mean, we didn't know the bomb was going to go off," Dees is quoted as saying.<sup>289</sup>

The SPLC's *Klanwatch Intelligence Report* of June 1995 claimed that "over 200 militia and support groups operate nationwide."<sup>290</sup> Three months later, in September 1995 the SPLC issued a report that identified seventy-three "militias or militia support groups nationwide, with a total of 30,000 to 40,000 members." The SPLC also claimed that about forty-five have "ties to the Ku Klux Klan."<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> Jim Tharp, "Attacking A Home-Town Icon," Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University, the 1999 Watchdog Journalism Conference ([www.nieman.harvard.edu/events/conferences/watchdog2/4th\\_panel\\_nonprof.html](http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/events/conferences/watchdog2/4th_panel_nonprof.html))

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> Dan Morse, "Marketing The Militias," *Montgomery Advertiser* (26 June 1995).

<sup>290</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center, "Over 200 Militias and Support Groups Operate Nationwide," *Klanwatch Intelligence Report* (June 1995).

<sup>291</sup> Dick Foster, "10 Militias at Home in Colorado" *Rocky Mountain News*, (6 September 1995).

127 “militia and support groups” suddenly disappeared. Moreover, even Dees’ more modest figures were way off base. Many of the “support groups” were just groups—some with only a few members—who shared some views with the militias (such as opposition to the income tax or gun control), but conducted no paramilitary activities themselves.

As for “ties to the Ku Klux Klan,” there were a few cases where this was true, but it constitutes only a small percentage of militia membership. Often these “ties” were nothing more substantial than the claim that Klansmen had attended militia meetings or that Klan literature was found there.

As for the impressive “30,000 to 40,000” figure, an actual count is impossible, but there is good reason to believe that actual, bona fide membership in the militias may have been no more than 20% of that at the time of the Oklahoma City bombing. (The Anti-Defamation League claimed only 10,000 militia members). Moreover, SPLC claims of a massive increase in membership after the bombing are unsupported except by absurd claims of publicity seekers in the militias themselves, who in some cases claimed wholly insupportable figures of a million members.

In part the controversy surrounding alleged membership figures rests on what constitutes a “militia,” a “militia support group,” and on what constitutes a “member.” The SPLC uses these terms as broadly as possible. It routinely includes every possible listing, including groups that are alleged to exist but not verified. As “support groups” the SPLC includes every listing that has interests even vaguely similar to militias.

For “members” they use unverified rumored figures estimated from meeting attendance (which include a large number of curiosity seekers, not to mention journalists, police and informants), and reports on mailing lists, which are always larger than bonfire membership lists. Of course, the financial fortunes of the SPLC depend entirely on claims of a large and growing “threat” of one kind or another.

## **Militia “Support Groups”**

The concept of a militia “support group” is particularly troubling. Using this kind of logic, one might suppose that the NAACP was a “support” group for the Communist Party, USA, merely because they had some interests in common. This argument has been used against the American Civil Liberties Union, which has defended leftists of all varieties as well as a few right-wingers. Moreover, in the highly individualistic and idiosyncratic far right even similar points of view do not necessarily spell cooperation or “support.” Far right groups are constantly feuding with one another and real cooperation on any issue is always problematic. To imply that the “right” is a monolithic and coordinated entity with “support groups” is simply not true.

As for militia complicity in the bombing itself—after more than three years of intensive investigation neither the FBI nor any other law enforcement agency has produced evidence that the perpetrators were members of or in any substantial way connected with any militia, anywhere, anytime.<sup>292</sup> A county grand jury arrived at the same conclusions.<sup>293</sup> No militias were implicated by government prosecutors at Timothy McVeigh’s or Terry Nichols’ trials. Militias had nothing to do with the Oklahoma City bombing. The perpetrators were acting entirely on their own. The only organizational “links and ties” they shared was service in the U. S. Army.

Although it hardly matters in view of the horrible crime for which they have been convicted, the depiction of McVeigh and Nichols as raving neo-Nazis and racists by Watchdog groups is similarly untrue.

McVeigh intended to avenge the deaths among the Branch Davidians at Waco, a third of which were members of minority groups, including 30 blacks, as well as 6 Hispanics and 7

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<sup>292</sup> Diana Baldwin, “Some Still Hunt for John Doe 2,” *Sunday Oklahoman* 13 December 1998, A-8.

<sup>293</sup> Ron Jenkins, “Oklahoma Bomb Jury Rules Out Conspiracy,” *Associated Press*, 30 December 1998.

Asians and including a number of interracial marriages.<sup>294</sup> Nichols was married to a Philippine national - not what one would expect of a bona fide racist. These “racists” were avenging the destruction of a multicultural and interracial religious commune!

Brandon Stickney, author of “*All-American Monster*” - *The Unauthorized Biography of Timothy McVeigh*, attempts to establish McVeigh’s racism as follows:

McVeigh and Nichols shared another personality trait – bigotry.

In Tim’s hometown the prejudice was subtle. It came from the teachings of elders passed down through generations, and a basic fear of the unknown.

In eastern Niagara County, where McVeigh was born, there are still only a few black families residing. In Pendleton, [New York] there were no black students in Tim’s graduating class of 1986. In fact, there was only one black family living in Pendleton when Tim was growing up, and they later moved.

Tim McVeigh spent his life, until the age of nineteen, in the cultural wasteland that is Pendleton and its surrounding area. He experienced severe culture shock when he arrived at Ft. Benning. Because of his ignorance, McVeigh became a bigot, which helped him get along with Nichols.<sup>295</sup>

If you don’t follow this logic, it’s because the logic isn’t there. To deduce racism from this kind of “evidence” is entirely unwarranted. On the other hand, if it’s politically convenient there are enough ambiguities to make it at least seem plausible. In an interview with Lawrence W. Myers in *Media Bypass* magazine:

McVeigh said he considers unfair and unfounded the notion that the mainstream press has classified him as a racist simply because he had read *The Turner Diaries*. He said he responded to a gun magazine advertisement for the book around 1988 because it was being billed as a novel about what may happen when the government comes to confiscate privately owned firearms.

McVeigh also pointed out, and his sergeant confirms, that while in the Army he served alongside black soldiers without incident or problem, and when he lived off base, he and Michael Fortier routinely gave rides to work to two fellow soldiers who were black.

Although there were no African-Americans in McVeigh’s graduating class, and few in his hometown, according to the U. S. Army there are no reported incidents of him having any professional problems as a soldier dealing with other races. Furthermore, McVeigh’s platoon sergeant was black and his platoon leader was black, and both gave him the highest ratings an infantry soldier can attain.<sup>296</sup>

The SPLC, of course, merely ignored the evidence to the contrary and proceeded to “link and tie” McVeigh to racist, neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic sympathies which he probably didn’t have. It was helpful for fundraising.

As an aside, I think in order to determine whether or not an organization is “racist” we need to establish a baseline signifying what is “normal” racism in a society. If 30% of the population holds “racist” ideas but only 15% of an organization’s membership does, then the organization is no more (and somewhat less) racist than the norm. Unless the organization exceeds the norm, it’s misleading to call them “racist.” I won’t attempt to define what a “racist” is, except that it’s usually used as an epithet. Don’t misunderstand this point -- there are real, bona fide racists out there. However, the utility of the term to

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<sup>294</sup> David B. Kopel and Paul H. Blackman, *No More Wacos: What’s Wrong With Federal Law Enforcement and How To Fix It* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1997), 409-411.

<sup>295</sup> Brandon M. Stickney, *All-American Monster: The Unauthorized Biography of Timothy McVeigh* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus, 1996), 92-93.

<sup>296</sup> Lawrence W. Myers, “Tim McVeigh: An Interview,” *Media Bypass* (February 1996), 36.

defame, degrade and stigmatize has made it descriptively useless. It has become merely a weapon in the word war between opposing interest groups.

## **False Patriots**

In 1996 the SPLC issued its report on the patriot movement, *False Patriots*. The 73- page report named names and made the usual “links and ties” characteristic of Watchdog publications. Writing in the *Boulder (Colorado) Weekly*, reporter Wayne Laugesen noted that the publication constituted a “guide to all the scary bad people we should fear and loathe” and that it “sets out to expose what the Patriot and militia movement is all about, assessing its dangers and identifying its major players.” Laugesen adds:

So it came as a shock to Bob Glass to see his Boulder gun store, Paladin Arms, listed as an active “Patriot Group,” after more than 50 pages warn against the danger of hate-filled, racist, anti-Semitic Patriot groups. “I’m Jewish, for God’s sake,” Glass says indignantly. “How can I be anti-Semitic?”

Furthermore, Glass has never belonged to a Patriot group or a militia and never referred to himself as a Patriot....In past *Boulder Weekly* interviews about the Patriot movement Glass has been openly critical, saying he’s amazed that large numbers of people are willing to believe sometimes goofy and paranoid conspiracy theories.

“I in no way fit the descriptions that are in this book,” Glass says. “It’s outrageous and it casts a serious indictment as to the credibility of Morris Dees and the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Glass, it turns out, found out about the SPLC’s defamation from a close Jewish friend, Max Winkler, a Colorado parole officer and a board member of the American Jewish Committee.

“I was flabbergasted,” Winkler says. “This kind of thing is just like what McCarthy did (labeling people as Communists). It’s just like Nixon’s enemies list.

Winkler says large numbers of minorities are involved in the Patriot movement for a number of reasons. The leader of the Ohio militia is a black man who started his group when Attorney General Janet Reno suggested that inner city homes be searched without warrants to confiscate guns.<sup>297</sup>

## **Demonization of Dissidents**

So shameful was the SPLC’s demonization of the militias for fund-raising purposes that in June 1995, the *Montgomery Advertiser* published a report on the SPLC’s fundraising tactics as part of a continuing series of articles examining the organization. Entitled, “Marketing The Militias,” by Dan Morse, the report noted that “Morris Dees and the Southern Poverty Law Center are using the militia controversy to raise funds, but not all donors approve of their methods.” The article quoted a former donor to the SPLC who learned that the organization had amassed \$60,000,000 in reserve funds:

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<sup>297</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center, *False Patriots: The Threat of Antigovernment Extremists* (Montgomery, AL: SPLC, 1996), 73 pp.

“It’s almost like jumping on whatever shameful thing has happened in the country to solicit funds,” said Harvy Aronson, a Long Island man who has sent about \$1,000 to the center. He quit giving last year when he found out about the millions in reserves. “My impression always was that they needed money. Some little group working out of practically a storefront,” he said.<sup>298</sup>

## The SPLC Legal Offensive

In 1987 Dees and the SPLC made national headlines with a \$7 million civil judgment against United Klans of America, a major Ku Klux Klan organization, and six former and current members for the March 1981 slaying of Michael Donald, a black teenager. None of the defendants in the case was able to afford effective legal counsel, including the UKA which was forced to turn over all of its assets and went out of business.<sup>299</sup>

This “\$7 million judgment” was a major point in SPLC fund-raising campaigns. SPLC mailings made it clear that this wonderful bounty for the mother of the slain teenager wouldn’t have been possible without their help, and that was a reason people should donate to the SPLC.

What the mailings didn’t mention was that the United Klans was nearly broke at the time of the judgment and Donald’s mother received less than \$52,000 with little possibility of getting any more. The SPLC, on the other hand, raised millions of dollars from its direct mail appeals featuring the case.

At issue in that trial was the liability of the entire UKA organization for the acts of a few of its members.<sup>300</sup> Had this legal doctrine that organizations are responsible for the acts of their members been established in the 1960s, it would have decimated the early civil rights movement, a few of whose members were occasionally violent, and would have bankrupted groups like the National Association For The Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), both of which this writer has belonged to.

Even the organized labor movement and the 1960s anti-war movement could have been crippled by lawsuits arising from the occasional violent acts of some of their members. Suppose a black activist organization was hit with a \$7 million judgment because one of its members killed someone in the Watts Riots? Suppose a labor union was bankrupted by the activities of one of its members during a strike? Had the Dees precedent existed then it might have happened.

Another case further illustrates this damage. On the morning of 13 November 1988 in Portland Oregon, three skinheads - Kenneth Mieske, Kyle Brewster, and Steven Strasser - got into a fight with three Ethiopians - Mulugeta Seraw, Wondwosen Tesfaye, and Tilahun Antneh. All parties had apparently been drinking.

When it was over, Mulugeta Seraw was dead. The three skinheads pleaded guilty: Mieske to murder, and Brewster and Strasser to manslaughter. All are serving long prison sentences as a result of this stupid, senseless crime.<sup>301</sup>

This was not the end of the matter, however. The SPLC and the ADL filed a \$10 million lawsuit on behalf of Seraw’s estate against Tom and John Metzger.<sup>302</sup> The suit attempted to link the Metzgers, a father-son team heading the White Aryan Resistance (WAR), to the killing through the questionable application of the doctrine of “vicarious liability.”

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<sup>298</sup> Dan Morse, “Marketing The Militias,” op cit.

<sup>299</sup> Gary Mitchell, “Civil Rights Leader Praise Verdict Against Klan,” *The Tampa Tribune* (14 February 1987).

<sup>300</sup> Robin Toner, “Experts Say Verdict on Klan May Chasten Other Racists,” *New York Times* (14 February 1987).

<sup>301</sup> Elinor Langer, “The American Neo-Nazi Movement Today,” *The Nation* (July 16/23 1990), 98.

<sup>302</sup> *Berhanu v. Metzger*, A 8911-07007 (Cir. Ct., Multnomah Co., Ore.)



Morris Dees argued that the Metzgers, through the actions of a skinhead named Dave Mazella, were responsible for the killing by virtue of their alleged instructions to Mazella and his alleged subsequent actions in organizing and motivating the Portland skinheads.

No allegation was ever made that the Metzgers had given any kind of instructions to Mieske, Brewster or Strasser. As might be expected the Metzgers had few assets and were forced to act as their own counsel. An account of Morris Dees' strategy is revealed in an article in *The National Law Journal*:

When we first filed this lawsuit, we had a choice between state and federal court. We chose state court because Oregon discovery rules are quite different than federal rules. You can do trial by ambush in Oregon. You have no interrogatories, no production of evidence; you don't have to give the names of witnesses or give the other side your documents.<sup>303</sup>

"As a result," according to the *Journal*, "Mr. Metzger had no idea how much evidence Mr. Dees had, and this ignorance would prove fatal."<sup>304</sup>

After a long trial in which the highly questionable Mazella himself was the star witness, the jury returned a verdict against the Metzgers in October 1990. The Metzgers made plans to appeal the verdict but when they attempted to pay for a transcript of the trial with donated money in order to prepare their appeal, Dees garnished the payment, thus impeding their access to the legal process.

At this point Chicago civil liberties attorney Michael Null, who is Jewish, entered the case because of the principle involved and submitted a detailed appeal brief.<sup>305</sup> Because the Metzgers had failed to raise numerous objections to Dees' tactics during the trial, and it was not possible to do so afterward under Oregon law, the appeal failed.

## Groups Dispute SPLC Claims

There are many cases in my files where organizations targeted by the SPLC strongly dispute the characterizations of them that have appeared in SPLC publications. Obviously, not all of these objections are reliable. Some groups might have a motive to lie about their true nature. On the other hand, the SPLC has been caught in so many exaggerations and misrepresentations that one must concede that their own record in this regard is poor. A recent example illustrates this.

Dr. William Pierce and his National Alliance organization are essentially everything watchdog groups say they are. Pierce is a racist and Jew hater, and his many publications reflect these prejudices. Violence by National Alliance members has been rare, however, and for the most part it functions as a white racist study group with roughly a thousand members nationwide. There is one National Alliance member for every 272,000 Americans - hardly an occupying fascist army.

Several articles about Pierce and his organization appear in the SPLC's Winter 1999 *Intelligence Report* (published in 1998). One of these, "The Alliance and Its Allies," discusses a number of details of recent National Alliance history and makes numerous claims suggesting that the SPLC has a man on the inside.<sup>306</sup> If so, this informant makes use of considerable creative license in rendering his reports. According to Pierce:

The SPLC's latest *Intelligence Report* asserts that I flew in, at Alliance expense, Richard Butler of Aryan Nations and Tom Metzger of the White Aryan Resistance

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<sup>303</sup> "Finding the Forum for A Victory," *The National Law Journal* (11 February 1991).

<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

<sup>305</sup> Appeal No. CA A67833, In The Court of Appeals of the State of Oregon (1992).

<sup>306</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center, "The Alliance and Its Allies," *Intelligence Report* (Winter 1999).

to various of the Alliance's twice yearly leadership conferences. Neither of these people has ever visited or been invited to the Alliance's facilities.

Another example: "attack dogs strained at their leashes" outside a Pan-European Nationalist meeting I attended in Thessaloniki last October. That's pure invention. I wandered out of the meeting hall a dozen times during breaks in the day-long conference, and I never saw a dog.

The SPLC just wants the meeting to sound sinister. Other examples: I have never been banned from entering Germany, but the SPLC claims that I have; I have never had any contact with past or present members of the Hungarian parliament, but the SPLC says I am "very close" to two of them.<sup>307</sup>

The same issue of *Intelligence Report* details an interview with the former wife of Kevin Alfred Strom, a National Alliance employee.<sup>308</sup> Kirsten Kiaser, 36, had been married at least three times and, according to people who know her, has a problem with alcohol. One of her complaints voiced in the interview was that Pierce would not allow any alcohol on the premises. Kiaser claims that Timothy McVeigh called Pierce five minutes before the bomb went off - a physical impossibility not supported by any evidence whatsoever but repeated widely by the SPLC in order to implicate the organization in the bombing. Pierce acknowledges her marriage to Strom and her presence at his headquarters but disputes her many characterizations of him:

...she has never been a member or an employee of the Alliance. Yet the SPLC prints her claims that Timothy McVeigh telephoned me five minutes before he detonated his truck bomb in Oklahoma City; that I require my wife to address me as "Dr. Pierce"; that I don't like women; and that every time I visit a new city I check out the location of the armory, so that I can rob it when the economy collapses.<sup>309</sup>

The SPLC publishes these apparent distortions with no fear of discovery by the mainstream media. If news media would undertake a much closer look at SPLC claims and attempt to independently verify them I think they would find that their trusted watchdog source was guilty of many fabrications of this sort.

## **Feminist Writer Opposes SPLC Tactics**

If claims by a certified right-wing extremist aren't adequate, consider what a bona fide liberal-left activist has to say. Barbara Dority is president of Humanists of Washington, executive director of the Washington Coalition Against Censorship, and co-chair of the Northwest Feminist Anti-Censorship Taskforce. Ms. Dority critiques the SPLC as follows:

...the SPLC says it has recently established a massive computer database of "hate groups," including reports on 14,000 individuals who have "committed hate acts" or who are "affiliated with hate groups," as well as "extensive intelligence" on more than 3,200 "hate and militia organizations."

