

The Watchdogs

A close look at Anti-Racist "Watchdog" Groups

by Laird Wilcox

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Foreword

Any criticism of so-called “anti-racist” Watchdog activists is not without its dangers. In the “either/or” and “good guys versus bad guys” mentality that characterizes 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 a legitimate grievances - which in some cases they are. Watchdog groups do some laudable things, particularly in the area of promoting bona fide intergroup harmony. On the other hand, there’s a dark side to the Watchdog mindset that itself requires scrutiny.

Organizing for or against specific causes is an American tradition and the right to organize, agitate, and propagandize is part of our constitutional heritage. A civil libertarian since my teens, I am a 36-year member of the American Civil Liberties Union. I’m also active in opposing the death penalty and work with Amnesty International toward its abolition. Like most liberals of my era, I have always had a strong sympathy for the underdog. I marched in the picket lines during the early civil rights movement and served as an officer of the Lawrence, KS, chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). For me the real issue in the civil rights movement was freedom - freedom in the sense of non-constraint, of having choices, and of being able to speak ones mind.

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 rights and privileges. I worked hard lobbying on behalf of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which effectively opened the door for black people in employment, housing and many other areas. I still feel this way today.

What I did not realize at that time was the peculiar attraction of “anti-racism” as an ideology that could explain all things and justify almost any course of action. In the thirty years since the civil rights advances of the 1960s the voices of “anti-racism” have become progressively more shrill and demanding as market forces have influenced the movement. Simply said, there are careers, status, jobs, and influence to be had as long as “racism” exists. As specific problems are solved new problems are defined and created to keep the movement alive. Indeed, there is an “anti-racist” industry afoot in the United States that has attracted bullying, moralizing fanatics, whose identity and livelihood depend upon growth and expansion.

“Anti-racism” is particularly problematic because it’s one of those terms that sets off “feel good” emotions among sympathetic individuals. It’s like rescuing puppies, feeding the starving, protecting children, or helping old people across the street. It overflows with “better than” messages and invokes images of fairness, decency, caring, altruism, and moral superiority - this last a commodity in high demand among individuals who need to define themselves in terms of their goodness and humanitarianism in contrast to the badness and selfishness of others.

Another problem with the “anti-racist” movement is its utility as a trojan horse to hawk a hidden agenda. “Anti-racism” is viewed as a response to an existing evil and by itself avoids the kind of scrutiny that more formal ideologies experience. Marxism-Leninism, for example, can be attacked on multiple grounds. For the casual mind, the only basis for attacking “anti-racism” is racism and no further examination is required. However, many (but not all) radical “anti-racists” today believe that in order to combat racism our social system must be overthrown and replaced with something more

congenial to their ends, and this involves issues of property, privacy, censorship, persecution of dissidents, and intolerance of any opposition.

A great many sins disappear when one becomes an "anti-racist" activist. Lives that would ordinarily be insignificant become important; hostility, contempt and hatred becomes reframed as moral outrage; and one has a delicious repertoire of epithets to use against critics and skeptics. As an "anti-racist" crusader, one can do things and say things to other human beings that would be out of the question otherwise and not only get away with them, but receive praise for them as well.

How did this happen? First, there is the remarkable appeal of altruism. Generally, the more seemingly noble and altruistic the cause, the more it appears to be removed from the ordinary human vices of pride, malice, and selfishness. For people who need to have their lives reframed in this manner, nothing is so temporarily tranquilizing as a noble cause or crusade to lift the spirits and boost self-esteem. Some therapists even prescribe this: "Go find yourself a nice cause to get involved in and get your mind off of yourself." It often works.

A second reason is the growing culture of victimhood. Being a victim means one has a grievance, and to have a grievance elevates one above the crowd. To be sure, there are bona fide victims with bona fide grievances, but what we have seen in recent years is the development of a cult of victimization -- victimization as ideology, identity, and quasi-religion all in one.

A third reason is undoubtedly economic. The simple fact is there's money to be made. The classic case of this is Morris Dees' Southern Poverty Law Center which now (1998) has reserves approaching 100 million dollars squeezed 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 Foundation¹

Finally, because of the manner in which "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-Leninism 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-Leninism is a hard sell. However, when its 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 or not. 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 sics law enforcement on opponents purely 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 of the Watchdog organizations. This I oppose.

Laird Wilcox

¹ "29 Are Chosen For The MacArthur Foundation's Fellowships," *New York Times* (2 June 1998); John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (www.macfdn.org), Chicago, IL. 1998.

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.

A good end cannot sanctify evil means; nor must we ever do evil, that good may come of it. William Penn, *Some Fruits of Solitude in Reflections and Maxims*.

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.

To punish a man because we infer from the nature of some doctrine which he holds, or from the conduct of other persons who hold the same doctrines with him, that he will commit a crime, is persecution, and is, in every case, foolish and wicked. Thomas Babington Macaulay, *Hallum*, 1828.

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've been studying extremist groups of the far left and far right, including acquiring material for my collection at the University of Kansas Library², it's 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 and their fund-raising activities. The observation of an acquaintance that "when the last Ku Klux Klansman and neo-Nazi turns out the lights and locks the door a lot of people will be out of work" is very pertinent.

Most political groups have certain watchdog functions, politely called "opposition research." They exist and have existed, across the political spectrum. The distinguishing feature between these groups and Watchdog groups is that the latter are aggressively hostile and have as their specific mission to

² Wilcox Collection on Contemporary Political Movements, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045.

defame, degrade and ultimately destroy their opponents. For Watchdogs, there is nothing to debate and the only issue of real significance is how much harm they can inflict on their enemies. This book examines only the full-time recognized "anti-racist" watchdog community, which includes the Anti-Defamation League, Southern Poverty Law Center, Center for Democratic Renewal and Political Research Associates, among others. Before we get to them, however, let's look at Watchdogs in America's recent past.