From a civil liberties standpoint, these tactics are a little too reminiscent of organizations like the John Birch Society, which kept extensive records on "communists and communist sympathizers." Moreover, the SPLC campaign for laws that will effectively deny free speech and freedom of association to certain groups of Americans on the basis of their beliefs. Six times a year, the SPLC's letter boasts, the center reports its findings to over 6,000 law-enforcement agencies; then,

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<sup>307</sup> William L. Pierce, *letter* (18 March 1999).

<sup>308</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center, "Q & A: Inside the Alliance, A Former Insider Speaks," *Intelligence Report* (Winter 1999).

<sup>309</sup> Pierce, (18 March 1999).

with no discernible irony, it goes on to justify its Big Brother methods in the name of “tolerance,” arguing that “paranoid militant groups” are seeking protection from “imagined threats” to their freedoms.<sup>310</sup>

Ms. Dority paraphrases Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall to the effect that history teaches us the gravest threats to liberty come in times of urgency, when constitutional rights seem too extravagant to endure.

## **The SPLC and Perjury**

Unlike the 1987 KKK case, the Metzger case was watched considerably more closely. What is interesting is not that various racist and neo-Nazi allies rallied to Metzger’s defense, but that liberals and leftists expressed doubt about the verdict as well. The *Williamette Weekly*, an Oregon alternative tabloid weekly newspaper editorialized:

In the wake of last weeks stunning victory over California’s white supremacist Tom Metzger at the hands of crusading civil rights lawyer Morris Dees, a number of courthouse observers are quietly raising questions about a little mentioned development in the trial. It is now clear that Dave Mazella, a star witness who provided Dees with the crucial link between Metzger and the racist skinheads who murdered Mulugeta Seraw...perjured himself on the witness stand.

“If definite proof can be presented that Mazella committed perjury, it may be possible for the Court of Appeals to order a new trial,” says Michael Simon, a local lawyer who monitored the case on behalf of the Oregon chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Such proof, in fact, does exist. Not only are there witnesses who insist that Mazella was lying on the stand, but there are also letters by Mazella himself that contradict his sworn testimony.<sup>311</sup>

Even the moderately leftist *In These Times* opined, “Jurors in a West Coast white-supremacy trial struck a blow for racial justice last week but may have bruised some civil liberties in the process.” Writer John Shragg questioned the credibility of Mazella’s testimony and pointed out:

Dees was backed by his center’s multi-million-dollar bankroll and its cadre of lawyers along with the equally impressive resources of the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith and the complete cooperation of federal, state and local authorities. The Metzgers represented themselves.<sup>312</sup>

Journalist Jim Redden, in a feature entitled “Snitching For a Living” in a Portland, OR weekly said:

...Mazella described the SPLC’s witness protection program as a ‘contract.’ ...He said the Center wanted to keep him out of public view until the Metzgers had finished appealing the multi-million dollar judgment against them. “...They [SPLC] kept me sheltered until the appeals were final, so that Metzger wouldn’t have anything to get back in court with. Not that I lied or anything like that....”<sup>313</sup>

## **The SPLC vs. Constitutional Rights**

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<sup>310</sup> Barbara Dority, “Is The Extremist Right Entirely Wrong?,” *The Humanist* (November/December, 1995), 12-15.

<sup>311</sup> “Everything But the Truth: Dave Mazella’s Perjury Could Be Tom Metzger’s Salvation,” editorial, *Williamette Weekly* (29 October 1990).

<sup>312</sup> John Schrag, “Supremacy Verdict Hurts Civil Liberties,” *In These Times* (31 October - 6 November 1990), 2.

<sup>313</sup> Jim Redden, “Dave Mazzolla: Saint or Sinner?,” *PDXS* (27 February - 12 March, 1995).

In a column appearing under the banner of the *Los Angeles Times / Washington Post News Service*, Ray Jenkins, a writer for the *Baltimore Sun*, noted, “A wise judge once observed that great constitutional rights often are established in the cases that involve ‘not very nice people.’” He also observed that while the State of Oregon lacked evidence to put Metzger on trial for murder in the case, what Morris Dees did was to

...convert the civil law, whose basic purpose is to settle disputes between individuals, into an arm of the criminal law. In legal abracadabra, the standard of proof in civil cases - usually only “preponderance of evidence” - is a good deal easier to meet than the higher standard of “guilt beyond a reasonable doubt” required in criminal prosecutions.

Let’s not forget, there are cases on record where civil law was tortured into criminal law to punish Communists in the 1950’s, then civil rights groups, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, in the 1960’s.<sup>314</sup>

Conscientious civil libertarians, while strongly opposing Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi groups, disdain unfair and underhanded methods used to attack them in the courts. Quite simply, anything that can be done to your enemies may, in time, be done to your friends.

The SPLC proclivity to use civil suits - where constitutional protections are minimal and there is no right to counsel - against poor, working class, and often semi-literate Klansmen unable to afford an attorney, has been compared to shooting fish in a barrel.

The issue, of course, is a classical moral one, i.e., whether the ends justify the means used to accomplish them. Many moral philosophers would say that the means indirectly determine the ends, and that unjust means necessarily lead to unjust ends.

## **Morris Dees and the Joanne Little Case**

If, in fact, Dees had permitted a sworn witness to perjure himself under oath, as it seems he did in the Metzger case, this would not be the first time this issue had been raised in his career.

In 1975 Dees and the SPLC represented Joanne Little, a 21-year old black woman who had been charged with capital murder after stabbing a jailer to death with an ice pick and escaping. Dees had read of the case in the newspapers and volunteered the services of the SPLC in her defense, complete with a massive fund raising campaign.

During the case, however, Dees was ordered from the courtroom and arrested for and charged with attempting to get a witness to perjure herself. Such a charge is difficult to prove and the charges against Dees were dropped. The judge, however, refused to allow Dees back on the case. Little was eventually acquitted.<sup>315</sup>

There is more to the Joanne Little case. An account of the case in the *Columbia Journalism Review* noted that Dees’ allies in the case included some elements of the Marxist-Leninist left:

[T]he great untold story of the Joan (sic) Little trial...was the role of the Communist Party [CPUSA] through its National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression [NAARPR], in controlling the entire...political movement surrounding the case. Angela Davis, a leading figure in both national organizations, became the most frequently quoted movement figure and constant companion of Little... Party

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<sup>314</sup> Ray Jenkins, “Even a Scoundrel is Due a Fair Trial,” *Los Angeles Times / Washington Post Service* (November 1990).

<sup>315</sup> Bill Stanton, *Klanwatch: Bringing the Ku Klux Klan To Justice* (Penguin Books, NY: 1991), 17-18..

members were visible and influential on the defense committee, and the party frequently set up rallies of support around the country.<sup>316</sup>

Angela Davis, often described as a “civil rights worker,” has long been a dedicated Marxist-Leninist. Following her indictment in a California murder, Communist Party USA leader Henry Winston said in a speech before the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union that

The symbol of this racism and anti-Communism is the political frame-up of Angela Davis. This attack is part of a general offensive of pro-fascist reaction which is also directed against other fighters for civil rights and social justice...<sup>317</sup>

If “links and ties” are fair game, they should be applied to all parties, not just some. Certainly Morris Dees and the SPLC live in a very fragile glass house.

## The SPLC Double Standard

In a Winter 1998, issue of the *SPLC Intelligence Report*, available on the internet, they make reference to the police record of a former British Ku Klux Klansman, Allan Beshella, who had been an “aide” to former American Klansman James Farrands. Quoting the British anti-racist journal, *Searchlight*, the SPLC notes that Beshella had a 1971 Los Angeles, California, conviction for child molesting.<sup>318</sup>

This is not a stone that Morris Dees should pick up, let alone throw. Dees has been married four times, and in an appellant brief filed by Maureen Bass Dees in their acrimonious 1979 divorce she alleges numerous infidelities, homosexual behavior and a sexual interest by Morris Dees in both his adolescent stepdaughter and his daughter-in-law.<sup>319</sup>

In all fairness, accusations and claims made in a divorce case may or may not be reliable. However, one must also ask how reliable are depositions, affidavits and testimony made by limited-income Ku Klux Klansmen who cannot afford legal counsel when faced with possible civil or criminal charges by Morris Dees. How many have agreed to say what Dees wanted them to say just to survive? How many legal “victories” have been obtained in this manner? Morris Dees and the SPLC must be judged by the same standards they have used to judge others.

Writing in a June, 1998, issue of *The Nation*, a leftist weekly, writer Alexander Cockburn observed:

Morris Dees has raised an endowment of close to \$100 million, with which he’s done little, by frightening elderly liberals that the heirs of Adolph Hitler are about to march down Main Street, lynching blacks and putting Jews into ovens. The fundraising of Dees and the richly rewarded efforts of terror mongers like Leonard Zeskind offer a dreadfully distorted view of American political realities.<sup>320</sup>

Let’s consider what a hundred million dollars, wisely allocated, could do for Black people and other minorities. How about scholarships? Black college enrollment is lagging nationwide, especially in computer science and engineering. How about job training and apprenticeship programs? In the emerging global economy many of the manufacturing jobs working class people held are disappearing and new skills are often required. How about preventative health programs?

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<sup>316</sup> Mark Pinsky, *Columbia Journalism Review* (March/April 1976).

<sup>317</sup> Jessica Smith, ed, *Voices of Tomorrow: The 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (New York: N.W.R. Publications, 1971), 150.

<sup>318</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center, “Demise Of A Pedophile,” *SPLC Intelligence Report* (Winter 1998), 1.

<sup>319</sup> Alabama Court of Appeals, Case No. Civ 2114, Maureen Bass Dees, appellant, vs. Morris S. Dees, Appellee.

<sup>320</sup> Alexander Cockburn, *The Nation* (9 November 1998).

Black health statistics have always been poor, and often this is due to inadequate funding for preventative medicine. And then there are grants to start small businesses, a fund to help new homeowners who might have a hard time qualifying for loans, and so on. The list is endless. Yet, the SPLC keeps building this surplus -- far, far in excess of any reasonable operating reserve -- while important needs for the constituency they claim to serve go wanting.

But perhaps the most destructive activity of the SPLC towards its basic constituency is the extraction of valuable funds that should be apportioned among other civil rights organizations. The enormous wealth of the SPLC is largely at the expense of a large number of other groups, ranging from the National Association For The Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to local community organizations.

# **The Watchdogs**

**A close look at Anti-Racist “Watchdog”  
Groups**

**Second Edition**

**Part 2**

**By Laird Wilcox**

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# Chapter Three

## The Center For Democratic Renewal

### *Links and Ties*

- The fanatic who refused to admit the existence of a feared facet of himself may eventually be confronted with undeniable evidence that he harbors the very attitudes or desires he has sought to eradicate. Snell and Gail Putney, *The Adjusted American*, 1964.
- The aggressiveness of a person with a paranoid style may be masked, but no less powerful, when it is expressed in intellectual or ideological terms. In such a subtle and controlled form it usually has a greater impact on others. . . .As individuals, extremist reformers utilize psychological mechanisms which resemble those observed in the paranoid individual. David W. Swanson, et. al., *The Paranoid*, 1970.
- Equality feeds on itself as no other single social value does. It is not long before it becomes more than a value. It takes on the overtones of redemptiveness and becomes a religion rather than a secular idea. Robert Nisbet, *Twilight of Authority*, 1981.
- Almost every discussion with myth-addicts, whether public or private, is doomed to failure. The debate is from the beginning removed from the level of objectivity; arguments are not considered on their merit, but by whether they fit the system, and if not, how they can be made to fit. Arthur Koestler, *The Yogi and the Commisar*, 1945.

The Center For Democratic Renewal (CDR) has a fascinating history that reaches into the deepest recesses of the American extreme left. If a counterpart organization on the far right had roots as far into the political extremes as the CDR does, it would have been instantly exposed. More importantly, these roots do not depend upon establishing mere “links and ties.” Rather, they are simply part of its history - the history of how a coalition of extreme leftists managed to blur their origins and avoid exposure by a trusting media. Although presented to the public as a civil rights organization, the CDR has an agenda that embraces much more.

On 3 November 1979 five members of the Communist Workers Party (CWP) died (nine more were wounded) in a shootout with Ku Klux Klansmen and neo-Nazis in Greensboro, North Carolina, during a “Death To The Klan” march through the streets of Greensboro sponsored by the CWP. Six months after the shootout, Terry Eastland, writing in *Commentary* magazine, described the CWP and its program:

The CWP...is one of the small Maoist groups that have developed since the disintegration of the Students for a Democratic Society in 1969....Although it had doctrinal differences with other Maoist groups, it agreed with them on the main goal, namely, the destruction of the American capitalist order by the working class....<sup>1</sup>

Eastland also disputed the notion that radicals of the day had “mellowed out” and cited both the People’s Temple of Jonestown and the CWP as examples. He observed:

The CWP can be faulted for another, potentially more deadly [form of racism]: manipulating blacks for its own political ends. The CWP went into a black community thinking that the poorer and less sophisticated of Greensboro’s blacks might be successfully exploited in this campaign to abolish class in America: it did not appear to mind how many black lives thus might be endangered, even sacrificed.

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<sup>1</sup> Terry Eastland, “The Communists And The Klan,” *Commentary* (May 1980), 65-66.



In this the CWP ironically made a kind of common cause with its avowed enemy, the Klan.<sup>2</sup>

Following the shootout the Klansmen and neo-Nazis were tried on two separate occasions, both of which resulted in acquittal. A state jury found the defendants not guilty of murder in 1980, and a federal panel acquitted them on charges of conspiring to violate the CWP demonstrator's civil rights in 1984.<sup>3</sup>

Until the Greensboro incident, the private, non-governmental anti-Klan effort was divided among a number of organizations, most of which might be considered of a "leftist" persuasion. These included the ADL, the American Jewish Committee (AJC), and a number of civil rights organization including the NAACP and CORE. These were all fairly effective in orchestrating community reaction to Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi activities.

A number of Marxist-Leninist groups—such as the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) and its affiliate, the International Committee Against Racism (INCAR), founded in 1973; and the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) and its affiliate, the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (NAARPR) founded in 1972 --- also took their place in the anti-Klan ranks.

The 1970s and 1980s were filled with anti-Klan counter-demonstrations by these and similar organizations, usually greatly outnumbering the Klansmen and often responsible for most of the violence. Observers were treated to the sight of allegedly terroristic Klansmen huddled in a small group while anti-racist opponents pelted them and the police guarding them with bottles and rocks. Anti-racist groups had no scruples in utilizing the appeal to the mob when directed against their opponents.

According to Wyn Craig Wade, author of *The Fiery Cross: The Ku Klux Klan In America*, a new mood was in the air. Wade recorded the change:

In response to the Klan's 1979 attack on its non-violent marchers in Decatur and the arrest of Curtis Robinson (a Black man convicted of shooting two Klansmen), the SCLC [Southern Christian Leadership Conference]...called a conference in Norfolk, Virginia. Thirty organizations responded and, out of the conference the National Anti-Klan Network was born.

Based in Atlanta, Georgia, the Network began by matching the ADL's research, monitoring and reporting on Nazi/Klan activity. Under the leadership of its coordinator, Lyn Wells, it took a strong stand against the Klan's corruption of children and assisted the NEA [National Education Association] in creating its curriculum guide.<sup>4</sup>

## **"Links and Ties" of CDR Staffers**

Rev. C. T. Vivian, Chairman of the NAKN, was named in a 31 March 1964 report by the Atlanta office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation as having been active in the Communist Party during the 1940's.<sup>5</sup> It is not known how long that alleged relationship lasted.

On the Executive Committee of the NAKN were Ann Braden, a founding sponsor of the U. S. Peace Council (USPC), an affiliate of the Communist-controlled World Peace Council (WPC). Ann Braden and her husband, the late Carl Braden, have long been associated

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Wheaton, *Code Name Greenkill : The 1979 Greensboro Killings* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987).

<sup>4</sup> Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross: The Ku Klux Klan in America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 391.

<sup>5</sup> David J. Garrow, *The FBI and Martin Luther King* (New York: Morrow, 1986), 116.

with Communist front organizations. Carl, for example, was one of the leaders of the NAARPR, co-chaired by the CPUSA's Angela Davis.<sup>6</sup> Most recently, Braden was a contributor to the April 2000 issue of the non-party Marxist journal, *Monthly Review*.

Ann Braden was elected Vice-Chair of the NAARPR in May, 1983.<sup>7</sup> In 1990 she was one of three co-chairs, along with Angela Davis and Lennox Hinds, who had served as the United Nations representative of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) a Soviet-controlled front. Executive Director was Charlene Mitchell, a long time member of the CPUSA.<sup>8</sup>

Prof. Harvey Klehr describes the nature of Communist front groups:

The essence of a front organization, of course, is that its members include non-communists. The rationale is that a group made up only of devoted communists and their close allies would lack credibility and effectiveness; its motives would be suspect. By lending their names and reputations to an organization, respectable people make the organization look respectable.<sup>9</sup>

Ann Braden was a participant at the 1989 Marxist Scholars Conference in Louisville, KY. Her panel, to be chaired by Rev. Alan Thomson, of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship (NCASF), was on "Progressive and Reactionary Trends in World Religions." Thomson had recently been indicted for attempting to launder \$17,000 he received from the WPC to operate his Communist front group.

In June, 1992, the Reverend Alan Thomson, NCASF executive director, pled guilty (U.S. v. Alan Thomson, U. S. District Court, Western District of New York) to evading currency regulations in 1989 by concealing a \$17,000 cash subsidy that Thomson brought back from the USSR. The plea agreement ending the case included the transcript of Thomson's secretly videotaped hand over of the \$17,000 to an associate, Barbara Makuch, who turned out to be an FBI operative for the past 21 years.<sup>10</sup>

Joseph Lowrey, another director of the CDR, was a speaker at the World Peace Council's assembly in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Executive Director of the World Peace Council is Michael Meyerson, a member of the Communist Party USA and board member of the NAARPR.<sup>11</sup>

Also on the NAKN's board is Marilyn Clement, who is active with the New York Marxist School (NYMS) and was writer for the *Guardian*, a now defunct Marxist-Leninist weekly tabloid. Martha Nathan, wife of Communist Worker's Party member Michael Nathan who died in a shootout with Ku Klux Klansmen is also present.<sup>12</sup>

## **Lyn Wells & the Communist Party, Marxist-Leninist**

NAKN/CDR National Coordinator Lyn Wells is a former member of the Central Committee of the October League (OL), a Marxist-Leninist group which evolved into the Communist Party, Marxist-Leninist (CPML). A 1979 study of the alternative media of the far left has detailed the history of the Communist Party, Marxist-Leninist as follows:

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<sup>6</sup> Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle and Dan Georgakas, *Encyclopedia of the American Left* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 105, 183.

<sup>7</sup> Flyer, National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, n.d.

<sup>8</sup> *Organizer* (April-June 1990); Harvey Klehr, *Far Left Of Center: The American Radical Left Today* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1988), 165.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 30.

<sup>10</sup> *Newsletter of the Historians of American Communism* (September, 1992, Vol 11, No. 3), 1.

<sup>11</sup> Klehr, op cit, 33.

<sup>12</sup> Wheaton, op cit., 170.

The CPML, like several other organizations evolved out of SDS [Students for a Democratic Society], began in late 1969 as the “October League” under the chairmanship of Michael Klonsky, immediate past national secretary of SDS and son of a long-time CPUSA organizer. In June, 1977 it held a “founding congress” at which it dropped its old name and established itself under the new one. In July, 1977 Klonsky and several associates were received and publicly welcomed in Peking by Hau Kuo-Feng and other officials of the new Chinese leadership.<sup>13</sup>

A 1980 article in *The Nation* magazine discussed the various splits and splinters of the American left. It had this to say about the Communist Party, Marxist-Leninist:

The CPML has somewhere between 800 and 1,000 members, and is the dominant faction in the U. S. - China People’s Friendship Association.<sup>14</sup>

In 1972 Wells gave an address to an OL labor conference. Standing below photos of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao, she said:

It is true that building a party requires conscious work on the part of communists. A party is the organized conscious expression of the working-class struggle and cannot develop out of the struggle spontaneously. It takes years of difficult work, developing an experienced core of cadre, raising the theoretical level and deepening ties with the masses. While being close to the united front, the communist organization is at the same time separate with an independent life of its own.<sup>15</sup>

A casual reading of *The Call*, official publication of the CPML, or their other journal, *Class Struggle*, reveals flagrant support and justification of totalitarian Marxist-Leninist regimes. The official youth organization of the CPML was the Communist Youth Organization. Its most active front group was the National Fight Back Organization, which focused on anti-racist issues.

## **Leonard Zeskind, Lyn Wells & the NAKN/CDR**

The NAKN has been regarded with sectarian skepticism by other extreme left groups. A November 1982 article in *Workers Vanguard*, journal of the Spartacist League (a Trotskyist sect), described it thus:

NAKN is a loose coalition of the remnants of the pro-Peking Stalinists of Mike Klonsky/Lyn Wells disintegrating “Communist Party Marxist Leninist” with Southern black ministers headed by SCLC’s Rev. C. T. Vivian, who organized in 1979 an “alternative” to the communists in the wake of outrage over Greensboro.<sup>16</sup>

In the Summer 1985 issue of *Shmate: A Journal of Progressive Jewish Thought* Leonard Zeskind joined Chip Berlet, Jean Hardisty, Lyn Wells and others in lamenting the emergence of the extreme right. Wells, identified as “Executive Director of the National Anti-Klan Network,” observes:

Political work against fascism by progressive movements has consisted primarily of a struggle to preserve our civil liberties and the right to organize against the establishment, which periodically names various movements its “enemy.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Francis M. Watson, Jr., *The Alternative Media* (Rockford, IL: Rockford College Institute, 1979), 69.

<sup>14</sup> George Vickers, “A Guide To The Sectarian Left,” *The Nation* (17 May 1980), 596.

<sup>15</sup> Lyn Wells, *The Call* (April 1973) n.p.

<sup>16</sup> “Killer Klan Must Be Smashed,” *Workers Vanguard* (12 November 1982), 1, 11-12.

<sup>17</sup> Lyn Wells, “Cedartown and the Klan,” *Shmate: A Journal of Progressive Jewish Thought*, Issue #11-12 (Summer 1985), 52.

In 1986 the NAKN changed its name to the Center For Democratic Renewal, perhaps an attempt to blur its radical roots. The masthead of its newsletter, *The Monitor*, however, continued to list Lyn Wells as executive director and Leonard Zeskind as director of research.<sup>18</sup>

In 1987 another writer for the now-defunct Marxist-Leninist *Guardian*, Lynora Williams, took over as executive director, replacing Zeskind who had been acting director.<sup>19</sup> Jean Hardisty of Political Research Associates and Randall Williams of the Southern Poverty Law Center also have been CDR board members.<sup>20</sup>

## Leonard Zeskind & the Sojourner Truth Organization

Leonard Zeskind, was also an organizer for the Marxist-Leninist group, the Sojourner Truth Organization (STO) during the 1970's and 1980's. On the editorial board of *Urgent Tasks: Journal of the Revolutionary Left*, published by the STO, Zeskind routinely engaged in classical Marxist rhetoric. *Urgent Tasks* acquired its name from a pamphlet by Lenin that asserted the urgent task of party workers was:

...not to serve the working class at each of its stages, but to represent the interests of the movement as a whole, to point out to this movement its ultimate aim and political tasks, and to safeguard its politics and ideological independence.<sup>21</sup>

In a 1980 issue of *Urgent Tasks*, Zeskind comments on events in Afghanistan and on U. S. imperialism:

The United States government, for its part, has constructed its own web of fabrications and deceptions around the Afghan events. It is using the occasion as another opportunity to galvanize the U. S. people around a war policy and to resurrect the military as a tool of U. S. imperialism.....

By concocting a new Soviet policy of aggression, Carter has placed the revitalization of the military as the top item on the national agenda.<sup>22</sup>

In another *Urgent Tasks* article entitled "Workplace Struggles In Kansas City," Zeskind offers the following observations:

A school of communism must be based on the actuality or potentiality of workers as freely associated producers. A school of communism is not a lecture hall. It is an arena of critical self-consciousness that seeks to destroy the marketplace, not sell at it.<sup>23</sup>

In another publication, *Towards A Revolutionary Party: Ideas On Strategy and Organization*, the Sojourner Truth Organization discussed their program to bring various groups together in a extreme leftist revolutionary movement:

In our view, the primary role of the party in the mass movement is to discover and articulate the patterns of thought, action, and organization which embody the potential of workers to make a revolution. These patterns are manifested, embryonically, in the course of every genuine struggle. This characteristic content of mass struggle provides the only possible social basis for integrating the experiences of masses of workers into a coherent revolutionary ideology and culture.

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<sup>18</sup> *The Monitor* (January 1986) 2.

<sup>19</sup> *Southern Changes* (August 1987), 7,

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> V. I. Lenin, *The Urgent Tasks of Our Movement*, pamphlet (n.d.)

<sup>22</sup> Leonard Zeskind, "The Events In Afghanistan: A State-Capitalist Viewpoint," *Urgent Tasks*, No. 8, (Spring 1980).

<sup>23</sup> Leonard Zeskind, "Workplace Struggles in Kansas City," *Urgent Tasks* (1978).

The real work of the party involves linking these fragmentary autonomous elements and socializing them into a new culture of struggle...it must emphasize those programs which lay the basis for the unification of the working class. Particularly important in this regard are concrete challenges to the institution and ideology of white supremacy.<sup>24</sup>

Concerning discipline within the vanguard party, the STO pamphlet quotes Joseph Stalin's *Foundations of Leninism* approvingly:

On the contrary, iron discipline does not preclude, but presupposes conscious and voluntary submission, for only conscious discipline can be truly iron discipline.<sup>25</sup>

The STO was only one of a multitude of left-wing extremist groups that formed from the remnants of the radical student movement of the 1960s. A surprising number of 1990s anti-racist activists did their apprenticeships in Marxist groups during the 1960s and 1970s.

## **Noel Ignatiev, Revolutionary**

An associate of Zeskind's in the STO was Noel Ignatin (he now spells it Ignatiev), who served as one of several rotating editors of *Urgent Tasks*.<sup>26</sup> Like many radicals of that period, Ignatiev discovered the appeal of "anti-racism" as a device to promote his ideological agenda.

In an article in a 1995 issue of *Love and Rage*, an anarchist tabloid, Joel Olson commented on Ignatiev as follows:

Noel Ignatiev put forth the position that the purpose of any revolutionary organization should be to build a "dual power" strategy which means that our political work should be geared toward building resistance movements...

In this way, we could link revolutionary urges (everyone hates the cops) to a revolutionary counterpower that challenges the main pillar upholding capitalism and white supremacy: the state and their pigs.<sup>27</sup>

*Love and Rage* is the publication of the Love and Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation, whose motto is: "Governments don't fall by themselves. They need your help. Join the Federation."<sup>28</sup> They work closely with radical anti-racist groups such as Anti-Racist Action (ARA), whose members are known for their violent confrontational tactics, and Anarchist Black Cross (ABC), a revolutionary anarchist organization. Both ARA and ABC have international "links and ties" with similar extremist groups.

## **Martin Glaberman, Marxist**

Yet another Zeskind associate at STO was Martin Glaberman, a militant Marxist revolutionary. In 1975 the New Hogtown Press published a pamphlet under Glaberman's authorship which included, along with contributions by like-minded radicals, a lecture he had given in Toronto, Canada on 14 September 1974 sponsored by the Marxist Institute of Toronto. An advocate of traditional "class struggle" Marxism, Glaberman noted:

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<sup>24</sup> Sojourner Truth Organization, *Towards A Revolutionary Party: Ideas on Strategy and Organization* (Chicago: Sojourner Truth Organization, 20 June 1976), 26.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>26</sup> *Urgent Tasks* (No 7, Winter 1980).

<sup>27</sup> Joel Olson, "Re: Proletarian Survival: The Federation Advances," *Love and Rage* (Jan/Feb 1995).

<sup>28</sup> *Love and Rage* (Jan/Feb 1997), 2.

There is still the question which derives from the classic Marxist view of whether the worker is the key to the revolutionary overthrow of this society. Is the worker so exploited that he will revolt?...

Marxism has been around for 100 years. Che Guevara said that Marxism is now part of the general heritage of mankind. There are all sorts of ideas which were the property of Marxists, say in 1917, which are not the property of humanity generally.

So long as workers resist alienation and oppression they will revolt. And these revolts will emerge, as they always have, with remarkable power and suddenness.<sup>29</sup>

Another article by Glaberman first appeared in *Radical America* in November, 1973. In it Glaberman quotes Marx and Engels as follows:

Both for production on a mass scale of this communist consciousness, and for the success of the cause itself, the alteration of men on a mass scale is necessary, an alteration which can only take place in a practical movement, a *revolution*.<sup>30</sup>

Glaberman's activities have continued to the present day. His letters have appeared in the monthly Marxist-Leninist journal *Monthly Review*<sup>31</sup> and a contributor to *Against The Current*, bi-monthly publication of the Marxist-socialist Solidarity movement. A review of Glaberman's co-authored book, *Working For Wages: The Roots of Insurgency*<sup>32</sup>, appearing in *Against The Current* noted:

It might be more accurate, then, to describe *Working For Wages* as a kind of primer on class struggle. Imbued throughout with an unswerving focus on class hatred, this examination of "the roots of insurgency" is itself rooted in the understanding that (to quote from the first chapter), "The working class struggles against capitalism because its objective conditions of life force it to...."<sup>33</sup>

## **Are these "links and ties?"**

Is Leonard Zeskind responsible for the politics of Ignatiev and Glaberman? Do his politics reflect on them? Do these "links and ties" have any direct bearing on Mr. Zeskind's values, opinions and beliefs today? The "links and ties" technique used here is an exact replica of the technique Berlet and Zeskind use to characterize their critics and opponents.

Consider that some of this information is over 25 years old. Consider also that the act of writing for an ideological journal may not necessarily imply that one agrees with everybody else that writes for it, or if they agreed with them in the past they continue to do so today. Finally, consider that all of the above applies to rightists as well as leftists.

## **Portrait Of A Marxist-Leninist Activist**

In January 1981 Kansas City writer Bruce Rodgers did a story on radical activism for *City* magazine. He had this to say about Leonard Zeskind:

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<sup>29</sup> Martin Glaberman, "The Working Class and Social Change," (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1975), 8, 17, 19.

<sup>30</sup> Martin Glaberman, "The American Working Class in Historical Perspective,' *Radical America*, Vol 7, No 6 (November-December, 1973).

<sup>31</sup> Martin Glaberman, "Reply to Nelson Lichtenstein: Correspondence," *Monthly Review* (Vol 48, No. 10, 1997), 60.

<sup>32</sup> Martin Glaberman and Seymour Faber, *Working For Wages: The Roots of Insurgency* (Dix Hills, NY: General Hall, 1998).

<sup>33</sup> Shelia Cohen, "Primer Of Class Struggle," *Against The Current* #80 (Vol XIV, No 2, May/June 1999).

Speaking freely is something Leonard Zeskind doesn't do to people he doesn't know. Call him on the phone and he'll answer with a near hysterical, "Who is this?" Zeskind needs an answerphone to calm his nerves. Plainly, Zeskind won't talk to bourgeoisie writers representing The Establishment Press.

The STO [Sojourner Truth Organization] was brought to Kansas City by Zeskind and his wife, Elaine, around 1973. Where they imported it from would be a good guess. Chicago is where the printed arm of today's STO is published. Both Lenny and Elaine have written for *Urgent Tasks: Journal of the Revolutionary Left*.

Alternately ridiculed, condemned, feared, pitied or admired, Zeskind does exercise control over his group. They are tight-knit, distrust the press and view everyone outside their group with suspicion. They surface on occasion to distract and intimidate non-violent groups working for social change.

The STO is not well-known by political historians. In fact, a recent study (1979) tracing the development of American radical movements, *Power on the Left*, does not even acknowledge the organization.

Whatever its origins, somewhere in Kansas City Zeskind gathers a dozen fellow travelers in an apartment decorated with revolutionary banners and a picture of Sojourner Truth. Led by him, the mostly white, mostly female group study Lenin, seek justification for their beliefs, and pay homage to a former slave and 19<sup>th</sup> century champion of black and women's rights.<sup>34</sup>

By 1982 Zeskind apparently found the response to traditional class-struggle Marxism-Leninism disappointing, as have many other American leftists, and shifted his focus to anti-racism. He created the Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights, Inc., and began publishing *The Hammer* (with Lyn Wells on the Board of Directors),<sup>35</sup> before hooking up with the National Anti-Klan Network.

A 1986 article in the *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* gave an account of a talk by Zeskind before the Jewish Community Center Women's Guild Auxiliary. According to Zeskind, the Nazi press describes him as "intense and humorless. The article said:

And just who is he, really? Zeskind isn't saying..... Zeskind likes to keep a low profile.

No photos, he insists, because he is already the target of a number of anti-Semitic, racist groups who would love to see him, well, out of a job. He also is reticent about his background because this, too, could be used by his enemies.<sup>36</sup>

## **Attacked by little white Baptist kids**

A 1989 article in the same publication featured Zeskind's complaint of being picked on as a kid. He says:

And I remember little white Baptist kids riding by on their bicycles, throwing stones at us and calling us kikes and things like that... My brothers and I had to defend ourselves from these other little kids. We had to throw rocks back...<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Bruce Rogers, "Radical Chic, Kansas City Style," *City* (January 1981).

<sup>35</sup> Annual Registration Report, Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights, Inc., Missouri Secretary of State (16 July 1984).

<sup>36</sup> Elizabeth Kaplan, "Keeping Tabs On Anti-Semitism a Full-Time Job", *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* (28 March 1986), 2A.

<sup>37</sup> Rick Hellman, "K.C. Klan-watcher Continues the Fight Against Hate Groups, *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* (1 December 1989).

That same article discusses Zeskind's preoccupation with his personal safety and his sense of personal importance to his enemies. Racists and neo-Nazis are out to get him.

Kansas Citian Leonard Zeskind likes to keep a low profile. You would, too, if white supremacists had targeted you for death and attacked you in their publications and rallies.

This is why Zeskind refuses to divulge the city of his birth or other details of his personal life. Releasing personal information like that might make it easier for an extremist to track him down and harm him.<sup>38</sup>

This theme of great importance and constant danger from fascists appears again in a 1991 issue of *Details* magazine. James Ridgeway begins his essay with

This is a scene from a paperback thriller: the two of us standing awkwardly at a park gate, in a city Lenny says I cannot name. No one is supposed to know what we're doing.<sup>39</sup>

They are waiting for one of Zeskind's "spies," a man named "Felix" who is bringing Zeskind a bag full of European right-wing literature. The article notes that

Felix is a spy, and Lenny Zeskind...who in glasses and trench coat resembles nothing more than a moderately successful accountant, is the spymaster for Felix and a corps of espionage amateurs.<sup>40</sup>

Ridgeway discusses Zeskind's elaborate security precautions in some detail, including his use of a false address on his Missouri driver's license, which is illegal. He observes,

Lenny has no known fixed address. If stopped by a cop, he can produce a driver's license with a listed street address, but if you visit the place, a pleasant house on a quiet street in Kansas City, it's not Lenny's address; it's a building that houses post-office boxes.

His office...is unmarked and hard to reach through a series of locked elevators. His home is protected by an elaborate alarm system that would sound instantly should someone toss a firebomb through a window.<sup>41</sup>

Zeskind's name no longer appears on CDR letterheads, but he continues to maintain the Kansas City office of the organization. In 1989 after accounts of his Marxist-Leninist background began appearing, he was quoted in an article in the *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* as follows:

I was never the kind of Marxist-Leninist that they think of. I was somebody who thinks that socialism is a good thing. I believe a society that's fair to its citizens is important. I don't think I'm a socialist either now. At one time, I did. But that's not a defining feature of my politics now.<sup>42</sup>

This is probably true. Many people have been former Marxist-Leninists, Maoists and Ku Klux Klansmen who simply changed their minds and gave it all up. Usually, however, they part company with their old colleagues and avoid the movements and causes they were associated with. A former Klansman or neo-Nazi may be just as sincere as a former Marxist-Leninist in revising his beliefs.

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<sup>38</sup> Rick Hellman, op cit.

<sup>39</sup> James Ridgeway, "Klanbuster: Penetrating the Racist Underground in America's Heartland," *Details* (February 1991), 19-22.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Rick Hellman, "Zeskind Draws Fire From Extremist Critic," *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* (1 December 1989).