Watchdogs Past

From the early days of the 20th 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 it's 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 more-or-less the same way: publishing lists of individuals with their alleged "links and ties" illustrating subversive intentions. 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. In the "anti-racist" watchdog milieu of today the targets are Christian rightists, opponents of abortion, radical tax protesters, "patriot" groups, militia organizations, holocaust revisionists, and, of course, neo-Nazis and "fascists." The thought-stopping term "fascist" as used by anti-racist Watchdog groups today has roughly the same function as "communist sympathizer" or "fellow traveler" did in the 1950s.

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 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.

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 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 . . .³

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 patently false. 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, 1934.⁴

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.

Two Watchdog-type publications also appeared around the time of *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*.⁵ 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.”⁶ Referring to both works, historian Leo P. Ribuffo observes:

Paradoxically, the documentary’s 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.⁷

³ Elizabeth Dilling, *The Red Network: A “Who’s Who and Handbook of Radicalism for Patriots* (Chicago: The Author, 1936), 282.

⁴ Ibid, 275.

⁵ 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.

⁶ Richard Rollins, *I Find Treason: The Story of an American Anti-Nazi Agent* (New York: William Morrow, 1981), 63.

⁷ Ribuffo, 182.

Whereas in the 1950s and 1960s “anti-Communist” campus watchdog groups might attempt to spy on and “expose” allegedly “pinko” and socialist professors, today feminist, gay rights, and anti-racist watchdog groups attempt to spy on and expose allegedly sexist, homophobic and racist students and faculty. Interestingly, the tactics of the old right-wing watchdogs and the present-day watchdogs of the left are remarkably similar, particularly with respect to name-calling and ritual defamation. Where the old right-wing Watchdogs wrapped themselves in the American flag and claimed patriotism and nationalism, the modern Watchdogs wrap themselves in highly-emotive mix of collectivism, equalitarianism, victimization and what we might call “counter-racism.”

There have been numerous libel and defamation lawsuits against watchdog groups of the past and present but few of them have ever reached the trial stage. Libel is extremely hard to prove in the United States, unlike the United Kingdom and Canada where it is much easier. One successful libel case against a “anti-Communist” watchdog group in the 1960s bears study, however.

The case of John Henry Faulk versus Aware, Inc., is an example of how watchdog groups can fare when their victim has a good attorney and the issues are clear-cut. Faulk, a radio talk-show host of outspoken liberal persuasion was certainly no Communist nor fellow traveler. He had been a strong supporter of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, worked for liberal causes, and had a widely followed commentary program over WCBS in New York City. A member of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA), he had opposed the pro-Aware watchdog faction within AFTRA on civil liberties grounds. For this he was branded as having “a significant Communist record,” and in August 1957 he was fired by WCBS. He soon found that he was blackballed for employment in the entertainment industry.

Faulk hired Louis Nizer, an eminently successful attorney, and sued Aware, Inc. and its officers Vincent Hartnett and Laurence Johnson, who had pressured Faulk’s sponsors to drop him. Hartnett had published a book in 1950 entitled *Red Channels* which, allowing for the shift from rightists to leftists, bears a remarkable likeness to the anti-racist Watchdog literature of today. The case finally came to trial in April 1962 and Faulk was eventually awarded \$550,000 in damages - an event that helped to bring about the end of blacklisting of leftists.⁸

The United States government has sponsored two major “watchdog” programs in recent decades. One of these was the House Un-American Activities Committee on (HUAC), which was empowered with the ability to hold hearings and issue subpoenas compelling testimony. The other was the FBI’s counter-intelligence program (COINTELPRO), which became the primary tool for a massive investigation of 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. Phillip Finch describes it thusly with reference to the Ku Klux Klan:

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

⁸ John Henry Faulk, *Fear on Trial* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1964).

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.⁹

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.¹⁰

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 the killing of a civil rights worker. 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.¹¹

The problem of the violent infiltrator 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.¹²

Private watchdog groups also have their ways of influencing extremist groups. 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, 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 ATF informant Roy Frankhauser, a close associate of Rosenberg, his job was to promote dissention

⁹ Phillip Finch, *God, Guns and Guts: A Close Look at the Radical Right* (New York: Seaview-Putnam, 1983), 157-58.

¹⁰ Ibid, 160.

¹¹ "FBI Covered Up For KKK Informant," *Associated Press* (29 October 1982).

¹² 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.

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.¹³

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 misadventure, also 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" it's members as neo-Nazis. According to Jane Hunter:

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.¹⁴

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

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. But the most troubling aspect of this opportunism is their infiltration of law enforcement. The watchdog organizations feed law enforcement agencies information in order to sic them on 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 it 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

¹³ "ADL Complicit in Police Spying," *Turning The Tide* (May-June 1993), 9.

¹⁴ Jane Hunter, "More Zionist Agents, *MEI* (5 February 1993).

mere curiosity seeker or an individual with no criminal intent whatsoever being suggested to the FBI as "dangerous" seems highly likely. Although I'm not prepared to deal with it at this time, watchdog influence on law enforcement policies in tragedies from Ruby Ridge to Waco needs to be examined in detail.

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. Both groups, particularly the ADL, hold law enforcement conferences, seminars and training sessions in dealing with their enemies and critics. In addition, a more direct penetration of law enforcement is demonstrated in San Francisco case in which the ADL was involved in the theft of confidential police records.

Another concern with regard to certain left-oriented watchdog organizations is that they have roots in extreme ideologies which may go so far as to encourage potentially violent confrontations directed against opponents. The Center For Democratic Renewal (CDR) and Political Research Associates (PRA) both have well-documented Marxist-Leninist "links and ties" and these are based on the same standards they use to establish "links and ties" among rightists. If it matters what organizations one is affiliated with, which petitions one has signed, where one publishes or speaks, and who one's "associates" are, then the same inferences can be drawn for leftists as for rightists. A "link" and a "tie" is, after all, a "link" and a "tie."

The Center for Democratic Renewal and Political Research Associates appear so thoroughly compromised by a hard left agenda that they might reasonably be considered representatives of that opposing extreme. They are "anti-extremist" only in the sense that they oppose the extremism of the right, while opposing that of the left only in cases of sectarian ideological differences.

The Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center practices of acquiring undue influence to advance their agendas with law enforcement agencies and the 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 a 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...¹⁵

The whole vocabulary of the Watchdog milieu is self-serving and designed to sanctify their actions while demonizing those of opponents and critics. 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. Nowhere is this more evident than in the highly subjective and cliché-ridden language of critical race theory. 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 it may mean only the “freedom” to submit to the identity and needs of their group and its version of political correctness.

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, to the merits of a

¹⁵ Murray Edelman, “Political Language and Political Reality,” *Political Science* (Winter 1985), 10-11.

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.¹⁶

Pratkanis and Aronson quote Walter Lippman whose 1922 classic *Public Opinion* argued that opposing viewpoints are essential to democracy. Pratkanis and Aronson observe that:

We learn most from those who tell us what we don't know or don't find agreeable...Lippman believed that it was only through listening to various positions on an issue that truth can be found.¹⁷

Regarding the role of censorship in propaganda, Lippman said:

Without some kind of censorship, propaganda in the strict sense of the word is impossible. In order to conduct a propaganda campaign there must be some barrier between the public and the event.¹⁸

Harold Lasswell deals with the implicit goal of propaganda against a hated value, opinion or belief:

The propagandist may pursue his task not only on the ordinary "common sense" level but also on a level leading to the underlying emotional life of those whom he desires to influence... Emphasis upon the aggressiveness, immorality and impropriety of the "enemy" is a sop that loosens the restraining grip of the conscience upon destructive impulses.¹⁹

Speaking of *stereotypes*, a term he originally coined, Lippman addresses the most common persuasive tool in the repertoire of Watchdog groups [and adversarial groups generally], Lippman says:

The subtlest and most persuasive of all influences are those which create and maintain the repertory of stereotypes. We are told about the world before we see it. We imagine most things before we experience them... They mark out certain objects as familiar or strange, emphasizing the difference, so that the slightly familiar is seen as very familiar, and the somewhat strange as sharply alien.²⁰

Austin Turk, in *Political Criminality*, observes:

At the extreme, the process of stereotyping eventuates in dehumanization: the enemy is judged to be so inhumanely evil or contemptible that anything may be done to "it" without subjectively compromising one's own humanity and sense of morality.²¹

¹⁶ Anthony Pratkanis and Elliot Aronson, *Age of Propaganda: The Everyday Use and Abuse of Persuasion* (New York: W. H. Freeman, 1991), 174, 178.

¹⁷ Ibid, 151.

¹⁸ Walter Lippman, *Public Opinion* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1922).

¹⁹ Harold D. Lasswell, in Edwin R. A. Seligman, editor, *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, First Edition, Vol, XII (London: Macmillan, 1934).

²⁰ Lippman, Op cit.

²¹ Austin J. Turk., *Political Criminality*, (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1982) 71.

Stereotypes, however, 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.²²

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.²³

The purpose of propaganda is to paralyze thought, to prevent discrimination, and to condition individuals to act as a mass.²⁴

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.²⁵

Don’t misunderstand this point: Certainly the targets of Watchdogs - the “hate groups” - are prone to these behaviors themselves. However, in objecting to these the Watchdogs have developed a certain blindness toward their own behavior that invalidates 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.

²² Stuart Oskamp, *Attitudes and Opinions*, (1977)

²³ Sam Keen, *Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 16.

²⁴ Ibid, 25.

²⁵ Ibid, 27.

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

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.²⁶

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.²⁷

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-Leninist 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, evidence suggests that some form of Marxism-Leninism 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 Marxism-Leninism as their goal, they "piggy-back" it onto anti-racism, which is far more popular. This pattern exists among most Marxist-Leninist 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.

Models of Intolerance

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

²⁶ Hy Ruchlis, *Clear Thinking: A Practical Introduction* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1990), 208.

²⁷ "How To Detect Propaganda," *Propaganda Analysis*, Vol. 1., No. 2 (1937).

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 [of which I was a part]²⁸ and my 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 felt differently was 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 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.²⁹

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

²⁸ 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 and was on the board of the local American Civil Liberties Union chapter. In 1965 my wife was arrested in a sit-in at the University (we flipped a coin to see which of us would take care of our son), and she was a delegate to the national CORE convention in 1965. I come from a large multicultural family and have both black and Asian cousins.

²⁹ 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.

strength. Despite their altruistic claims, the ADL and SPLC profit directly off the sensationalism that acts as a sparkplug for Hollywood and the weekly tabloids.³⁰

“Links and Ties”

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.

Example of “links and ties”

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 conservative publication of the Lincoln Institute. Berlet claims that “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.³¹

You didn’t know Justice Thomas may be a closet neo-Nazi, did you? Who would have imagined it? One wonders if his wife, who is white, knows it? And how about the other eight Supreme Court Justices? Do they know it? Has Justice Thomas pulled off the greatest masquerade of the century? On the other hand one wonders if this isn’t just another ritual defamation of somebody whose political views Berlet deplores and therefore wants to “link” with the Nazis and fascists.

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 in order to stigmatize and defame him. Although the appellations “neo-Nazi” and “fascist” are sometimes accurately applied in Watchdog literature, there are many occasions when they are merely the anti-racist equivalent of calling somebody a “subversive.” Whoever does it, the practice of calling people bad names so nobody will listen to them, the police will regard them as dangerous, and their families will be stigmatized and degraded by this process is highly questionable. The ferreting out and neutralizing of dissidents is as old as society itself. The process is a form of ostracism or *ritual defamation*, which I will discuss shortly.

³⁰ Adam Parfrey, *Cult Rapture: Revelations of the Apocalyptic Mind* (Portland, OR: Feral House, 1995), 327.

³¹ Chip Berlet, “A Few Facts About Clarence Thomas,” published by Rock Out Censorship (1997).

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 on 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-Leninist 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.

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, 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’s merely to defend the interests of a particular ideological organization or its members. Those who regularly defend the rights of Marxist-Leninists 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. Disreputable people, fanatics or extremists are sometimes correct in their assessment and analysis. These instances have to be judged on their 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. Each case deserves careful consideration.