## Leonard Zeskind, Gerry Gable and *Searchlight*

It is not known when Zeskind first linked up with Gerry Gable and his publication, *Searchlight*, but in the February, 1983 issue of *The Hammer*, he carried a 2/3 page advertisement listing “*Searchlight* Distribution, USA” at a post office box next to his own.<sup>43</sup> In May 1988 *Searchlight* published a full-page laudatory review of Zeskind’s work and publications.<sup>44</sup> Coinciding with Zeskind’s role as research director for the CDR, he began writing regularly for *Searchlight* and became their USA correspondent.

*Searchlight*, Britain’s self-proclaimed premier “anti-fascist” magazine, began publishing in its current form in 1975. The May 1975 issue listed Gable as Editor and Maurice Ludmer as Managing Editor. Previously, Ludmer has been a reporter for *Morning Star*, the Communist Party’s daily newspaper. *Searchlight*’s primary constituency was, and always has been, Britain’s extreme left, with whom the magazine collaborates extensively.

Maurice Ludmer was a founder and member of the steering committee of the Anti-Nazi League (ANL), and a platform speaker at their first conference in July 1978. He died in 1981. According to a 1978 series appearing in *News Line*, publication of the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP):

The Anti-Nazi League was launched by the Socialist Workers Party in November, 1977. It was subsequently welcomed by the International Marxist Group - in an editorial in *Socialist Challenge* of 5 May 1978, headed “Hats off to the SWP!” - and by the Communist Party.

The Communist Party’s daily paper, the *Morning Star*, urged party members on 16 May 1978, to join the Anti-Nazi League and participate fully in its activities.<sup>45</sup>

Under Ludmer’s leadership the ANL staged frequent counter-demonstrations against the NF and other right-wing groups, many of which became violent and in some cases causing many injuries, including to policemen. In a 1980 article published in the London *Guardian*, Polly Toynbee observed:

If by creating a public order problem there is hope that Chief Constables will ban the Front marches as they banned Mosley’s, then he feels the counter-demonstrations are valuable.<sup>46</sup>

In December 1976, a British magistrate accused *Searchlight* of actually inciting violence. Magistrate John Milward condemned what he described as the “grave and sinister” feature of the magazine:

What purpose can there be in advertising opponent’s meetings except for the purpose of identifying them and creating disorder and public violence. This seems to be an attempt to stir up trouble which is to be very strongly depreciated.<sup>47</sup>

The comments came at the end of proceedings against Maurice Ludmer, then managing editor of *Searchlight*. Ludmer had been accused of two counts of criminal libel. Magistrate Milward declined to commit Ludmer for trial in the matter.

An important point needs to be made here: Western countries, unlike Marxist-Leninist dictatorships, have traditionally allowed wide latitude with respect to freedom of expression, including the right to hold meetings and demonstrations. Some anti-fascist groups, frustrated in their goal of ideological hegemony by governments which respect the rights of their opposition, have used the tactic of sponsoring counter-demonstrations with the intention that they will create public disorder. In this way they seek to cause authorities

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<sup>43</sup> *The Hammer* (February 1983).

<sup>44</sup> *Searchlight* (May 1988).

<sup>45</sup> *News Line* (10 July to 13 July 1978).

<sup>46</sup> *Guardian* (25 February 1980).

<sup>47</sup> “Magazine Accused of Race Incitement,” *Birmingham Post* (31 December 1976).

to prohibit meetings, demonstrations or marches by their adversaries for reasons of public safety.

In the United States, for example, whenever groups like the Ku Klux Klan have planned demonstrations, they are often confronted by very large, and often violent, counter-demonstrations. Usually, the public has associated the violence with the Ku Klux Klan, and not the anti-racist counterdemonstrators. In some cases Klan demonstrations of fewer than a dozen members have been confronted by well-organized counter-demonstrations of several thousand.

This reached its inevitable absurd conclusion in the United States in April 1998 when city officials in Cicero, Illinois, agreed to a payoff of \$10,000 to a small Ku Klux Klan group if they would cancel their planned demonstration.

Town officials said they worked out the deal to avoid the expected violence and security costs, which they say would easily have topped \$10,000....While it looked a little like a payoff, city officials said, it was preferable to the rally.<sup>48</sup>

The violence feared by Cicero city officials, of course, was that from anti-racist counter-demonstrators and not from the small number of deluded Ku Klux Klansmen who might have demonstrated. In the first nine months of 1999 the cost of protecting citizens from potential violence from anti-racist counter-demonstrations cost communities in one state alone - Ohio - about \$800,000, including a counter-demonstration in Cleveland that cost \$573,000 alone.<sup>49</sup> At that rally there were 41 Klansmen and 300 anti-racists. The association of the Ku Klux Klan with violence has gradually lost some credibility because the activities of violence-prone anti-racist fanatics. The same situation is also developing in the U.K.

Born in January 1937, Gerry Gable was a member of the Young Communist League during his youth and stood as a Communist Party candidate in the Northfield Ward of Stamford Hill, North London, on Thursday 10 May 1962.<sup>50</sup> He claims to have quit the CP that same year.

On 14 January 1964 Gerry Gable and Manny Carpel plead guilty to breaking and entering with intent to commit a felony. Gable and Carpel, along with another man, had obtained false identification and posed as utility repairmen at the home of David Irving, a British author known for his controversial books on World War II. According to the *Evening Standard*:

One of them, David Freedman, was alleged to have told a policeman, "This man is a fascist. We got in because we wanted to get some of these books and papers of his and he knows a lot of Nazis who are top brass." Sgt. Tavener said Freedman pointed at a number of books and papers on the table in the room.

Charged with breaking and entering with intent to commit a felony were Freedman, 19, electrician, of Solander Gardens, Stepney; Gerald Gable, 26, electrician, of Lynmouth Road, Stoke, Newington; and Manny Carpel, 20, unemployed, of Downs Park Road, Dalston, who appeared on remand. Gable was also charged with stealing a G.P.O. pass card.<sup>51</sup>

Carpel, an intimate *Searchlight* associate, was convicted of assaulting P.C. William Nield and having an "offensive weapon" in 1963.<sup>52</sup> Carpel and *Searchlight* secretary Michael Cohen plead guilty to attempting to break into W. H. Jones Ltd. printing works on 20 July

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<sup>48</sup> *Associated Press*, "Town Heads Off KKK Rally With Cash," (11 April 1998).

<sup>49</sup> *Associated Press*, "Peace at Klan Rallies Costly," (10 October 1999).

<sup>50</sup> *Hackney Gazette and North London Advertiser* (8 May 1962 and 15 May 1962).

<sup>51</sup> "Bogus GPO Men Tried To Grab Nazi Papers," *Evening Standard* (18 December 1963); *Focal Point* (30 May 1981).

<sup>52</sup> *Jewish Chronicle* (26 August 1966)

1966, with intent to commit a felony and to possessing housebreaking implements by night. The company was the printer for a right-wing magazine. He was also jailed for two and a half years for arson at Lewes Criminal Court, 13 April 1981.<sup>53</sup>

Harry Bidney, another *Searchlight* associate and the man Gable credits with inculcating him into the anti-fascist movement, was fined in 1977 after being found guilty on eight charges of living off the earnings of prostitutes. According to the *Daily Telegraph*:

Harold Bidney, 54, company secretary of Dennett House, Bernoe Road, Bow, was fined a total of 1,600 pounds after being found guilty of eight charges concerning eight female prostitutes; that between January 1973 and October last, he knowingly lived in part on the earnings of prostitution.<sup>54</sup>

Interestingly, the June 1987 *Searchlight* glowingly described Harry Bidney's "long and honorable life fighting fascism."<sup>55</sup>

Ray Hill, a former member of the National Front who subsequently became an employee of *Searchlight*, jumped bail on a fraud charge in Johannesburg, South Africa in 1979, two days before his scheduled hearing. He forfeited 1,500 pounds bail which had been put up by his wife. According to the *Guardian*:

The police in Johannesburg confirmed yesterday that Mr. Hill had also faced prosecution in connection with the alleged embezzlement of 20,000 pounds from the funds of the Sons of England, a Masonic organization of which he was secretary.

Mr. Hill, a former member of the British Movement, was a housemaster at a boys home in Johannesburg earning about 250 pounds a week. He is reportedly intending to open a night club in Britain.<sup>56</sup>

In 1981 *Searchlight* reporter David Roberts was convicted at Birmingham Crown Court with conspiracy to burn down an Asian restaurant.<sup>57</sup>

Another *Searchlight* regular is Graeme Atkinson. Like many *Searchlight* people, Atkinson grew up in a family steeped in Marxism-Leninism. His father was a member of the Communist Party during many years of Communism's purges, mass killings and slave labor camps in the USSR and elsewhere. The elder Atkinson apparently had enough and quit the party in 1956 over the brutal repression in Hungary. Graeme became active in "anti-fascism" in 1962 during a wave of anti-Semitic activity in Europe. He worked closely with the "62 group" in London, many of whom were members of the Communist Party.

According to Atkinson, "Our job is to stick the Nazi label on right-wingers. We keep the issue of Nazis before the general public."<sup>58</sup> He also acknowledged that *Searchlight* has placed informants in all "fascist organizations," and that occasionally there had been "captured" documents. Through their supporters in the media, he says that "We know who to talk to, to get a story out."<sup>59</sup>

On 23 April 1989 Leonard Zeskind spoke at a rally in Leeds, England, where he shared the platform with Martin Becher of the radical Berlin-based Anti-Fascist Action Group. According to press reports, Zeskind and Becher were "touring the country as part of a campaign mounted by *Searchlight*, the anti-fascist magazine."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> *Focal Point* (30 May 1981).

<sup>54</sup> *Daily Telegraph* (6 August 1977).

<sup>55</sup> *Searchlight* (June 1987).

<sup>56</sup> *The Guardian* (11 May 1979).

<sup>57</sup> *Focal Point* (30 May 1981).

<sup>58</sup> Graeme Atkinson, Interview with Jeffrey Kaplan, (27 February 1997).

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> "Rallying Point For Harmony," *Yorkshire Evening Post* (24 April 1989).

The rally was sponsored by the “Blair Peach 10 Anniversary Committee” along with several other radical left groups, including Anti-Fascist Action, Azania Worker, Asian Youth Movement, Camden Black Workers Group, and Black Action. Peach was a supporter of the Anti-Nazi League who was killed by police in 1979 and became a much-needed martyr to the cause.<sup>61</sup>

In May 1989 Zeskind again addressed a *Searchlight* rally where he shared the platform with *Searchlight's* Ray Hill. An article in the *Jewish Chronicle* referred to Zeskind as “one of America’s leading Nazi catchers.” Zeskind also warned that “Free access to guns of American Nazis would soon make murder weapons available around the world.”<sup>62</sup> In 1998 - nine years after this statement - there is absolutely no evidence that this has happened.

In November 1990 Gerry Gable addressed a benefit for the Center for Democratic Renewal held in Kansas City, MO. Gable lamented the collapse of Communism throughout Europe, blaming that for what he said was an “increase in racial attacks against minority groups.” Leonard Zeskind claimed that the average age for skinheads in the United States had dropped from 22 and 21 years old to 16 and 17 years old. He said:

We’re not concerned about these new kids committing acts of violence. We’re seeing more David Dukes coming down the road at us. These people aren’t just violent thugs. They’re racists who have attained a level of sophistication.<sup>63</sup>

None of this transpired. David Duke’s political career flopped and the skinhead movement, such as it is, has continued to decline. It is probably safe to say that few of them have acquired a significant level of sophistication. The presence of a couple thousand adolescent “skinheads” in a country of 270 million people, while lamentable, is hardly a national crisis that needs the help of Gerry Gable and Leonard Zeskind.

## **The CDR and the Paranoid Style**

In November 1989 *Atlanta Constitution* writer Alan Sverdlik wrote an article on the CDR in which he detailed the paranoid-like mentality that surrounds the organization:

They operate in quasi-secrecy out of a basement in a southwest Atlanta office building. They won’t give out the street address. They use real names and pseudonyms interchangeably and have unlisted home phone numbers.

This bunker mentality belongs to the Center for Democratic Renewal, one of the nation’s principle monitors of far right hate groups...<sup>64</sup>

Sverdlik also noted that the CDR had a \$300,000 annual budget and quoted ADL Southern counsel Charles Wittenstein that “They have a left-wing political agenda that we don’t have... We don’t have any working relationship with them.” CDR employee Daniel Levitas is quoted as complaining that the ADL has “consistently red-baited us.”<sup>65</sup>

The February 1991 issue of *Details* magazine contains an article on Leonard Zeskind by James Ridgeway in which former right-winger Tom Turnipseed, chairman of George Wallace’s 1968 presidential campaign, now vice-chair of the CDR, is quoted as saying, “His hands kinda shake...(Lenny) is probably scared shitless all the time.”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> *Searchlight* (May 1989); flyer, Blair Peach 10 Anniversary Committee, nd.

<sup>62</sup> “Neo-Nazism On The Rise,” *Jewish Chronicle* (5 May 1989).

<sup>63</sup> Steve Penn, “Attacks On Minorities Climb With Communism’s Collapse,” *Kansas City Star* (22 November 1990), C-16.

<sup>64</sup> Alan Sverdlik, “Keeping An Eye On The Hate Groups,” *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* (3 November 1989), B-2.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> James Ridgeway, op cit.

And Lenny, who likes to hunt, owns a semiautomatic Mini .14, the far right's weapon of choice. He also has a shotgun. But when his mother offered Lenny her .38 revolver, he declined. The handgun he wants is a stylish 9mm automatic, which his mom has promised to get him for his birthday.<sup>67</sup>

It is fairly common for extremist groups to welcome former police "infiltrators" of opposing extremist groups into their ranks. These people lend some semblance of credibility to "links and ties" claims and impress contributors who imagine they are now getting inside information. During the 1960's, for example, a number of right-wing groups had former government agents on their payroll as experts.

In 1990 the CDR acquired the services of former San Diego police reservist Douglas K. Seymour who had infiltrated the Ku Klux Klan. He was listed on the CDR letterhead as a "Special Assistant to the Chairman." In 1989 Seymour had received a \$300,000 settlement from the San Diego police, claiming "emotional suffering" as the result of his two-and-a-half years of work as an infiltrator. Seymour's relationship with the CDR did not last long, however. In May 1991 he was convicted of embezzlement in LaCrosse, WI.<sup>68</sup> CDR's trusted source was quietly dropped from their letterhead.

## **Leonard Zeskind and Oklahoma City**

Following the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing Zeskind teamed with James Ridgeway, who writes about right-wing politics for various liberal and leftist serials, and they produced a conspiracy theory of their very own.

There is every reason to believe that the attack was a call for revolution by the far right wing of this country, organized through the widespread militia movement and carried out by one of the leaderless terror cells created by that movement.

It is probable that the three men being held in connection with the bombing—Timothy McVeigh, James Nichols and his brother Terry Nichols—are all members of that same militia cell.<sup>69</sup>

None of this proved true, of course, and one of the most intensive investigations in FBI history has failed to link these three to any militia organization in any significant way whatsoever. In addition, James Nichols was not even a defendant in the case. The article also refers to the Posse Comitatus, a radical tax protest group of mythical proportions, as a precursor to the militias.

Kansas is an old center for the Posse. During the 1980s federal law enforcement sources said that as many as one-third of all Kansas state sheriffs were either involved in, or sympathetic to, the Posse. Posse doctrine holds that the highest law of the land is the county sheriff.<sup>70</sup>

A rather incredible charge. Checking with the Kansas Attorney General's office and the officers of the Kansas Sheriffs Association, I was informed that they did not know of a single sheriff who had been in any way "involved in or sympathetic to" the Posse Comitatus. In point of fact, Kansas sheriffs, and presumably sheriffs everywhere, tended to view Posse members as "idiots" and troublemakers who were more of a nuisance than a bona fide threat. The occasional Posse member who ran afoul of the law was swiftly dealt with by Kansas or other law enforcement officers.

In 1996 Zeskind was a contributor along with Chip Berlet and others to *Conspiracies: Real Grievances, Paranoia, and Mass Movements*, edited by Eric Ward and published by Peanut

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<sup>67</sup> James Ridgeway, op cit.

<sup>68</sup> "Former Klan Spy Found Guilty of Embezzlement," *Tribune*, (9 May 1991).

<sup>69</sup> James Ridgeway and Leonard Zeskind, "Revolution U.S.A.," *Village Voice* (2 May 1995).

<sup>70</sup> James Ridgeway and Leonard Zeskind, op cit.

Butter Publishing. The general thrust of their contributions was to attack conspiracy theories of the right while ignoring those of the left.

Zeskind, in a typical overstatement, writes that during the infamous Tuskegee study of syphilis that 400 black men were “deliberately infected” with the disease. This is not true. They had each contracted syphilis in the usual manner but all were intentionally denied treatment in an effort to track the course of the disease, which is horrible enough in itself.<sup>71</sup>

In a generally sympathetic but critical review of the book, Kent Chadwick of the *Washington Free Press*, observed that to be “intellectually honest” progressives need to “clearly distinguish our moral values and our political agenda.” He objects to the “almost exclusive concentration on conspiracies of right-wing groups” in the compilation. He warns that this biased partisanship runs the risk that we “cheapen our own values and become true believers, mirror images of the self-righteous we froth against on the right.”<sup>72</sup> This may have already happened to Zeskind and Berlet.

Leonard Zeskind’s penchant for alarmist and exaggerated predictions of danger is illustrated by leftist writer Alexander Cockburn in a February 1999 exchange in *The Nation* magazine. Cockburn writes, “Listen to the last sentence of Zeskind’s review of a [Morris] Dees book, here in *The Nation* in 1996:

“When the next generation’s D. W. Griffith shows a militia version of *Birth of a Nation* in the White House amidst fond remembrance of how Christian patriots braved repression and calumny to restore US sovereignty, a few will turn for elements of the truth to...” a book by Morris Dees! “Assuming all the libraries will be purged by then,” Zeskind warns darkly, “find a safe spot for your copies now.”<sup>73</sup>

Was this merely anti-racist hyperbole, an attempt at inside humor, or was Zeskind serious? Taken seriously, this represents a serious failure of political analysis. Yet, viewed through the eyes of a fevered ideologue the threat from the domestic far right may be distorted to this level. A level, in my opinion, that bears no relationship to political reality whatsoever.

More recently, Zeskind was a panelist on the topic of racism at the 1997 annual convention of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America union. Among other things, he accused Pat Buchanan of amplifying David Duke’s beliefs and expressed concern about “translating the Nazi’s platform ‘into the political language of the Gingrich crowd.’”<sup>74</sup>

“UE” as it is known, has a reputation as perhaps the most radical union in existence today, and also has a well-documented Communist Party past. According to historians Harvey Klehr and John Earl Haynes in their 1992 book, *The American Communist Movement*, referring to the expulsion of a number of Communist-led unions from the CIO in the 1940s:

The director of organization of the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers Union (U.E.), James Matles, was also a secret Communist, as was its secretary treasurer, Julius Emspak. Many second-tier leaders of the union were more open about their party affiliation. After another bitter struggle for control, the pro-Communist forces succeeded in gaining the upper hand and isolating the U.E.’s anti-Communists.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Eric Ward, editor, *Conspiracies: Real Grievances, Paranoia, and Mass Movements*, (Washington: Peanut Butter Press, 1997) See also: James A. Jones, *Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment*. (NY: The Free Press, 1981).

<sup>72</sup> Kent Chadwick, “Conspiracies of Hate,” *Washington Free Press*, (1977).

<sup>73</sup> Alexander Cockburn, “The ‘Conscience Industry’ says...,” *The Nation* (15 February 1999).

<sup>74</sup> Convention Summary, National Convention, United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, 21-25 September 1997; *EU News* (September 1997).

<sup>75</sup> Harvey Klehr and John Earl Haynes, *The American Communist Movement: Storming Heaven Itself* (New York: Twain, 1992), 82.

Bert Cochran of Columbia University in his *Labor and American Communism*, characterizes U.E.'s pro-Communist behaviors thusly:

To make up for their prudence in striking and bargaining policies, they were reckless in following propagandistically the twists and turns of Communist Party policies... Neither is any enlightenment gained from a detailed recitation of Communists' techniques of control: how they staffed the union with members and adherents, how they fixed their positions ahead of time, how they positioned their people at meetings, how they deliberately muddled embarrassing questions, how they overawed dissenters with vituperation and character assassination.<sup>76</sup>

## Zeskind's Jewish Problem

In April, 2000, Zeskind's extremist past caught the eye of Kansas City's premier business journal, *Ingram's*. Jack Cashill, who had worked on the Kansas City Jewish Community Center's holocaust project and editor of *Ingram's*, made the following observation about Zeskind's local activity:

Leonard Zeskind owes Kansas City an apology. A big, fat one. The mischievous Zeskind has bamboozled *The Kansas City Star* and *The [Kansas City] Jewish Chronicle* into believing his prattle about the "abyss of mayhem and murder" America faces at the hands of its "white nationalists." And in the process, he has scared thousands of otherwise sane Kansas Citians half to death.

Zeskind is a so-called "watchdog," Kansas City's most celebrated, the winner of a \$295,000 McArthur "genius grant," the preferred source on "extremism" for papers like *The Star* and *The Jewish Chronicle* and political organizations like the Mainstream Coalition. Over the last decade, in fact, no fewer than ten different *Star* writers have gotten Zeskind's breathless take on everything from Pat Buchanan to the Ku Klux Klan...<sup>77</sup>

The Mainstream Coalition is a left-liberal Kansas City-area coalition chaired by Rev. Robert Meneilly organized to stigmatize conservative activists by claiming specious "links and ties" with racists and neo-nazis. Cashill notes that Meneilly "made the preposterous claim that the altogether decent Christian conservatives of Johnson county were 'a threat far greater than the old threat of communism.'" Cashill continues:

Yet for all of his expertise, the Amazing Zeskind has chosen to keep mum about certain hard-core extremist groups of his acquaintance. And with good reason. He himself has carried their banners.<sup>78</sup>

The *Ingram's* article went on to detail Zeskind's record of Marxist-Leninist "links and ties," quoting both *The Watchdogs* and Kansas City journalist Bruce Rodgers, who detailed Zeskind's paranoid demeanor in *City Magazine* in 1981. According to Cashill, Zeskind's demonization of local Christian conservatives 'has driven a wedge between area Christians and Jews that never before existed.'"

Jack Cashill is not alone in this assessment of Zeskind's extremist behavior. Following the publication of Cashill's article, John W. Uhlmann, president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Kansas, responded with a letter to the editor:

I appreciate very much reading the article about Leonard Zeskind. There some within the Jewish community who advance their own agenda under the guise of protecting the Jewish community. While it helps the liberal wing of the democratic party, it is doing irreparable harm in this country and to the Jewish community.

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<sup>76</sup> Bert Cochran, *Labor and Communism: The Conflict That Shaped American Unions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 285-286.

<sup>77</sup> Jack Cashill, "Who's Watching the Watchdog," *Ingram's* (April 2000), 19-20

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

Ingram's has helped to expose the duplicity of people like Leonard Zeskind. Thank you for the brilliant writing and the insightfulness of the article.<sup>79</sup>

## **The CDR and the Great Black Church Arson Conspiracy Hoax**

In 1996 a huge media campaign commenced in the United States to publicize an alleged conspiracy by white racists, neo-Nazis and Ku Klux Klansmen to set fire to black churches throughout the south. The Center For Democratic Renewal was the primary organization pushing the story which it described as the work of "a well-organized white supremacist movement." The late Rev. Mac Charles Jones, a CDR leader, officer of the National Council of Churches, and associate of Leonard Zeskind, characterized it as a terrifying resurgence of white racism. CDR chair C. T. Vivian blamed the arsons on the Christian right, noting that there was only a "slippery slope" from conservative Christians to those who are really doing the burnings.<sup>80</sup>

However, the issue was not this simple. On 5 July 1996 *Associated Press* writer Fred Bayles noted that of the 409 church fires since 1990, two-thirds were at white churches, while of the 148 fires since 1995, more than half were also at white churches. In the fires at black churches "only random links to racism" could be found. Bayles concluded that there was "no evidence that most of the 73 black church fires since 1995 can be blamed on a conspiracy or a general climate of racial hatred."<sup>81</sup>

A detailed analysis of the claims by the CDR and other players in the church burning conspiracy appeared in *New Yorker* magazine. Writer Michael Kelly noted that:

There is no evidence of a massive plot by organized hate groups. The people who set racially motivated fires at black churches tend to be loners and losers and copycats acting largely on drunken impulse, and they are few in number.<sup>82</sup>

Kelly also comments on the effects of the CDR's false claims of a white racist conspiracy:

Placing the blame for the church burnings on a cultural conspiracy of white racism works toward two important political goals. First, by changing the definition of the word "conspiracy" to implicate not only the whites who have actually plotted to burn a church but whites in general and the entire American political establishment, it obscures the fact that federal investigators have to date uncovered no evidence of any national, or even regional, conspiracy in any of the fires, and it reaffirms the idea that 1996 equals 1963.

Second, in a critical election year it works to establish a political climate in which any Republican attempts to win votes on some of the Party's most popular issues may be depicted as fostering anti-black violence.<sup>83</sup>

Michael Fumento, a former attorney for the U. S. Civil Rights Commission, writing in *Commentary* magazine, reported on his own independent investigation and concluded that the controversy was close to a "deliberate hoax." His investigation soon focused on the CDR. He noted that the CDR has a "rather more explicit" agenda than that of a "watchdog" or "anti-hate" group. This includes working "with progressive activists and

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<sup>79</sup> John W. Uhlmann, letter, "Hidden Agenda Exposed," *Ingram's* (May 2000).

<sup>80</sup> Michael Fumento, "Politics and Church Burnings," *Commentary* (October 1996).

<sup>81</sup> Fred Bayles, *Associated Press* article (5 July 1996).

<sup>82</sup> Michael Kelly, "Playing With Fire," *New Yorker* (15 July 1996).

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*



organizations to build a movement to counter right-wing rhetoric and public-policy initiatives.”<sup>84</sup> According to Fumento:

What I found was that beginning last winter and throughout the spring, the CDR, in conjunction with the National Council of Churches (NCC), had been feeding the media a steady diet of “news” about black church burnings in the South.....Since 1990, the CDR...alleged, there had been 90 arson attacks against black churches in nine Southern states; the number had been rising every year; and each and every culprit “arrested and/or detained” was white.

I established that the CDR had systematically failed to count fires set by blacks in black churches, had labeled as arson a number of fires which responsible authorities insisted were attributable to other causes, and had altogether ignored fires in white churches.<sup>85</sup>

What was the motive behind this CDR hoax? According to Fumento, an article in the 9 August 1996 edition of the *Wall Street Journal* revealed that the NCC had been having a hard time raising money to support its anti-racist programs. Working with seven other groups, the CDR and NCC established a special fund for burned churches and “to challenge racism throughout the country.”

By early August it had accumulated \$9 million from Americans sincerely alarmed by the specter of burning black churches, and contributions were continuing to pour in at the rate of approximately \$100,000 a day.<sup>86</sup>

Fumento also observed that the person in charge of the Burned Churches Fund was a NCC employee by the name of Don Rojas, former press secretary to the late Marxist-Leninist leader of Grenada, Maurice Bishop.

In May, 1997 *Foundation Watch* newsletter discussed the National Council of Churches and its highly suspicious windfall. Observing that the Burned Churches Fund had raised \$12 million and, considering that many of the churches had fire insurance, only \$4.5 million would rebuild all the churches that had burned, the Foundation speculated what the NCC would do with the \$7 million surplus?:

The answer seems to be to use it for unpopular political advocacy programs. [Rev. Charles] Mac Jones and Don Rojas, the administrator for the Burned Churches Fund have plans to spend \$3.5 million “for program advocacy to address economic justice and interlocking oppressions from gender to homophobia”.....

The Institute For Religion and Democracy issued a report on the Burned Churches Campaign that reveals that Mac Jones headed a support committee for Communist leader Angela Davis when she and several Black Panthers were on trial for murder in the early seventies.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Fumento, Op Cit.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Fred Friedman, *Foundation Watch* (May, 1977).

## **Chapter Four**

### **Political Research Associates**

*A Study in “Links and ties”*

- As a religion, Marxism is a secularized form of the idea of predestination. Nicholas Berdyaev, *The Realm of Spirit and the Realm of Caesar*, 1952.
- Slogans are both exciting and comforting, but they are also powerful opiates for the conscience. James Bryant Conant, *Baccalaureate Address*, Harvard University, June 17, 1934.
- The connection between the Gulag and Marx is obvious. It is not an accident which can be explained by bureaucracy, Stalinist deviation or Lenin’s errors. Rather it is a direct and ineluctable consequence of Marxist principles. The classless society is not a messianic vision, but rather another name for terror. Monique Hirschhorn, *Stanford French Review*, vol. 2, 1978.
- The religious quality of Marxism also explains a characteristic attitude of the orthodox Marxist against opponents. To him, as to any believer in a faith, the opponent is not merely in error but in sin. Dissent is disapproved of not only intellectually but also morally. Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, 1942.
- It is almost impossible to convince people who are under the influence of ideological bigotry that those whom they regard as belonging to the enemy species are human. Louis J. Halle, *The Ideological Imagination*, 1972.

According to its own literature, Political Research Associates (PRA) began in Chicago in 1981 under the name Midwest Research. In 1987 Midwest Research moved to Cambridge, MA, and effected its name change in the process. In addition to numerous reports, articles and books, PRA publishes *The Public Eye* quarterly newsletter. The two principle officers of PRA have always been Jean Hardisty, Director, and John Foster “Chip” Berlet, analyst.<sup>88</sup>

Although often described as a “senior analyst” at PRA, Berlet was, in fact, for years the only analyst in the three-person office. Margaret Quigley served as Berlet’s primary researcher until her untimely death along with domestic partner Susie Chancey-O-Quinn in 1993. Jean Hardisty, an accomplished woman, holds the distinction of having been inducted into the “Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame” in October 1995. In recent years an influx of foundation money has swelled the PRA staff to six, including Berlet and Hardisty.

Guidestar, the internet search service of Philanthropic Research, Inc., lists Political Research Associates as follows:

PRA is a research center that analyzes information on anti-democratic movements and trends and publishes materials that explain their ideologies, strategies, agendas, financing and links to each other.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Unmasking The Political Right: A Ten Year Report, 1981-1991 (Cambridge: Political Research Associates, 1992).

<sup>89</sup> [www.guidestar.org/search/](http://www.guidestar.org/search/) 13 March 2001.

What this description leaves out is the heavy radical left agenda of PRA itself, including the fact that those “anti-democratic” movements fail to include Marxist-Leninist and extreme leftist movements unless they are in sectarian dispute with PRA. As for the “links to each other,” PRA’s “links” are examined here in detail. There is nothing even vaguely impartial, objective or scholarly about PRA except the image it attempts to foist upon an unsuspecting public, including reporters and researchers who contact it for information.

A 1989 PRA biographical sheet on Chip Berlet lauded his tireless effort toward neutralizing police and counter-terrorist surveillance of radical leftist groups. Among his prepared lectures was “From Concentration Camps to Contragate: Nazis, Anti-Communism, and the National Security State.” In it he reveals:

How obsessive Cold War anti-communism led to an alliance with former Nazi collaborators and the development of the National Security State with its emphasis on militarism and covert action abroad, and secrecy and repression at home.<sup>90</sup>

Another PRA regular is Russ Bellant, who in 1988 wrote a PRA document purporting to show that the Reagan administration was infiltrated by Nazis. The publication, *Old Nazis, The New Right and the Reagan Administration*<sup>91</sup>, roundly denounced by Republican Party officials and virtually ignored in the mainstream press, was favorably reviewed in the *People’s Weekly World*, publication of the Communist Party USA, which quoted Berlet as follows:

Only one-third of the report is devoted to the so-called ethnic Nazis...Other chapters reveal how these fascists worked hand-in-glove with the American Security Council, the World Anti-Communist League and other fascist-like groups and how their activities overlapped with the Iran-contras affair and U.S. foreign policy in South Africa and Central America. The bottom line is that a fascist and authoritarian network, whose guiding ideology is anti-communism, has been recruited into the Republican Party.<sup>92</sup>

Bellant’s publication was also favorably reviewed in *Searchlight*, which was not surprising since it drew on that publication for much of its information. They concluded their review with “We now know who our enemies are.”<sup>93</sup>

## Chip Berlet and the National Lawyers Guild

*The Public Eye* was for years a semi-official organ of the National Lawyers Guild (NLG), of which Chip Berlet is a long-standing member. His 1989 biographical sheet distributed by PRA admits that he is a “former vice-president of the NLG and currently serves as Secretary of the NLG’s Civil Liberties Committee.” He also coordinates joint work between the NLG and the National Committee Against Repressive Legislation [NCARL].<sup>94</sup>

A 1981 issue of the publication states unequivocally that “*The Public Eye* is produced in conjunction with the National Lawyers Guild Committee Against Government Repression and Police Crimes.” It also lists Chip Berlet as a managing editor.<sup>95</sup> What was not included in the biographical sheet is Berlet’s history as a writer for *High Times*, the virtual

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<sup>90</sup> *Chip Berlet: Prepared Lectures for 1989* (Cambridge, MA: Political Research Associates, 1989).

<sup>91</sup> Russ Bellant, *Old Nazis, The New Right and the Reagan Administration* (Cambridge: Political Research Associates, 1988).

<sup>92</sup> Tim Wheeler, “The Bush Campaign - Fascists On Board,” *People’s Daily World* (22 September 1988).

<sup>93</sup> “Reviews,” *Searchlight* (May 1989), 20.

<sup>94</sup> Political Research Associates, *Biographical Information: Chip Berlet* (1989).

<sup>95</sup> *The Public Eye*, Volume III, Issues 1 and 2 (1981).

house organ of the recreational drug industry. Berlet's articles appeared from 1976 to 1981.<sup>96</sup>

Professor Harvey Klehr of Emory University, in his detailed book *Far Left of Center: The American Left Today*, details the extreme left roots of the National Lawyers Guild:

The NLG is an affiliate of the Soviet-controlled International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL), founded in 1946. Expelled from France in 1949, the IADL is now headquartered in Brussels. Over the years it has steadfastly supported every twist and turn in Soviet foreign policy, including the invasions of Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan.<sup>97</sup>

In *The Soviet Propaganda Network*, published in 1988, British diplomat Clive Rose, describes the IADL thusly:

The IADL, whose organizational links with the pre-war Comintern are more apparent than most of the current Soviet controlled international front organizations.

The IADL has a large number of national affiliates throughout the world, including the Haldane society in the United Kingdom, which was originally founded in the 1930s as a society of British socialist lawyers, which was disaffiliated by the Labour Party in 1949 on account of its subservience to the Communist Party, and the National Lawyers' Guild in the U.S.<sup>98</sup>

During the 1960s and 1970s the NLG experienced considerable growth with the rise of the radical student movement. Several NLG figures were violent revolutionaries, including Bernardine Dohrn, the NLG student organizer in 1967 and fixture on the FBI's "most wanted list" for several years. Another was Judith Clark, now serving a long sentence for murder in the 1981 Brinks armored car robbery undertaken to fund radical leftist activities. According to Prof. Gunter Lewy of the University of Massachusetts:

By the early 1970s old and new left elements in the Guild had come to terms, for they shared basic goals, the most immediate of which was the victory of the Vietnamese Communists..... Marxist-Leninist terminology, previously shunned, now was used openly in Guild proceedings and publications.<sup>99</sup>

An article in a 1981 issue of *Military Police* journal detailed the criminal careers of several National Lawyers Guild members as follows:

...Carlos Zapata who was killed in Denver by a bomb he was planting at a VFW hall on 22 March 1978. He was...involved in the National Lawyers Guild-sponsored 'Police Crimes Task Force.'

Bernardine Dohrn, the much sought Weather Underground fugitive, was named student director for the National Lawyers' Guild in 1967.

NLG member, Stephen Mitchell Bingham, is being sought by the state of California and the FBI for smuggling a .380 automatic pistol to George Jackson in prison...

...Guild member Frank Eugenio Martinez...was a Loyola law student who was active in NLG projects at the college and on the streets. Suspiciously, Frank's fingerprints ended up on several of the eight letter-bombs mailed to Denver police officers in

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<sup>96</sup> Chip Berlet, "Where the Candidates Stand on Dope Reform," *High Times* (May 1976); "Inside The DEA," *High Times* (December/January 1976); "National Anti-Drug Coalition," *High Times* (May 1981).

<sup>97</sup> Klehr, 1988, 161.

<sup>98</sup> Clive Rose, *The Soviet Propaganda Network: A Directory of Organizations Serving Soviet Foreign Policy* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1988), 94, 98.

<sup>99</sup> Gunter Lewy, *The Cause That Failed: Communism in American Political Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 285.