Over the years I’ve 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. 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 no lasting involvement. A free society should not require undue vigilance in this regard. As a life-long civil libertarian, I am especially fond of the late Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, and his 1958 observation that:

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...³²

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.³³

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 John Birch Society members 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.

Some people, like myself, have a consuming curiosity about human behavior and ideological movements and seek out these organizations almost as a hobby. In my case, I turned my fascination into a major library collection of political literature at the University of Kansas and a successful book co-authored with Prof. John George. Along the way I've had many "links and ties" along the entire political spectrum. I've never experienced the discomfort some feel when talking to people of diametrically opposite views. I have always felt that it was a sign of wisdom to be able to understand a point of view and its attractions without having to adopt it yourself. Again, I turn to Spinoza to illustrate my point:

I have striven not to laugh at human actions, nor to weep at them, nor to hate them, but to understand them.³⁴

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

³² Quoted in Laird Wilcox and John George, *Be Reasonable: Selected Quotations for Inquiring Minds* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1994), 22.

³³ Ibid, 80.

³⁴ Ibid, 262.

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.³⁵ 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.³⁶

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” 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.³⁷

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.”³⁸

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,

³⁵ Jeffrey S. Victor, *Satanic Panic: The Creation of a Contemporary Legend* (Chicago: Open Court, 1993).

³⁶ Ibid, 217-218.

³⁷ Ibid, 209.

³⁸ Ibid, 207.

nations, policies, practices, beliefs, and ideals that he would have us condemn and reject.³⁹

None of this is altered merely by changing the target. Name-calling was used by Nazis in Germany and Marxist-Leninists throughout the world and, for that matter, by people everywhere.

“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.⁴⁰

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.”⁴¹

The Watchdogs, past and present, and their target groups both practice “baiting” with gusto. Name-calling is primarily a *propaganda device* and it should be seen as precisely that. Whether or not the “links and ties” alleged are reasonable and justified cannot be determined in the heat of passion or by groups with an interest in the outcome. Each case is different and requires careful, objective analysis. Some people are unequivocally Marxist-Leninists and some people are unequivocally neo-Nazis. My experience has been that genuine cases make up but a small fraction of the irresponsible charges made by adversarial organizations.

Defamatory Labels

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

³⁹ “How To Detect Propaganda,” *Propaganda Analysis*, Vol 1, No. 2 (November 1937), 5.

⁴⁰ Richard Gid Powers, *Not Without Honor: The History of American Anti-Communism*. (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 163.

⁴¹ Ibid, 294-295.

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.

While “nut,” “slut,” “fag,” and categories of far more dangerous import - “heretic,” “terrorist group,” “Communist,” “soft-core fascist,” or “queer” - may be used incorrectly, with the labeler unconscious of any malicious intent, they are more often employed with calculation to destroy careers and enhance political and national causes. The point is that defamatory language rarely, if ever, simply describes things. And what it accomplishes is an enemy, ready for violation.⁴²

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 bear witness that he is not as he appears but is otherwise and in essence of a lower species.”

The social affects 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.⁴³

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.

Psychologist David Barash notes:

Many psychologists and psychiatrists have studied the “image of the enemy,” and they have concluded, among other things, that our images of the other side (whether visual or in words) tend to emphasize, exaggerate, and even create nasty traits, all the while literally “dehumanizing” the opponent. Thus, we find words such as “rats,” “dogs,” “vermin,” “scum” and “pigs” applied to “the enemy”.....⁴⁴

Barash also discusses the role of the scapegoat:

⁴² James A. Aho, *This Thing of Darkness: A Sociology of the Enemy* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 29-29.

⁴³ Harold Garfinkle, “Conditions of Successful Degradation Ceremonies,” *American Journal of Sociology*, 16 (1956): 420-424.

⁴⁴ David P. Barash, *Beloved Enemies: Our Need for Opponents* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1994), 88.

On a wider scale, the scapegoat also remains useful...As with the shared enemy, which he closely resembles, the scapegoat provides an opportunity for us to join together with other, like-minded good folks, driving out and often destroying the evil while at the same time basking in the warm sense of belonging and good fellowship that comes from unified, cohesive action, directed toward a common end and against a common foe.⁴⁵

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-Leninist-oriented Watchdog groups, their persecution of a similarly marginalized group on the opposite end of the spectrum can have an legitimizing effect both inside the group and without. The utility of “enemies” to perform this function is obvious.

Watchdog groups seem not to appreciate that not all people see the issues in question the same way and that their views are substantially shaped by their own experiences and interests. One can argue that these experiences and interests might be misunderstood, overvalued or irrational but those arguments are rarely convincing since they imply that outsiders know more about a person’s life than that person himself. In any event, the same can be said of the Watchdogs. The Marxist equivalent of this argument is to assert “false consciousness.”

Absent the ability to talk people into denying their own experiences and interests, the method that looms large for the Watchdogs is neutralization through defamation and degradation. Some people will withdraw in anticipation of public humiliation, but many will not and these become the witches - the “hard core” - the Watchdog groups depend on for their existence.

This tendency for watchdogs to help construct the menace they claim to fear is not necessarily irrational. Sociologist Jeffrey Kaplan has studied marginal religious movements, including the Odinist and Asatru movements which tend 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.⁴⁶

What I think is of utmost importance is the realization that Watchdog organizations cannot exist without enemies; they have a *vested interest* in the existence of the minuscule extreme right. One wag has suggested that it would be cheaper to just buy off the leadership of the extreme right off with a generous pension on some island than it would be to keep on “monitoring” and harassing them. No figures exist, but I suspect that the budget of all the Watchdog groups put together is a couple orders of magnitude more than that of their combined targets.

Watchdogs and Oklahoma City

⁴⁵ Ibid, 185-186.

⁴⁶ Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far Right to the Children of Noah* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 163.

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.⁴⁷

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 nothing to do with the bombing, but the incredible onslaught changed their composition considerably. Some militias folded and many of their less committed members quit. This had the effect of "radicalizing" the movement, increasing their paranoia, and before long - in a typical self-fulfilling prophecy - the militias began to mimic the journalism that described them. This widely-publicized stereotype of the violence-prone right-wing extremist probably attracted individuals of that disposition. Combine that with harassment by police agencies from the FBI to the local sheriff, negative media publicity, pressures on family and friends, and you have a prescription for disaster. Watchdogs have a part in creating the very monsters they claim are out there.

There are hard-core extremists in the movement, but by no means in large numbers, including some of the Jew-haters and racists the ADL and SPLC have attempted to portray as commonplace. In any event the evidence is in now and as far as Oklahoma City was concerned, the militias got a bum rap at the hands of these 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

⁴⁷ Diana Baldwin, "Some Still Hunt For John Doe 2," *Sunday Oklahoman* (13 December 1998), A-8.

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.⁴⁸

One does not need to be a right-winger or a militia sympathizer to identify the issues involved in the demonization of the militias. Ritual defamation as a technique is much the same no matter who the victim. In *Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of a Hostile Imagination*, Sam Keen notes:

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.

Paranoia creates a self-fulfilling prophecy, a vicious circle in which suspicion breeds suspicion, threat brings counterthreat. Passive aggressive victims bring on themselves the aggression they obsessively fear.

Paranoids begin with imagined enemies and end up with real ones as the cycle of reaction turns into a complex historical conflict. In *paranoia a deux* hostility becomes synergistic, enemies become hypnotized by each other and become locked in a prison of mirrors.

We scapegoat and create absolute enemies, not because we are intrinsically cruel, but because focusing our anger on an outside target....brings our tribe or nation together and allows us to be part of a close and loving in-group.⁴⁹

Nothing, it seems, that energizes the mind and perfumes one's ego as much as having some bad people to hate. Watchdog groups are congregations of individuals who collectively hate people with opposing values, attitudes, beliefs and interests. Absent actual physical combat, name-calling is the next best thing.

A couple of years ago while working on a book on propaganda analysis, I put to paper the main principles of this form of ritual defamation and name-calling. I received several constructive comments and criticisms. The following is the latest version (1998) of a work in progress:

The Principles of Ritual Defamation

Neutralizing Offensive Values, Opinions and Beliefs

Defamation is the destruction or attempted destruction of the reputation, status, character or standing in the community of a person or group of persons by irresponsible, unfair or malicious speech or publication. Few things characterize

⁴⁸ Laird Wilcox, "Don't Fear Militias, Fear Their Fringes," *Newsday* (27 April 1995).

⁴⁹ Sam Keen, *Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination*, (New York: Harper, 1986), 18, 23, 24, 27.

political extremism and counter-extremism more than the routine and regular use of defamation.

The central element is defamation in punishment for the real or imagined values, opinions and beliefs of the accused, with the intention of silencing them and neutralizing their influence, and/or making an example of them so as to discourage similar independence and "insensitivity" or non-observance of taboos. This is in distinction from bona fide illegal behaviors, such as violence, which generally have no justification. It differs from simply criticism of or disagreement with the subject in that it is aggressive, organized and tends to follow a predictable course.

1. In a ritual defamation the victim must have violated a particular taboo in some way, usually by expressing or identifying with a forbidden attitude, opinion or belief. It is not necessary that they "do" anything about it or undertake any course of action, only that they engage in some form of communication or expression of that attitude, opinion or belief.
2. The method of attack in a ritual defamation is to assail the character of the target, and to avoid engaging in debate over the truthfulness or reasonableness of what has been expressed. Accordingly, truth is not a defense. Debate opens up the issue for critical examination, which is precisely what the ritual defamer is trying to avoid. Ritual defamation is not necessarily about being wrong or incorrect, but rather about being "insensitive" and failing to observe prevailing social taboos.
3. In order for a ritual defamation to be effective, victims must be dehumanized to the extent that they become thoroughly identified with the offending attitude, opinion or belief, and with the most extreme (and often fanciful) examples of it. For example, a "subversive" will be identified with the most extreme examples of subversion, such as espionage or treason. A "pervert" will be identified with the most extreme examples of perversion, such as child molestation. A "racist" or an "anti-Semite" will be identified with the most extreme examples of racism or anti-Semitism, such as lynchings or gas chambers, and so on.
4. An attempt, sometimes successful, is made to involve others in the ritual defamation. In the case of a public official, other public officials will be urged to denounce the offender. In the case of a student, other students will be called upon, and so on. To be successful, a ritual defamation should entail pressure and humiliation from every quarter, including family and friends. If the victim belongs to clubs or associations, they may be called on to denounce or expel him, and so on.
5. Anyone who attempts to defend a victim of ritual defamation is looked upon with suspicion and risks being similarly defamed. A kind of "guilt by association" kicks in and attempts will be made to "link" the defender with the values, opinions and beliefs of the victim.
6. An interesting aspect of ritual defamation is its universality. It is not specific to any particular values, opinions or beliefs. It may be used either by or against any political, ethnic or religious minority. It may be used, for example, by anti-Semites against Jews, or by Jews against suspected anti-Semites.

7. The power of ritual defamation lies in its capacity to intimidate and stigmatize. It represents the modern corollary of a primitive curse or hex. It also plays into the fear most people have of being rejected by the tribe and being cut off from social and psychological support systems. Often, the victim of a successful ritual defamation becomes isolated and abandoned.
8. The weakness of ritual defamation lies in its tendency toward overkill and its obvious maliciousness. Often, the source of a ritual defamation will be equally vulnerable to similar tactics and depends upon allies in the media to forestall that, which doesn't always work. Ritual defamations sometimes fail because of a failure to correctly estimate the vulnerability of the victim, or can backfire because its viciousness generates sympathy for the underdog.

Ritual defamation is accomplished primarily through the manipulation of words and symbols and is essentially a form of hostile propaganda. It is not used to persuade but to punish, intimidate and persecute.