1973...His younger brother, Francisco Kiko Martinez, also an attorney, was killed in a car when a bomb they were transporting exploded.<sup>100</sup>

The article by Detective Arleigh McCree, a former military police officer who became Officer in Charge, Firearms and Explosives Unit of the Los Angeles Police Department, observes that "The NLG continues to act as a clearinghouse and as an apologist and defender for terrorists and terrorism."

## Civil Libertarian?

As for being a civil libertarian, consider Chip Berlet's role in the harassment and humiliation of a 76-year-old Salem, MA, Roman Catholic priest who happened to attend a meeting where anti-Semitic comments were made. Apparently in concert with representatives of the right-wing chauvinistic Jewish Defense League (viewed by the FBI as a terrorist organization with a long history of violence), Berlet "conclusively identified" the priest on a videotape obtained by the JDL as the Rev. Francis S. Strykowski of St. John the Baptist Church in Salem. Berlet, who was also at the 1988 meeting, said "I was there posing as a racist." According to *The Jewish Advocate*:

Rev. Francis Strykowski, 76, pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Salem, has tendered his resignation following an Archdiocese investigation confirming the authenticity of his presence at a videotaped 1988 white supremacist meeting. The controversial tape, released by the Boston area Jewish Defense League (JDL) in August...showed Strykowski and another individual, identified as Msgr. Lipka.<sup>101</sup>

In a statement, Father Strykowski stated that he "did not know ahead of time what would be the contents [of the talk]...it was racist and anti-Semitic. I sat through that and left immediately after it." Father Strykowski had held his position at the parish since 1968.<sup>102</sup>

The targeting and public humiliation of an elderly priest had no objective value. It hardly struck a blow against "racism, sexism and homophobia" - Berlet's most frequently cited hatreds. Rather, it demonstrated the vindictiveness and seeming sadism that has come to characterize Berlet's activities. He's a very angry man.

Berlet's one-sided view of civil liberties runs through his entire career, or perhaps he has constructed a definition of civil liberties more congenial to his ideological imperatives. Writing with Leonard Zeskind, Lyn Wells and Jean Hardisty in a 1985 issue of *Shmate: A Journal of Progressive Jewish Thought*, Berlet rages at right-wing organizations such as the now-defunct American Security Council and Church League of America for "spying" on extreme leftists and sharing some of this information with law enforcement.

Another Berlet article in this same issue of *Shmate* claims that:

The right seeks to enforce upon America a narrow set of political and moral standards. In order to accomplish this, it must stifle debate and dissent. And to do that, it must seriously curtail our civil liberties.<sup>103</sup>

It's certainly true that there are right-wingers who have intolerant ideas about opponents and who would like to silence them, or worse. However, Berlet's analysis omits any mention of the same behavior on the extreme left, not to mention by himself. For civil libertarians to be genuine, and not just shills for a particular ideological persuasion, they must apply the same standards along the entire political spectrum. If harassment, intimidation, stalking, and exposure for exposure's sake are wrong for one they should also be wrong for all.

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<sup>100</sup> Sgt. A. McCree, "A Case For Self-Defense," *Military Police* (Summer 1981).

<sup>101</sup> Dalia Miller, "Salem Priest Resigns After Probe," *The Jewish Advocate* (6-12 November 1992), 1.

<sup>102</sup> Dalia Miller, op cit.

<sup>103</sup> Chip Berlet, "Civil Liberties," *Ibid.*, 37-41.

## Chip Berlet and the John Birch Society

One of the oft repeated stereotypes of right-wingers, and of the John Birch Society in particular, is that they are “paranoid” or “engage in the politics of paranoia.” There’s probably a bit of truth to that inasmuch as all adversarial political organizations are necessarily suspicious of their opponents. In the case of the Birchers, however, they may not have been paranoid enough.

## Chip Berlet, Jean Hardisty & the Revolutionary Left

On 13 January 1984 an open letter to Judge Charles Sifton entitled “Political Grand Juries Must Be Stopped!” appeared in the New York-based Marxist-Leninist, weekly, *Guardian*. The letter expressed outrage that federal grand juries were investigating the activities of leftist revolutionaries who have “supported mass struggle against the military...development of an armed clandestine movement [and] broad struggle against repression.” Among its signers were Chip Berlet and Jean Hardisty.

Other signers included convicted spy Morton Sobel, William Kunstler and Arthur Kinoy, attorneys active in the National Lawyers Guild and closely associated with Communist and revolutionary causes. Among the organizations represented were the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee (PFOC), John Brown Anti-Klan Committee (JBAKC), International Workers Party (IWC), League for Revolutionary Workers (LRW), May 19<sup>th</sup> Communist Organization (M19CO), National Lawyers Guild (NLG), Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika (PGRNA), Revolution in Africa Action Committee (RAAC), Sojourner Truth Organization (STO); Women Against Imperialism (WAI) and the Youth International Party (YIP).<sup>104</sup>

The PFOC, formed in 1974, was the publishing arm of the Weather Underground Organization (WUO), the terrorist spin-off from Students For a Democratic Society (SDS). Its first pamphlet was *Prairie Fire: The Politics of Revolutionary Anti-imperialism*, written by Bernardine Dohrn, Bill Ayers and Jeff Jones. According to Harvey Klehr:

It announced that “we are communist men and women” and urged its supporters to form an above-ground arm of the WUO. Chapters soon formed in several cities with perhaps a thousand members. Members of PFOC helped facilitate communication and logistics for WUO members living underground.<sup>105</sup>

The PFOC also published *Breakthrough*, a quarterly journal which routinely called for widespread violent resistance to U. S. imperialism, and ran article after article praising third-world single party Marxist-Leninist dictatorships.

Another Weather Underground front, the John Brown Anti-Klan Committee, was formed in 1978 and soon had chapters in over a dozen cities with about 300 members.<sup>106</sup> It quickly took its place alongside other Marxist-Leninist based anti-Klan organizations and proceeded to stage violent confrontations with small Klan groups when they held marches or demonstrations.

The JBAKC counter-demonstrators were almost always more violent than the Klansmen they protested. In 1983, for example, the JBAKC attempted to halt a parade of seventy Klansmen in Austin, TX. Counter-demonstrators threw rocks injuring twelve people, including several police officers. Two members of the JBAKC - Elizabeth Ann Duke and Linda Evans - were among those involved in the openly terrorist May 19th Communist

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<sup>104</sup> *Guardian* (11 January 1984).

<sup>105</sup> Klehr, 1988, 109.

<sup>106</sup> *Montgomery Journal* (10 February 1983).

Organization.<sup>107</sup> In 1984 the JBAKC publication, *Death To The Klan*, published the following communiqué:

November 7, 1983

Tonight we bombed the U. S. Capitol building. We attacked the U. S. Government to retaliate against imperialist aggression that has sent the marines, the CIA and the army to invade sovereign nations...

We are acting in solidarity with all those leading the fight against U. S. imperialism - the peoples of Grenada, Lebanon, Palestine, El Salvador, and Nicaragua - who are confronting direct U. S. aggression...

Our action carries a message to the U. S. imperialist ruling class: we purposely aimed out attack at the institutions of imperialist rule rather than at individual members of the ruling class and government. We did not choose to kill any of them at this time...<sup>108</sup>

The May 19th Communist Organization acquired its notoriety from the role of several members in the attempted holdup of a Brinks armored truck in Nyack, NY, in November 1981 that left two policemen and one security guard dead. A press release claimed M19CO was being persecuted because it supported armed struggle of oppressed nations like American blacks and Puerto Ricans as well as the militant struggle against white supremacy.<sup>109</sup>

Approximately six months later on 11 July 1984 another letter, this time addressed "To All Progressive People," appeared in the Marxist-Leninist *Guardian* weekly that included the following:

We, the undersigned, are grand jury resisters, former grand jury resisters, people who have been targets of grand jury investigations, and people who have consistently fought for non-collaboration with the grand jury. We are united now to protest the current escalation of grand jury attacks....

Criminal contempt is a "legal" mechanism to establish political internment in the United States...an attempt to instill a "snitch mentality" in which fear of jail overrides justice and principle.

We urge you to join us in refusing to collaborate with the grand jury or the FBI. Now more than ever before we need a powerful resistance movement that would never give the U. S. government or its agencies any information about the national liberation struggles and progressive movements, that refuses to collaborate with the military draft, that is willing to harbor Central American refugees, that staunchly resists the U. S. War mobilization. We won't cooperate! Stop the grand jury!

Among the over one hundred signers—a virtual who's who of the extreme radical left—were Chip Berlet and Jean Hardisty. Other signers included David Gilbert, Kathy Boudin and Judith Clark, all members of the radical Weather Underground organization and all serving prison sentences for the murder of a Brinks armored truck guard in 1981. Among the numerous organizations included was the Sojourner Truth Organization.<sup>110</sup>

This letter is an example of the classic Marxist-Leninist approach to the crimes committed by Communists in the service of their ideology. Here we see an attempt to shift attention from what Marxist-Leninists have done to what has been done to Marxist-Leninists. By focusing on the civil liberties implications of the government's case against the Weather

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<sup>107</sup> John George and Laird Wilcox, *Nazis, Communists, Klansmen and Others on the Fringe* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1992), 158.

<sup>108</sup> "Armed Resistance Unit Bombs US Capitol," *Death To The Klan* (Winter, 1984, No. 3).

<sup>109</sup> May 19th Communist Organization, *Press Release* (2 November 1981).

<sup>110</sup> *Guardian* (11 July 1984), reprinted in *Stop The Grand Jury*, John Brown Anti-Klan Committee (November 1984).

Underground, they seek to dodge the question of the horrible crimes committed by them, and the historic crimes of Marxist-Leninists generally. Not what they have done, but what has been done to them.

The *Guardian* contained a long article by Chip Berlet and Jean Hardisty in a 1981 *Guardian Special Report*. Entitled “An Anatomy of the New Right,” they say:

The paramilitary, neo-fascist and ultra-right branch [of the right-wing] has ties to both the old right and the new right, but is publicly shunned by both. This branch includes groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, the Nazis, Posse Comitatus and other armed militants.

The new right, by inflaming public opinion and promoting fear, is attempting to galvanize its followers into a militant anti-Communist crusade reminiscent of the cold war...<sup>111</sup>

With a relationship lasting a full decade and more, in September 1991 Chip Berlet penned what was to be among his last articles for the *Guardian* before it went out of business. *Right-wing Conspiracists Make Inroads Into Left* was devoted to a major theme in Berlet’s worldview, that “fascists” were conspiring to establish common ground with leftists on certain issues in order to compromise and infiltrate the radical left.<sup>112</sup>

In 1983 an issue of *The Public Eye* contained a statement by Cathy Wilkerson, a captured fugitive from the ill-fated Weather Underground terrorist bomb factory that blew up in March 1970 killing three people, “prior to her imprisonment for Weather Underground Activities, January 15, 1981”:

Today I am going to prison to serve a three-year term. I have been identified as one who sought to attack the foundations of American justice...I want to take this opportunity to extend my solidarity to the people and communist parties of Vietnam and Cuba...and I want to send special love and solidarity to the sisters and brothers of the Puerto Rican Movement who are P.O.W.’s in our prisons....<sup>113</sup>

Much of this issue of *The Public Eye* was devoted to the “New McCarthyism” surrounding the 1981 Brinks Armored Car Robbery. In a preface to an article critical of press coverage of the event, *The Public Eye* had the following lead:

The Brinks Robbery ushered in a new phase for the current witch hunt. As before, the press becomes a willing, almost eager, partner in circulating the most ludicrous charges regarding progressive political groups and individuals, as long as someone could be quoted alleging a connection to the Brinks robbery.<sup>114</sup>

One cannot but reflect on the many articles by Chip Berlet “linking and tying” individuals to various right-wing causes based on “someone being quoted alleging a connection...”

## **Chip Berlet and Chicago Area Friends of Albania**

His long-standing relationship with the NLG notwithstanding, perhaps the most outrageous extreme left link Chip Berlet possesses is his membership in the Chicago Area Friends of Albania (CAFA). Founded in 1983, CAFA is dedicated toward individuals who “are friendly and supportive of the People’s Socialist Republic of Albania.”<sup>115</sup> In 1985

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<sup>111</sup> *Guardian Special Report* (Fall, 1981), reprinted by *Public Eye*.

<sup>112</sup> Chip Berlet, “Right-wing Conspiracists Make Inroads Into Left,” *Guardian* (11 September 1991), 3.

<sup>113</sup> *The Public Eye* (Volume IV, Issues 1 & 2, 1983), 20-21.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid*, 23.

<sup>115</sup> Chicago Area Friends of Albania, *form letter signed by Sally Olson* (6 June 1983).



when Albanian dictator Enver Hoxa died, CAFA circulated a letter to its mailing list requesting “condolences” be sent to Hoxa’s wife and other Communist officials there.<sup>116</sup>

Albania, now going through the rigors of transformation from a one-party Marxist-Leninist dictatorship to some semblance of democracy, was for decades one of the most repressive of Communist countries. Moreover, this characteristic has been so widely documented that no one could not be aware of the horrible, murderous nature of that regime. Freedom House, which monitors human rights around the world, gave the following characterization of Albania at approximately the time of Berlet’s membership in CAFA:

Albania is a traditional Marxist-Leninist dictatorship. While there are a number of elected bodies, including an assembly, the parallel government of the Communist Party (4.5 percent of the people) is decisive at all levels; elections offer only one list of candidates.

Press, radio, and television are completely under government or party control, and communication with the outside world is minimal. Media are characterized by incessant propaganda, and open expression of opinion in private conversations can lead to long prison sentences. There is an explicit denial of freedom of thought for those who disagree with the government. Imprisonment for reasons of conscience is common; torture is frequently reported, and execution is invoked for many reasons.<sup>117</sup>

Nevertheless, on 26 June 1987 when Political Research Associates was preparing to make its move to Boston, CAFA held an open house and farewell party in Chip Berlet’s honor. A CAFA flyer requested:

Help C.A.F.A. say goodbye and good luck to one of its long-time members, Chip Berlet. Chip and his family are moving to the Boston area, to continue their anti-fascist work there. Chip was one of our founding members, and a steadfast friend of Albania through thick and thin. Come give him a good send off.<sup>118</sup>

After this information was made public in 1992 Berlet was challenged concerning it. In an Internet posting under the heading of the NLG Civil Liberties Committee dated 13 August 1993 Berlet responded thusly:

I joined the Albania group at a time when I was investigating why Yugoslav agents were harassing the émigrés from Albania and Kosovo in Chicago. One did not have to support the government of Albania to join. I have always opposed Stalinism.<sup>119</sup>

However, at the Millennial Studies Conference at Boston University in 1998 Berlet acknowledged that his membership in CAFA was proving embarrassing and claimed that his only reason for joining was to find a platform to practice public speaking!<sup>120</sup> This from a “one of our founding members, and a steadfast friend of Albania through thick and thin.”

## **Chip Berlet and U.S. Law Enforcement and Intelligence Agencies**

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<sup>116</sup> Chicago Area Friends of Albania, *form letter signed by Sally Olson* (12 April 1985).

<sup>117</sup> Raymond D. Castill, *Freedom In The World: Political Rights and Civil Liberties, 1987-1988*, (New York: Freedom House, 1989).

<sup>118</sup> Chicago Area Friends of Albania, *flyer*, (26 June 1987).

<sup>119</sup> H2JArticle 16502...in alt.conspiracy, From: NLG Civil Liberties Committee <chberlet@igc.apc.org>. Date: 13 Aug 93 20:29 PDT. Subject: 4mRe: Who Is Chip Berlet?.

<sup>120</sup> Millennial Studies Conference, Boston University, 2-4 February 1997.

Concern over anti-Communism represents a thread that runs through almost everything Chip Berlet does. In 1991 Chip Berlet and Linda Lotz released a revised version of their *Reading List On Intelligence Agencies and Political Repression*. It was distributed by far left groups including the Movement Support Network (MSN), Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), and National Lawyers Guild Civil Liberties Committee. The list consists mainly of works attacking United States intelligence and law enforcement agencies and virtually none of some 150 titles are critical of the intelligence or law enforcement activities of any Communist regime. The list notes that “This is the reading list circulated by Phil Agee at his Speakout lectures.”<sup>121</sup>

Who is Linda Lotz? According to a biographical note on the *Reading List*:

...Ms. Lotz was formerly a staff organizer for the now-defunct Campaign for Political Rights, a Washington, DC-based coalition which organized against covert action abroad and political surveillance at home.<sup>122</sup>

The Campaign For Political Rights (CPR) was originally founded in 1977 as the Campaign To Stop Government Spying (CSGS) with the help of Morton Halperin and the National Lawyers Guild. It changed its name in 1978. The primary role of the organization, in addition to exposing American intelligence efforts overseas, was to undertake a disinformation campaign on behalf of Marxist-Leninist terrorists in the United States. According to Scott Steven Powell:

Under the leadership of Morton Halperin, CPR became the workhorse in the campaign against the CIA, FBI, and local law-enforcement agencies.

For Halperin there are, it seems, “no enemies on the Left.” One of his CPR assistants, Ester Herst, was national director for the National Committee Against Repressive Legislation (NCARL)...Halperin flew to London in 1977 for the defense of Philip Agee, who was being deported from Great Britain as a security risk after his continuing collaboration with Cuban intelligence.<sup>123</sup>

Who is Phillip Agee? He is a renegade Central Intelligence Officer implicated in revealing the names of CIA officials in a manner leading to their endangerment, and in at least one case, that of Richard Welch, their death.<sup>124</sup> Agee was deeply involved in the anti-government *Counterspy* magazine, which made a practice of such disclosures. According to an item in *Security Intelligence* newsletter:

To the surprise of few, CIA defector Philip Agee was named as a recipient of KGB pay for almost 20 years. Florintino Aspillaga Lombard, formerly a major in Cuba’s Direccion General de Inteligencia (DGI) before defecting to the US, said payments to Agee for anti-CIA writing and lecturing could exceed \$1 million.

Agee...left the agency in 1968 and began exposing CIA officers and operations through lectures, magazines and books.<sup>125</sup>

Referring to *Counterspy*, a *Washington Post* editorial asked, “What other result than the killing did Mr. [Timothy] Butz and his colleagues at *Counterspy* expect when they fingered

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<sup>121</sup> Chip Berlet and Linda Lotz, *Reading List on Intelligence Agencies and Political Repression* (NY: National Lawyers Guild Civil Liberties Committee, 1991).

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> S. Steven Powell, *Covert Cadre: Inside the Institute For Policy Studies* (Ottawa, IL: Green Hill Publishers, 1987), 72-73.