Magical Words, Cliches and Slogans

Terms like "racist," "hatemonger" and "bigot" are hardly purely descriptive. Like the terms "kike," "queer," "nigger" and "subversive," they are epithets that tend to invoke certain associations and which trap the uncritical listener into a mindset that encourages the denigration and abuse of opponents. Prof. Murray Edelman in *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* notes:

The magical associations permeating language are important for political behavior because they lend authoritativeness to conventional perceptions and value premises and make it difficult or impossible to perceive alternative possibilities.⁵⁰

Once a term becomes a vehicle for expressing a group interest it goes without saying that it is in no sense descriptive, but only evocative.⁵¹

The Institute For Propaganda Analysis, previously quoted, observes that:

...it is plain that certain terms have what is called a positive or attractive "halo" and others a negative one. Such "power-words" are the favorites in the vocabulary of propagandists. Neutral terms are rarely used because they lack the exciting quality demanded by those who wish to mold public opinion in accordance with their interests.⁵²

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 every writer wishes he 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. Other former campus radicals have made similar

⁵⁰ Murray Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 121.

⁵¹ Ibid, 125.

⁵² "What's Beneath The Label?," *Propaganda Analysis*, Vol 1, No. 7 (April 1938), 33.

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*.⁵³

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.⁵⁴

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*⁵⁵, and appeared to succumb 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...⁵⁶

Although he doesn't 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 reveals it had a much broader agenda than the simple opposition to slavery commonly associated with it, including a number of collectivist 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.⁵⁷

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

⁵³ Richard J. Ellis, *The Dark Side of the Left: Illiberal Egalitarianism in America* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1998).

⁵⁴ Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to FDR* (New York: Vintage, 1955).

⁵⁵ Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York, Vintage, 1967).

⁵⁶ Richard J. Ellis, preface, ix.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 137.

...having embarked on a crusade against evil, they find it difficult to make room for skeptics or to tolerate doubters. Fanaticism sets in.⁵⁸

Observing that although millenarianism and apocalyptic visions have become more closely associated with right-wing religious fundamentalism, Ellis notes that they hardly have a 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.”⁵⁹

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 Marxist-Leninist 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.⁶⁰

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.⁶¹

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.⁶²

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.⁶³

⁵⁸ Ibid, 268.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 269.

⁶⁰ Jeffrey Herf, in John H. Bunzel, ed., *Political Passages: Journeys of Change Through Two Decades, 1968-1988*, (New York: The Free Press, 1988), 113.

⁶¹ Paul Watzlawick, *The Invented Reality :How Do We Know What We Believe We Know?* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), 209.

⁶² Ibid, 220.

⁶³ Ibid, 206,

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.⁶⁴

Marxism-Leninism: A Hidden Agenda?

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 Union, 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.

Some form of Marxism or Marxism-Leninism is common in many Watchdog organizations. Marxism-Leninism is best understood as a theory of organization, i.e., a political program for victory. Motivated by causes and concerns they feel are imperative, Marxist-Leninists 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 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.⁶⁵

More recently, in a May 1997 column in the *Chicago Tribune*, Michael McGuire observes that freed documents from a secret archive in the Soviet Union revealed Lenin as a "brutally impulsive leader who employed terror as a primary tool of power, repeatedly ordering the murders of political opponents and friends alike." McGuire also quotes a prominent Soviet leader:

Gen. Dimitri Volkogonov, the late historian who once held the Soviet Union's top political post, later wrote of Lenin as a "savage, cruel, uncompromising, remorseless and vengeful" leader who ordered terror, torture, violence, hostage-holding and "a vast array of punitive measures and propaganda on a scale never before seen in Russia or anywhere else."⁶⁶

In a society 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

⁶⁴ Monique Hirschhorn. "Le Nouveaux Philosophes: L'Ecume et la vague," *Stanford French Review* 2, 1978, 301-313.

⁶⁵ Frederick M. Watkins, *The Age of Ideology - Political Thought, 1750 to the Present*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 86.

⁶⁶ Michael McGuire, "Archive of Lenin Documents Feeds Dispute Over His Legacy," *Chicago Tribune*, (May 1997).

feminism is a natural phenomenon. For one thing, a constituency already exists in the form of the civil rights, homophile and radical feminist movements.

It is virtually impossible for any literate person in the United States not to have some idea of the extent of the horrors that Marxist-Leninist regimes have inflicted upon their citizens. In his detailed book, *Lethal Politics: Soviet Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1917*, R. J. Rummel notes that the lowest estimate for 70 years of Soviet atrocities is 24,063,000 deaths. He notes, however, that this figure doesn't jibe with Soviet census data and says that total could be as high as 61,900,000 victims. Rummel calculates that during the collectivization period, for example, about 11,440,000 people were murdered, and he shows that the Soviet forced labor camps, which were the major engine of death, probably killed 39,464,000 prisoners overall.⁶⁷ Arnold Beichman, a research fellow at the prestigious Hoover Institution, wrote in 1990:

With Marxism and its adjunct Leninism now universally judged to have created one of the greatest moral and economic calamities in all history, we must consider Marxism today as much of an enemy as Hitlerism was half a century ago.

After 70 years of Marxist praxis in the Soviet Union and 40 years in China and the accompanying staggering loss of life and treasure, Marxism must be regarded as a doctrine and a system which spawned an inhumanity perhaps even worse than Nazism. While Nazism made cruel claims, at least it didn't camouflage its ambitions with humanitarian and utopian slogans.⁶⁸

Zbigniew Brzezinski, in his seminal *The Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, comments on Adolf Hitler's admiration for Leninist organizational strategy:

Hitler was a careful student of the Bolshevik concept of the militarized vanguard party and of the Leninist concept of tactical accommodation in the service of ultimate strategic victory, both in seizing power and in the remolding of society. Institutionally, Hitler learned from Lenin how to construct a state based on terror, complete with its elaborate secret police apparatus, its reliance on the concept of group culpability in dispensing justice, and its orchestrated show trials.⁶⁹

The appeal that Marxism-Leninism, or any other collectivist ideology, has to intellectuals lies primarily in its advocacy of a "system." Intellectuals have an abhorrence of the unpredictable and especially the uncontrollable event. They need a "system," a plan, an ideology to guide them and to reduce human behavior to readily decipherable and understandable components that can be conceptualized in buzz words, 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 western democracies and in a few newly liberated Communist countries reacting to the horrors of their Marxist-Leninist past.

It should be born in mind, 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

⁶⁷ R. J. Rummel, *Lethal Politics: Soviet Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1917* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Press, 1990).

⁶⁸ Arnold Beichman, "Bubonic Plague of Thought," *Column* (October 1990).

⁶⁹ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism in the Twentieth Century* (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1989).

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.

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 effect 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. Rather, the Watchdogs want to spoon feed an ideological construction of race and ethnicity that happily coincides with their interests and those of their constituencies. Anyone who gets too independent with this subject bears watching and anyone who diametrically opposes the watchdog agenda runs the risk of being ritually defamed as a “neo-Nazi” or a “hatemonger” - two categories that can have profound consequences for the victim.

“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.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Stephen Schafer, *The Political Criminal: The Problem of Morality and Crime* (New York: The Free Press, 1974), 22-23.

Watchdogs and Political Codependency

“Anti-racist” groups tend to exist in what could be called a “codependent” relationship with their opposition. “Codependency” is usually used to describe parasitic relationships between individuals, where one is the problematic or dysfunctional person, and the other is the helper or enabler. According to Melody Beattie, popularizer of the concept:

A codependent person is one who has let another person’s behavior affect him or her, and who is obsessed with controlling that person’s behavior.⁷¹

In codependency, the enabler actually develops an investment in the failings of the dysfunctional person (in this case the “victim”) and tends to define themselves in that role, i.e., “doing good” or enabling that person to function. Take away the dysfunctional person (or group of persons) to minister to and the enabler is deprived of the opportunity to “do good” in order to enhance an otherwise problematic sense of personal (or collective, in the case of Watchdog organizations) worth and group esteem. When Watchdog organizations enter into this paradigm, not only are issues of collective identity and self-congratulation involved, but also issues of jobs, careers and political influence. There are powerful reasons for Watchdog activity that have no objective relationship with the purported threat they claim to be acting against.

What is toxic about the codependent relationship is that all attention is focused on the “problem” of the dysfunctional person and none on the often hidden motives of the enabler. More importantly, however, it tends to institutionalize the problems of the dysfunctional person or group because without it the enabler(s) have lost a very important part of their identity and self-esteem.

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.⁷²

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.

⁷¹ Melody Beattie, *Codependent No More* (New York: Walker Pubs., 1989).

⁷² Chip Berlet, “Anatomy of the Right,” *The Progressive* 59 (12): 40-42.

(We similarly absorb homophobia and sexism). It is foolish to say, "I am not a racist."⁷³

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.

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.⁷⁴

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.⁷⁵

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.⁷⁶

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

⁷³ Raphael S. Ezekiel, *The Racist Mind: Portraits of American Neo-Nazis and Klansmen* (New York: Viking, 1995), 322.

⁷⁴ Irving Janis, *Victims of Groupthink* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), 9.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 13.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 198.

- which, after all, is what Watchdogs do. In the case of the Southern Poverty Law Center they have constructed a special bomb-proof headquarters building. There's a sense 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.⁷⁷

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 of 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.⁷⁸

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.⁷⁹

These considerations, then, are what motivated me to ask the question of "who watches the Watchdogs?"

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 intergroup 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.

⁷⁷ David Sapiro, *Neurotic Styles* (New York: Basic Books, 1965) 66.

⁷⁸ Watzlawick, *Op Cit.*, 223-224.

⁷⁹ Orrin E Klapp, *Collective Search For Identity* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, 1969) 274.

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.

I would encourage readers to contact the Watchdog groups for their response to my criticism. Their response may confirm some of what I have written about them.

Laird Wilcox

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.⁸⁰

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.⁸¹

⁸⁰ *Canadian Jewish News* (14 November 1991).

⁸¹ "Harassment of Jews Rose in '93, Anti-Defamation League Reports," *New York Times* (25 January 1994).

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 culprit was 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.⁸²

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.⁸³

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.⁸⁴

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 regarded as harder working, richer, less prone to violence, more self-supporting and more intelligent.⁸⁵

⁸² Debra Nussbaum Cohen, "Paradox of Anti-Semitism in America: Perception vs. Reality," *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* (8 January 1993).

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ *New York Times* (8 January 1992).

The American Jewish Committee said that “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.⁸⁶

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.⁸⁷

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.⁸⁸

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.⁸⁹

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?⁹⁰ 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 about the ADL

⁸⁶ J. J. Goldberg, “Tide of Anti-Semitic Acts Exposes ‘Perception Gap,’” *Jewish Week* (18 November 1988).

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ J. J. Goldberg, “Scaring The News,” *The New Republic* (17 May 1993).

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Stewart Ain, “ADL Launches Ad Campaign Aimed at ‘Organized’ Hate in U.S.,” *Washington Jewish Week* (14 September 1990).

in some fashion, as though they were the ADLs only critics.⁹¹ 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 which 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.⁹² It can be filled out in a jiffy. If a commercial polling firm engaged in such practices it would be regarded as highly unethical and possibly fraudulent.

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."⁹³

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.⁹⁴

A group uses the term "epidemic" to focus public attention and resources and create social and behavioral changes.⁹⁵

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 an indicator of hate *crime*.

Thus, the ADL audit will necessarily be dominated by "low-end" incidents such as anti-Semitic comments, literature and graffiti.⁹⁶

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

⁹¹ Anti-Defamation League, "What The Haters, Bigots, and Anti-Semites are Saying About the ADL (flyer), 1987.

⁹² Anti-Defamation League, "Reporting Anti-Semitic Incidents," (form), 1997.

⁹³ 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.

⁹⁴ Henry and Jacobs, 368.

⁹⁵ Henry and Jacobs, 378; Eric Zorn, A Trend that's....Well, Epidemic, *Chicago Tribune* (23 March 1994)..

⁹⁶ Henry and Jacobs, 386.

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.⁹⁷

Jacobs has expanded on this theme in considerably more detail (with Kimberly Potter) in his seminal *Hate Crimes: Criminal Law and Identity Politics*.⁹⁸ 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 even the staunchest supporters of hate crimes law think twice. This will - or should - be a touchstone for future debate.⁹⁹

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.

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."¹⁰⁰

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

⁹⁷ Henry and Jacobs, 391.