<sup>124</sup> “Richard S. Welch,” *Washington Post*, (29 December 1975), p. A16.

<sup>125</sup> “To The Surprise Of A Few....,” *Security Intelligence* (24 August 1992), 5.

Mr. Welch?"<sup>126</sup> Butz, incidentally, was on the editorial staff of *The Public Eye*, along with Chip Berlet and Russ Bellant.<sup>127</sup>

U.S. Senator John Chaffee, a ranking member of the Select Committee on Intelligence pointed out in the *Congressional Record*:

At the time of the Welch assassination, *Counterspy* magazine claimed they had leaked the names of 225 alleged CIA agents. Now, five years later, Louis Wolf of *Covert Action Information Bulletin* can boast that he has helped to disclose the names of more than 2,000 American intelligence officers stationed around the world.<sup>128</sup>

Louis Wolf, incidentally, is listed as being on the advisory board of Political Research Associates on PRA's 1999 letterhead.<sup>129</sup>

Agee is one of Chip Berlet's heroes, and the old *Counterspy* and *Covert Action Information Bulletin* crowd include some of his close working associates. Agee gave a revealing account of his politics in an interview with a Swiss magazine in 1975:

The CIA is plainly on the wrong side, that is, the capitalistic side. I approve [of] KGB activities, communist activities in general, when they are to the advantage of the oppressed. In fact, the KGB is not doing enough in this regard...<sup>130</sup>

More recently Agee commented on his revolutionary sympathies and his role (with Louis Wolf) in the destabilization of American intelligence activities:

Havana, Cuba, July 1998

This was an exciting city 20 years ago this month, as more than ten thousand young people from around the globe gathered for the Eleventh World Festival of Youth and Students.

A group of had just launched this magazine in Washington, DC. as the *CovertAction Information Bulletin*, and all six of us were here for the world festival.

We gave speeches describing Agency [Central Intelligence Agency] operations and how to identify their undercover personnel, and we testified at the International Tribunal Against Imperialism, the Festival's main political event which focused on the CIA's war against Cuba.<sup>131</sup>

As for *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, according to counter-terrorism writer Neil Livingstone:

Publications like the *Covert Action Information Bulletin* are widely regarded, even within the liberal community, as paranoia mongers that view the counterterrorism community as a sinister aggregation of quick-on-the-trigger thugs and ideologues engaged in all manner of skullduggery...<sup>132</sup>

Unlike the far right, where alliances are difficult and unstable and individuals tend not to work well together, alliances and linkages among certain elements of the extreme left appear common and more enduring, even when they have the effect of destabilizing U.S. government operations against terrorism, domestic and foreign.

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<sup>126</sup> Welch, Op Cit.

<sup>127</sup> "Public Eye Staff," *The Public Eye* (Vol II, Issues 1 & 2, 1979), 3.

<sup>128</sup> "For The Record," *Washington Post*, 27 July 1980.

<sup>129</sup> Letterhead, Political Research Associates, 1999.

<sup>130</sup> Peter Studer, "Philip Agee -- Turncoat CIA Agent," *Tages Anzeiger* (Zurich, Switzerland), March 1975 (undated clipping).

<sup>131</sup> Philip Agee, "CovertAction Quarterly: Turning Twenty, Looking Back," *CovertAction Quarterly* (Fall 1998).

<sup>132</sup> Neil C. Livingstone, *The Cult of Counterterrorism* (NY: Lexington Books, 1990), 30-31.

In the Spring of 1987 a Berlet article attacking domestic counter-terrorism practices of various police departments appeared in *Overthrow*, the appropriately named organ of the far left Youth International Party. Among those targeted were the Chicago Police Department Intelligence Unit, the Texas Department of Public Safety, the Indianapolis Police Department and the Detroit Police Department.<sup>133</sup>

In recent years Berlet has softened his stance against repressive actions against political dissidents, providing they are identified with the conservative right. In March 2000 a group of students at Brandies University sought to bring veteran movie actor and National Rifle Association president Charlton Heston to speak at the campus. The university responded with a poorly concealed tactic used to discourage politically incorrect speakers. They would not allow Heston to speak unless the student group put up between \$5,000 and \$10,000 to finance “security” for Heston. These included “a bomb sniffing dog, ten police officers, two metal detector wands, a paramedic team and four pints of Mr. Hestons blood type.”<sup>134</sup>

Had similar requirements been made for a speech by Jesse Jackson or a similar figure on the far left the implied threat to the safety of the speaker would have been an instant scandal. Berlet responded to the situation with a statement that “What Brandies University is asking for is the minimum security required for a major public figure such as Heston in a country that does not have adequate handgun control.”<sup>135</sup> But security for Heston from whom? Certainly not the “gun nuts” that Heston champions, or the militia types Berlet has tried to associate both Heston and the NRA with. Perhaps its security from the extreme leftists who are more comfortable with Berlet than Heston. Berlet may know what he’s talking about.

## **Chip Berlet and the United Front Against Fascism**

On 10 August 1991 Chip Berlet was a featured speaker at a rally on “Racism, Fascism and the New Right,” in Seattle, WA, sponsored by the “United Front Against Fascism.” Endorsers of the event included such diverse elements as the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP), on whose premises the rally was held, and “Asian Lesbians Outside Asia (ALOA).”<sup>136</sup> The FSP was formed in 1964 when the Seattle branch of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) broke away from the national organization. The organization has slowly shifted its emphasis from traditional Marxism-Leninism to revolutionary feminism and anti-racism.<sup>137</sup> Its principles include:

The working class is international and bound by global abuse. It must liberate itself through socialism. We support revolution on all fronts and seek to transform it into world socialism, which alone can defeat capitalism.

The struggles of the oppressed minorities against racism objectively challenge the basic core of the American political system. The resistance of people of color, who suffer dual oppression, spurs all other sections of the working class to advanced political consciousness and militancy.

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<sup>133</sup> Chip Berlet, “Secret Police Political Spying Network Revealed,” *Overthrow*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Spring 1987, np.

<sup>134</sup> Press Release, Young America’s Foundation, *Students Want Heston; Administration Asks for Blood...LITERALLY*, 14 March 2000.

<sup>135</sup> Op cit.

<sup>136</sup> Flyer, United Front Against Fascism, Seattle, WA, n.d.

<sup>137</sup> Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle and Dan Georgakas, *Encyclopedia of the American Left* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992).

History has proven that only a thoroughly democratic and centralized vanguard party can lead the proletariat and its many allies to power. The FSP, a product of the living tradition of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky, aspires to become a mass organization capable of providing direction for the coming American Revolution.<sup>138</sup>

The Freedom Socialist Party has branches in Australia and Canada in addition to ten branch offices in the United States. Its membership is estimated at several hundred.

## **Chip Berlet and the Socialist Scholars Conference**

On 24, 25, and 26 April 1992 the 10th annual Socialist Scholars Conference was held in New York City. Sponsors included the Marxist-Leninist *Guardian* newspaper, the New York Marxist School (NYMS), the Research Group on Socialism and Democracy (RGSD), and the Radical Philosophy Association (RPA). The program included panels with Angela Davis, then member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party USA (CPUSA), and Carl Bloice, then editor of the CPUSA's *People's Weekly World*.

Chip Berlet, along with Dennis King, Linda Hunt and A. J. Weberman conducted a panel on "How to Investigate the Right," sponsored by Political Research Associates. Other panels on radical topics were conducted by the *Socialist Register* and *Monthly Review* magazines; the Workers Defense League (WDL); the Soviet Workers Information Committee (SWIC); and *Social Text* magazine.<sup>139</sup>

## **Chip Berlet and the Brecht Forum / New York Marxist School**

In the extremist underworld of New York City's Marxist subculture there exists a complex of organizations governed by an interlocking directorate. The Brecht Forum / New York Marxist School / Institute for Popular Education are basically one and the same. Of special interest is the Brecht Forum, named after Marxist-Leninist writer Bertolt Brecht, perhaps one of the most blatant apologists ever for Communist atrocities. Regarding the role of the Communist functionary Brecht had this to say:

He who fights for Communism must be able to fight and to renounce fighting, to say the truth and not say the truth, to be helpful and unhelpful, to keep a promise and to break a promise, to go into danger and to avoid danger, to be known and to be unknown. He who fights for Communism has of all the virtues only one: that he fights for Communism.<sup>140</sup>

Brecht was involved with Communist activity in the motion picture industry among his many activities on behalf of Marxism-Leninism. According to Kenneth Lloyd Billingsley's 1998 account of Communist activity in 1930's and 40's Hollywood, *Hollywood Party*:

Brecht, who in 1935 had told Sidney Hook that Stalin's victims deserved to be shot even if they were innocent, had gained fame with *Three Penny Opera*, written by Kurt Weill. Brecht collaborated with Hans Eisler on *Die Massnahme* (The Measures Taken"), an agitprop musical about four agitators who are faced with a decision about a delinquent comrade. "We must shoot him and throw him into the

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<sup>138</sup> *Freedom Socialist Party -- Its Program and Principles: Where We Stand*, Freedom Socialist Party, n.d.

<sup>139</sup> Flyer, Tenth Annual Socialist Scholars Conference, April 24, 25, 26 1992, Borough of Manhattan Community College, NY, n.d.

<sup>140</sup> Quoted in Irving Howe and Lewis Coser, *The American Communist Party: A Critical History (1919-1957)*, (New York: Praeger, 1962), 505.

quicklime pit,” the agitators decide. Later they say, “We shot him and threw him into the quicklime pit. And when the quicklime had eaten him, we returned to our work.” In the final chorus is the line “And our work was happy, and you have spread the teachings of the classics, the ABC of Communism.”<sup>141</sup>

Hans Eisler was the brother of Gerhart Eisler, one of the most notorious Comintern agents of his era, highly skilled in espionage, sabotage and subversion. Billingsley states:

According to Ruth Fisher, Gerhart’s sister, Gerhart Eisler was a major Communist agent in America, directing Party affairs on behalf of the Kremlin.<sup>142</sup>

Bertolt Brecht...had fled to East Germany, where Gerhart Eisler had also been welcomed. There Brecht would enjoy full cooperation from the Communist regime in staging his plays, along with an Austrian passport, a West German publisher, and a Swiss bank account.<sup>143</sup>

According to FBI documents released under the Freedom of Information Act, Brecht’s communist activities were well known to the Bureau:

...it has been ascertained that Brecht is a frequent contact of individuals suspected of espionage activities in behalf of the Soviet Government as well as known Communists active in the movie industry in the Hollywood area. Brecht himself is a suspected agent of the Soviet Government and has been contacted by Gregori Khiefets, the former Soviet Vice Consul in San Francisco, who was in charge of Soviet espionage activities on the West Coast prior to his departure from the United States in July of 1944.<sup>144</sup>

The New York Marxist School was established in 1973 by Arthur Felberbaum, a Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) activist, in collaboration with the Marxist Educational Collective (MEC).<sup>145</sup> The board of directors of the BF/NYMS/IPE includes Marilyn Clement, formerly of the *Guardian* and Center For Democratic Renewal. On the advisory board we find Carl Bloice, former editor of the Communist Party USA’s *People’s Weekly World*.<sup>146</sup>

In September 1994 Chip Berlet conducted a three lecture seminar under the auspices of the Brecht Forum on “The Resistible Rise of Neofascism.”<sup>147</sup> Other recent programs by the group have included presentations by Irwin Silber, former editor of the *Guardian*, current editor of *Crossroads*; Peter Camejo, former officer of the Socialist Workers Party;<sup>148</sup> and a “two-week intensive study entitled “Marxism vs. The Contract On America.”<sup>149</sup>

Berlet’s association with the Brecht Forum is an enduring process. On 11 May 2001 he will lecture on “Producers and Parasites: Scapegoating and Right-Wing Power” with Matthew Lyons. Programs by other lecturers during this session of the Forum include

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<sup>141</sup> Kenneth Lloyd Billingsley, *Hollywood Party: How Communism Seduced the American Film Industry in the 1930’s and 1940’s* (Rocklin, CA: Forum, 1998), 196.

<sup>142</sup> Op Cit., 202.

<sup>143</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>144</sup> Office Memorandum [FBI], United States Government, to E. A. Tamm, from D. M Ladd. 3 October 1945.

<sup>145</sup> Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle, and Dan Georgakas, *Encyclopedia of the American left* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 650.

<sup>146</sup> Schedule of Events, January-March 1997, Brecht Forum.

<sup>147</sup> Brecht Forum / New York Marxist School / Institute for Popular Education, Sept-Oct 1994 Schedule.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Brecht Forum / New York Marxist School / Institute for Popular Education, May-July 1995 Schedule.

“Twentieth Century Marxism: An Evaluation” and “Revolution and the Transition to Socialism.”<sup>150</sup> A congenial place for Mr. Berlet.

An associate of Berlet’s, Dennis King, conducted a seminar on “David Duke, Lyndon LaRouche, and the Growth of Electoral Neo-Fascism” at the New York Marxist School on 4 June 1991.<sup>151</sup> King is author of *Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism*<sup>152</sup> as well as a ten-year past member of the extreme Marxist-Leninist sect, the Progressive Labor Party. King’s Marxist-Leninist “links and ties” are not mentioned in his book or any of the publicity surrounding it. Many people mistakenly believed that it was written by an objective researcher who was simply opposed to LaRouche’s brand of extremism.

Another participant in the Brecht Forum/New York Marxist School is Harry Magdoff, a long-time member of the advisory board and occasional lecturer. In 1991, for example, Magdoff gave a lecture entitled “The Age of Imperialism” during the BF/NYMS spring session.<sup>153</sup> Since 1968 he has also been an editor of the non-party Marxist journal, *Monthly Review*. In the April 2000 issue of that publication he spoke of spending “years struggling against the odds to make a living in the environment of great fear produced by the mania of anticommunism.”<sup>154</sup>

Magdoff is also known in other circles as well. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union scholars have gradually gained access to Soviet records of their dealings with the Communist Party, USA, and the transcription of the “Venona” coded documents, which contain information on Soviet undercover activities in the United States. Mentioned in the Venona documents in conjunction with the Communist infrastructure that had penetrated the U. S. Government was an individual named Magdoff, an employee of the War Production Board and alleged member of the secret “Perlo Group.” Harry Magdoff had worked for the War Production Board.

According to John Earl Haynes and Hervey Klehr, authors of *Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America*, former Communist Party courier Elizabeth Bentley had named Harry Magdoff as a member of the Perlo Group, and in a 1944 cable KGB officer Iskhak Akhmerov had assigned Magdoff the cover name of “Kant.”<sup>155</sup>

## **Chip Berlet and the Midwest Anti-Fascist Network (MAFNET)**

On 25 September 1995 the second annual “Midwest Anti-Fascist Network” (MAFNET) held a three-day conference in Columbus, Ohio. Speakers included Chip Berlet as well as:

Rita Bo Brown, former member of the nominally terrorist George Jackson Brigade (JGB). Jackson was killed in August 1970 when his brother attempted to free him from Soledad Prison by bursting in to a Marin County, CA, courtroom handing guns to three convicts and taking five hostages. In the shootout that ensued five people were killed including the judge.

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<sup>150</sup> Brecht Forum / New York Marxist School / Institute for Popular Education, April-June 2001 Schedule.

<sup>151</sup> Catalog, New York Marxist School (Spring, 1991), 12.

<sup>152</sup> Dennis King, *Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism* (New York: Doubleday, 1989).

<sup>153</sup> Catalog, New York Marxist School, 23.

<sup>154</sup> Harry Magdoff, “Notes From An Editor,” *Monthly Review* (April 2000).

<sup>155</sup> Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Fridrikh Igorevich Firsov, *The Secret World of American Communism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 312-13, 316.; John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, *Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 117, 118, 119, 121, 128, 409n2.

Signe Waller, former member of Jerry Tung's Worker's Viewpoint Organization (WVO), which evolved into the Communist Workers Party (CWP), a small, violence-prone Marxist-Leninist sect. In 1979 armed members of the CWP were killed in a shootout with Ku Klux Klansmen in Greensboro, NC. Her husband, Michael Waller, was one of five people killed.<sup>156</sup>

Also in attendance were representatives of Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) Klanwatch project, Leonard Zeskind's Center For Democratic Renewal (CDR) and RASH, an anti-racist Skinhead organization. Seminars were held on such diverse subjects as "Doing Revolutionary Anti-Klan Work" and "What Is Fascism."

## ***Guardian***

In order to fully grasp the apparent affinity both Chip Berlet and Political Research Associates and Leonard Zeskind and the Center For Democratic Renewal had for the now-defunct Marxist-Leninist (and sometime Maoist) publication, *Guardian*, it may help to know a little of its background.

*Guardian* long described itself as an "independent radical newsweekly." If the publishers, Weekly Guardian Associates, later the Institute for Independent Social Journalism, Inc., wanted to be more exact they would call their tabloid an "independent Marxist-Leninist newsweekly," for that has been the main thrust through its many changes over the years.

Launched as the *National Guardian* in October 1948 by James Aronson, Cedric Belfrage and John McManus, the paper was closely associated with the 1948 Progressive Party candidacy of Henry Wallace and also with the American Labor Party, on whose ticket John McManus ran for governor of New York in 1950 and 1954.

*National Guardian* was allied with the Communist Party's *Daily Worker* in opposing United States involvement in the Korean War and was among the first publications to oppose U. S. involvement in Vietnam. Contributors included pro-Communist writers such as Agnes Smedley and Anna Louise Strong. It also carried dispatches from Wilfred Burchett, often behind Communist lines, during the Vietnam War. Burchett, who died in Sofia, Bulgaria in September 1983, was a significant influence in the *National Guardian's* editorial policies and it would help to look into his background.

Robert Manne, an Australian historian and author of *The Petrov Affair: Politics and Espionage* has produced a detailed report on Burchett under the auspices of the McKenzie Institute for the Study of Terrorism, Revolution and Propaganda of Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He notes:

Wilfred Burchett, however, did not completely commit himself to the Communist cause (at least in public) until the Cold War... His book from this period, *Cold War In Germany*, shows him now a convinced, credulous and often vicious Stalinist...

The Allied sectors of Germany are described as being in the grip of a Nazi revival...under the dominance of industrial barons and feudal landlords. By contrast Soviet policy in Germany is portrayed as staunchly for peace and the Soviet sector is seen has a haven of genuine culture and nursery of progressive land reform. It was not for nothing that *Cold War In Germany* was nominated for a Stalin prize.<sup>157</sup>

Burchett is most notorious for his false reports on American use of germ warfare in the Korean War and his collaboration in the brainwashing of American POWs. In May 1952 Burchett reported to the world his own version of conditions in Communist-controlled POW camps claiming that

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<sup>156</sup> See John George and Laird Wilcox, *Nazis, Communists, Klansmen and Others on the Fringe* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1992); see also Elizabeth Wheaton, *Code Name Greenkill: The 1979 Greensboro Killings* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1987).

<sup>157</sup> Robert Manne, *Agent of Influence: The Life and Times of Wilfred Burchett* (Toronto, McKenzie Institute, 1989).



This camp looks like a holiday resort in Switzerland. The atmosphere is also nearer that of a luxury holiday resort than a POW camp<sup>158</sup>

According to Manne, Burchett also reported that:

....men in the POW camps were fed so well that he himself could not finish the “standard portion of meat and eggs he was offered....A British prisoner, selected “at random,” told him “we are all getting fat and brown.” Prisoners lazed around during the day with “swimming, fishing, sports, reading, writing.”<sup>159</sup>

In June 1952 over Peking radio Burchett accused the Americans of perpetrating “the most monstrous crimes against humanity.” He said that in germ warfare the Americans had launched upon mankind a weapon more frightful than the atomic bomb. In order to support these allegations, Burchett assisted in the extraction of “confessions” from American pilot POWs. Manne explains the use of these confessions:

False confessions to fantastic crimes, extorted by protracted processes of mental and physical torture were of course a standard feature of the international Stalinist culture...Burchett himself...had played an important part in publicizing the confessions of Cardinal Mindszenty and Laszlo Rajk in post-war Hungary. Now in Korea he was to play a far more important role in publicizing to the world germ warfare “confessions” of captured American pilots.”<sup>160</sup>

The hoax of American use of germ warfare in Korea has persisted in Marxist-Leninist circles until the present day. In 1998, however, news reports noted:

...documents from Russia’s Presidential Archive finally prove, more than four decades after the fact, that the United States was the victim of a disinformation campaign scripted by North Korea, China, and the Soviet Union.

A report by Lavernti Beria, head of Soviet intelligence, outlined the deception: “False plague regions were created, burials...were organized, measures were taken to receive the plague and cholera bacillus.”<sup>161</sup>

Burchett was typical of the extreme left viewpoint in *National Guardian*, for over the years the publication registered support for one single-party Marxist-Leninist dictatorship after another, lied and apologized for brutality and murder on a grand scale, and offered excuse after excuse for suppression, censorship and dictatorship.

John McManus died in 1961. James Aronson continued on until 1967 when he and Cedric Belfrage resigned. After leaving the paper Aronson taught journalism at universities in New York and was a teacher of journalism and propaganda techniques in the People’s Republic of China. He wrote three books, including a history of the *National Guardian* which he co-authored with Belfrage. Aronson died in 1987.<sup>162</sup>

With occasional bursts of deviation, usually along the lines of support for the even more totalitarian Chinese Communist regime or the genocidal Cambodian Khmer Rouge, the *National Guardian* followed the line of the Communist Party USA most of the time until February 1968. Then a drastic change in staff took place following a revolt by younger radicals who felt that the publication should provide the anti-war and Marxist-Leninist movement with ideological coherency and leadership. After this editorial shakeup, the newsweekly declared independence from the CPUSA and shortened its name to *Guardian*. Dan Georgakas describes it as follows:

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<sup>158</sup> New China News Agency (18 May 1952).

<sup>159</sup> Manne, *Op Cit*, 20.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid*, 25.

<sup>161</sup> Bruce B. Auster, “Unmasking An Old Lie: A Korean War Charge Is Exposed As a Hoax,” *U. S. News & World Report* (16 November 1998), 52.

<sup>162</sup> Cedric Belfrage and James Aronson, *Something to Guard - The Stormy Life of the National Guardian, 1948-1967*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978).

The *Guardian* maintained friendly but problematic relations with the CP. A major area of difference was the *Guardian's* rejection of the CP view that independent political parties were futile and that radicals should work within the Democratic Party. The *Guardian* held exactly the opposite view. In spite of the failures of the third parties in the 1950s, the *Guardian* took part in a party-building movement in the 1970s and in the 1980s used its influence within the Rainbow Coalition to keep that movement as independent of the Democratic Party as possible.<sup>163</sup>

The first issue of the new *Guardian* carried a biting attack on liberal Senator Eugene McCarthy. A few issues later the readers were informed (once again) that the enemy was (and still is) liberalism:

The future of the radical movement will depend on how effective new left...advocates have been in convincing activists that their enemy is corporate liberalism -- of which Kennedy and McCarthy are both a part.”<sup>164</sup>

The following month *Guardian* readers were informed that “White Americans...lost their best friend when Martin Luther King was assassinated.” Stokely Carmichael was quoted to the effect that King’s death made it easier for blacks, since it proved to them that they should get guns.<sup>165</sup>

Throughout the 1970s *Guardian* kept up a steady defense of “national liberation” struggles and focused on third world revolutionary movements and their occasional rise to power, which they invariably supported. In the 1980s, however, a subtle shift was taking place among Marxist-Leninist groups and publications. As usual, *Guardian* was in the forefront.

As it became more and more obvious even to Marxists that Marxism-Leninism was failing as an economic theory and growing unrest was developing within the Eastern European bloc, *Guardian* began to shift gears. Instead of applying Marxist analysis and Leninist organizing tactics to traditional economic issues (class struggle Marxism-Leninism), *Guardian* reinvented itself along with other elements of the American left and shifted to issues of ethnicity and gender and a kind of Marxism-Leninism of race and sex emerged, complete with a special vocabulary of clichés, buzzwords and slogans.

No longer did we see the steady knee-jerk rhapsodizing about this or that leftist dictatorship but a new knee-jerk rhapsodizing about the radical feminist, gay rights and anti-racist movement. These concerns had, of course, been part of the *Guardians* agenda all along, but in the 1980s they took on a new intensity and significance. Radical anti-racist, gay, and feminist cadres with Marxist-Leninist tendencies found a very congenial home in the new *Guardian*.

Whatever the nature of the relationship between Chip Berlet and Political Research Associates and Leonard Zeskind and the Center For Democratic Renewal and *Guardian*, it’s significant that both parties regularly attempt to “link and tie” opposing individuals and groups with the publications they have written for or were favorably reported in. If one uses the standards suggested by their own writings, their “links” with *Guardian* bear looking into. If, on the other hand, these “links and ties” with the *Guardian* are tangential and unimportant, then so might be the alleged “links and ties” of their enemies on the right.

## Summary

Watchdog organizations, although they may have laudable concerns, bear close and critical watching by journalists and law enforcement. In some cases they are but a lobby for the opposite extreme. If one accepts the legitimacy of their “links and ties” reasoning

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<sup>163</sup> Dan Georgakas, in Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle and Dan Georgakas, *Encyclopedia of the American Left* (New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1990), 503.

<sup>164</sup> *Guardian* (23 March 1968).

<sup>165</sup> *Guardian* (13 April 1968).

then the “links and ties” of Watchdogs should be considered as well. To do otherwise would be irresponsible and dishonest.

Watchdogs have a general and self-admitted program of stifling freedom of expression with respect to criticism of their interests and a tendency to use underhanded and undemocratic means to attack their enemies. While claiming “human rights” as an agenda, they make it clear that not everyone is “human” enough to enjoy those rights. In this respect, they merely mimic the jingoism and bigotry of the movements they ostensibly oppose, including neo-Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan.

From a law enforcement standpoint, Watchdogs may be dangerous because of their disinformation activities. They tend to exaggerate and dramatize the activities of small and marginal individuals and organizations, thereby promoting over-reaction and hypervigilance. By releasing “lists” of alleged extremists which claim dangerous on the basis of their attitudes, beliefs and opinions, they put both law enforcement and innocent citizens at unnecessary risk.

From a journalistic standpoint, Watchdogs are often the journalist’s primary source of information on the groups and interests they oppose. Watchdog organizations are agenda driven and represent the interests of their constituencies. They are lobbying organizations. They are not disinterested, unbiased or objective. Instead of consistently opposing extremist behavior, they often advocate and practice it. They do not advocate fair play and open debate, but rather the suppression of their opponents and critics. They invariably advocate some kind of censorship, which legitimate journalists should always oppose.

From a political standpoint, Watchdogs have a history of representing the political extremes themselves and may, in a manner of speaking, merely represent one side in a contest between extreme ideological positions, neither of which is good for a free society.

Some Watchdog programs are valuable and important, especially as they help to promote real racial understanding and dispel antagonism and hatred between groups of people. In entering into a program of political warfare against their enemies, real or imagined, they have compromised this goal.

**End**

## Appendix

# What Is Political Extremism?

by Laird Wilcox\*

If it's a despot you would dethrone, see first that his throne erected within you is destroyed. *Kahlil Gibran, 1923.*

Roger Scruton, in the *Dictionary of Political Thought*, defines “extremism” as:

1. Taking a political idea to its limits, regardless of unfortunate repercussions, impracticalities, arguments, and feelings to the contrary, and with the intention not only to confront, but to eliminate opposition.
2. Intolerance toward all views other than one's own.
3. Adoption of means to political ends which show disregard for the life, liberty, and human rights of others.

A similar view is found in the work of Milton Rokeach, whose book, *The Open and Closed Mind*, is a classic in the field of dogmatic thinking, prejudice, and authoritarianism. He observes:

To study the organization of belief systems, we find it necessary to concern ourselves with the structure rather than the content of beliefs. The relative openness or closedness of a mind cuts across specific content; that is, it is not uniquely restricted to any particular ideology, or religion, or philosophy, or scientific viewpoint. A person may adhere to communism, existentialism, Freudianism, or the “new conservatism” in a relatively open or a relatively closed manner. Thus, a basic requirement is that the concepts to be employed must not be tied to a particular belief system; they must be constructed to apply equally to all belief systems.

This definition basically reflects my own experience that extremism is more a matter of style than of content. In the thirty years that I have been investigating political groups of the left and right, I have found the most people can hold radical or unorthodox views and still entertain them in a more or less reasonable, rational, and non-dogmatic manner. On the other hand, I have met people whose views were fairly close to the political mainstream but were presented in a shrill, uncompromising, bullying, and distinctly authoritarian manner. The latter demonstrated a starkly extremist mentality while the former demonstrated only ideological unorthodoxy, which is hardly to be feared in a relatively free society.

Another point is that the extremist style is not found only on the fringes of the political or religious spectrum, but sometimes in the “middle” as well. An individual who is

uncompromisingly “centrist” may be far more dogmatic and prejudiced than someone with more radical views but does so in an open and tolerant manner.

The use of “extremist” as an epithet tends to confuse the issue. Sometimes it’s like calling someone a “pervert” or a “subversive,” based primarily on the fact that you don’t like or disagree with them. Political ideologues are fully aware of the power of name-calling and labeling, and often attempt definitions of “extremism” that condemn the views of their opponents while leaving their equally strident and intolerant behavior untouched. For the term to retain any objective meaning, it must apply equally across the board. The late Robert F. Kennedy recognized this when he said,

What is objectionable, what is dangerous about extremists is not that they are extreme, but that they are intolerant. The evil is not what they say about their cause, but what they say about their opponents.

## **Traits and Tactics of Political Extremists**

1. Extremists tend to believe that it’s OK to do bad things in the service of a good cause. This may mean shouting down speakers, harassment, intimidation, threats, censorship, and even violence. Defeating heretics, deniers, critics or other “enemies” becomes an all-encompassing goal to which other values become subordinate. In this sense, for extremists *the end justifies the means*.

2. The use of slogans, buzzwords, epithets and thought-stopping clichés are common among extremists. Complex problems are dramatically simplified. These cognitive shortcuts are necessary for extremists to avoid awareness of troublesome facts and to bolster group solidarity.

3. An emphasis on emotional responses and corresponding devaluation of reasoning and rational analysis is a frequent extremist trait. Extremists have an unspoken reverence for propaganda, which they may call education or “consciousness-raising.” Harold D. Lasswell, in his book, *Psychopathology and Politics* says, “The essential mark of the agitator is the high value he places on the emotional response of the public.”

4. Extremists often practice and openly advocate flagrant double standards. They generally tend to judge themselves, their interest groups or allies in terms of their noble intentions, which they view generously, and their opponents by their acts, which they view very critically. They want you to accept their claims on faith, but demand proof from their opponents. They tend to view arguments that call their premises into question as hostile propaganda or provocation.

5. Confusing of mere similarity with essential sameness is a common extremist trait. Hence, for the extremist socialist medicine may be *just like* Communism, or the appearance of racism is *just like* Nazi Germany. Instead of trying to understand complex phenomenon in its own particular context, they attempt to associate it with a *God* word or a *Devil* word.

6. Extremists often attack the character of an opponent rather than deal with the issues and views he presents. Through this kind of *character assassination* they may question motives, qualifications, sexuality, race, associations, personality, mental health and so on as a diversion. In some cases these matters may not be entirely irrelevant, but they shouldn’t obscure the issues in question.

7. A *Manichean worldview* tends to characterize many extremists, where they see the world in absolutes of good and evil, for them or against them, with no middle ground or intermediate positions. All issues are framed in stark terms of right and wrong, with the “right” position happily coinciding with their interests. Their slogan is *those who are not for us are against us*.

8. Some extremists tend to identify themselves in terms of their enemies, i.e., whom they hate and whom hates them. Accordingly, extremists may become emotionally bound to their opponents in a strange *symbiotic relationship*, where their lives have meaning primarily in terms of conflict and opposition to one another. Because they view their

opponents as unprincipled and powerful, they tend, perhaps subconsciously, to emulate them and adopt their tactics.

9. Hypersensitivity and vigilance are hallmarks of the extremist style. They may perceive hostile innuendo in casual remarks; imagine hostility and rejection “concealed” in honest disagreement and dissent, and discover “subtle” manifestations in ordinarily innocuous events.

10. An inclination toward *groupthink* permeates extremist organizations. They are prone to the kind of inward-looking group cohesiveness that Irving Janis discussed in his book, *Victims of Groupthink*. This involves a strong tendency to conform to group norms and to preserve solidarity at the expense of dealing with conflicting evidence and disquieting observations that may call into question their shared assumptions and beliefs of the group.

11. Finally, extremists often have problems tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty. Indeed, the ideologies and belief systems extremists tend to adopt often represent grasping for certainty and absolute truth in an uncertain world.

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It's important to realize that nobody is perfect nor should perfection be sought. What is important is that we monitor our behaviors toward others and avoid extremist traits to the best of our ability.  
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\*Condensed from the article, “What Is Political Extremism?,” by Laird Wilcox in the Fall, 1990, issue of *Free Inquiry*, quarterly publication of the Council for Democratic and Secular Humanism.

Added Material

## Smoke and Mirrors

Many important figures in the far right - the primary target of the anti-racist watchdog movement - are not quite what they seem. Sometimes the racist and anti-Semitic extremists and neo-nazis we think we are seeing are something altogether different. This is an area of political intrigue that deserves considerable attention but there is room to only touch on it here with a few examples.

In the mid-1960's, for example, the Canadian news media was confronted with the appearance of what seemed to be bona fide “neo-Nazi” activists, particularly around Toronto. Among these “nazis” were Ronald Bottaro, Chris and John Dingle, and their leader, John Beattie, who came to be regarded as the primary Canadian neo-nazi.

Coincidentally, during this period there occurred several incidents that provoked the Canadian media and populace to react to this new “nazi” threat, including anti-Jewish graffiti, Nazi literature in public rest rooms, and most suspiciously, a large mailing of Nazi literature to Toronto Jews.<sup>166</sup> From the standpoint of advancing the cause of a successful neo-nazi movement in Canada, nothing could have been more counterproductive.

At least part of the Canadian neo-nazi movement, it turns out, may have been a black operation operated by the Canadian Jewish Congress. Appearing on the Don Simmons CBC radio show on 20 October 1965, Bottaro and the Dingle brothers boasted that they

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<sup>166</sup> “Jews Got 95% of Hate Cards,” *Toronto Telegram* (22 February 1964).

had been undercover agents of the CJC. They claimed that they had bugged Beattie's apartment and that they had been sent to various public meetings in Toronto to make anti-Semitic remarks and to wear Nazi-style uniforms. Out of a total of 10 Canadian neo-nazis, 7 were CJC operatives and only three were genuine including, at the time, Beattie.

Beattie dropped out of sight after a brief career, much of which was devoted to establishing "links and ties" with various American neo-nazi figures in order to lend credibility to the image of an international Nazi movement. He surfaced again in 1972 when it was revealed that he had been employed as an informant by the Ontario Provincial Police.<sup>167</sup>

In 1974 an article in *The Sunday Sun* revealed his contacts with Al Applebaum of the Jewish Defense League, an anti-nazi organization widely suspected of terrorism. The paper noted that:

The profound irony in his life is that a Jew was one of the few people to give him a second chance to become useful.<sup>168</sup>

Beattie surfaced again, in 1989, this time in connection with skinheads at a white supremacist rally in Minden, Ontario.<sup>169</sup>

Most recently, Beattie is planning to testify before a Canadian Human Rights Tribunal in Toronto in December 2000. According to a release from the Canadian Association For Free Expression:

Beattie will reveal...that everything from his group's name to its major activities was suggested or quarterbacked by persons acting as agents for the Canadian Jewish Congress.

...the same agent proposed legal maneuvers that were calculated to frighten and cause distress among dues, thus heightening the "Nazi" menace, which was used as the argument for the 1971 "hate law (Section 319 of the Criminal Code) and the subsequent section 13.1...of the Canadian Human Rights Act, where truth is no defense.<sup>170</sup>

Admittedly Beattie himself has credibility problems given his bizarre and checkered career. Nevertheless the general thrust of his story is backed by other sources and it raises serious questions about the authenticity of Watchdog claims.

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<sup>167</sup> Richard Campbell, "OPP Paid ex-Nazi \$15 a week To Inform," *Toronto Star*

<sup>168</sup> Bruce Blackadar, "An Ex-Nazi Tries To Forget," *The Sunday Sun* (10 November 1974), 8.

<sup>169</sup> Alan Cairns and Kathleen Griffin, "Nazi Leader Staging Rally," *The Toronto Sun* (16 June 1989); Manuel Prutschi, "Hate Groups and Bigotry's Fellow Travelers," *Currents*, Urban Alliance for Race Relations, Toronto (Vol 6, No. 2, October 1990, 8).

<sup>170</sup> Canadian Association for Free Expression, "John Beattie To Expose the Nazi Party That Never Was," *Press Release* 26 November 2000).