⁹⁸ James B. Jacobs and Kimberly Potter, *Hate Crimes: Criminal Law and Identity Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

⁹⁹ Jacobs and Potter, jacket.

¹⁰⁰ Phillip Matler and Andrew Ross, "Former S. F. Cop Focus of Probe," *San Francisco Chronicle* (15 January 1993).

throughout the course of the investigation that Bullock and Gerard "clones" were positioned in or close to police departments throughout the country.¹⁰¹

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.

Some 12,000 computerized files were seized Dec. 10 [1992] in searches of ADL offices in San Francisco and Los Angeles...¹⁰²

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.¹⁰³

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.

¹⁰¹ 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).

¹⁰² Dennis J. Opatrny and Scott Winocur, "Police Said To Aid Spying On Political Groups," *San Francisco Examiner* (9 March 1993).

¹⁰³ James Zogby, "Harassment and Surveillance of Arab-Americans," *San Francisco Examiner* (4 March 1993).

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.¹⁰⁴

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."¹⁰⁵

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."¹⁰⁶ This was met with skepticism by many of those concerned, including Robert J. Friedman 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.¹⁰⁷

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."¹⁰⁸

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."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ Opatrny and Winocur, "A New Target In S.F. Spy Probe," *San Francisco Examiner* (1 April 1993).

¹⁰⁵ George Cothran and Peter Hegarty, "Spies for Zion," *SF Weekly* (28 April 1993).

¹⁰⁶ Robert J. Friedman, "The Anti-Defamation League is Spying On You," *Village Voice* (11 May 1993).

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ken Hoover, "Anti-Defamation League Raided by S. F. Cops," *San Francisco Examiner* (9 April 1993).

¹⁰⁹ Garth Wolkoff, "ADL Chief Lashes Out At Critics, Press, D.A.," *Jewish Bulletin of Northern California* (7 May 1993).

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 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.¹¹⁰

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.¹¹¹

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.¹¹²

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.¹¹³

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:

¹¹⁰ 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).

¹¹¹ "ADL Could Face Felony Charges," *Detroit Jewish News* (16 April 1993).

¹¹² Richard C. Paddock, "Spy: 40 Years of Undercover Work For ADL," *Los Angeles Times* (13 April 1993).

¹¹³ Ibid.

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.)"¹¹⁴

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.

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.¹¹⁵

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.¹¹⁶

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, is 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.

¹¹⁴ Cothran and Hegarty, Op Cit.

¹¹⁵ Los Angeles Times, "Deal Lets Anti-Defamation League Escape Trial on Spy Charges," *St Louis Post-Dispatch* (17 November 1993).

¹¹⁶ Opatrny and Winocur, "18 Litigants Draft Suite Charging ADL Spying," *San Francisco Examiner* (14 April 1993).

In no sense, however, is the ADL on a par with the *New York Times* or *Time*, 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 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.¹¹⁷

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*:

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.¹¹⁸

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.¹¹⁹

ADL and the Investigators Leads File

The infiltration of police and national security agencies to attack and marginalize the ADL's critics and enemies has a long and sordid past. In what should have caught the attention of the ADL's supporters on the left, in October, 1947 the Subcommittee of the Committee on Expenditures in the

¹¹⁷ Opatrny and Winocur, "Judge Rules ADL Need Not Open Its Files In Civil Suit," *San Francisco Examiner* (7 October 1993).

¹¹⁸ Friedman, op cit.

¹¹⁹ Rachelle Marshall, "ADL Pays Up Again For Stealing Police Files and Spying on U. S. Citizens," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (October 1996).

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.¹²⁰

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 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.¹²¹

=====

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.¹²²

¹²⁰ 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.

¹²¹ Ibid, 4.

¹²² Ibid, 14.

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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.¹²³

=====

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, specific case where the file cards of your organization have a reference -- not to publications -- but to the files of these two organizations.¹²⁴

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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.¹²⁵

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

¹²³ Ibid, 17

¹²⁴ Ibid, 23.

¹²⁵ Ibid, 36.

obtained under a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)¹²⁶ request it becomes clear that the organization has labored long and hard to ingratiate itself to 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 didn’t entirely trust.

In a 4 January 1966 letter to Dore Schary, ADL national chairman, Hoover declined attendance at an ADL dinner for U. S. Supreme Court Justice Arthur J. Goldberg. A note written by FBI researchers was appended 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] 10450.¹²⁷

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.¹²⁸

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’s unlikely that many who lent names to the organization were unaware of the role Communists played in its policies and daily activities.

Another group was American Youth for Democracy, also a popular front organization of mixed membership. 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.”¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Freedom of Information - Privacy Act request #312724, by Laird Wilcox (1988-1995).

¹²⁷ J. Edgar Hoover, letter to Dore Schary, National Chairman, Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith, 4 January 1966.

¹²⁸ Dorothy Healey, *Dorothy Healey Remembers: A Life in the American Communist Party* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 87.

¹²⁹ Dore Schary, testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee, (29 October 1947).

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."¹³⁰

An important point here is that while the ADL would almost certainly explain away Dore Schary's associations as being circumstantial and tangential which, although unlikely, may be true, in their publications they almost never extend 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:

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.¹³¹

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.¹³²

Inflation, even by 100%, is not uncommon in ADL membership claims even today. The more bad guys the more the ADL is needed, the greater its prestige and the more its political clout. Perhaps

¹³⁰ John Sanford, in Griffin Fariello (ed), *Red Scare: Memories of the American Inquisition* (NY: Norton, 1995), 290-291.

¹³¹ W. C. Sullivan, "Memorandum," to R. W. Smith, "Review of Pamphlet, *Report on the Ku Klux Klan*, by Arnold Forster and Benjamin R. Epstein," 12 August 1965.

¹³² W. C. Sullivan, "Memorandum," to F. J. Baumgardner, "Investigation of Klan Organizations, Racial Matters - Klan," 22 September 1966.

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.¹³³

ADL Hoaxes 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 the leaders of the New York City chapter of the Christian Patriot's Defense League, a right-wing quasi-paramilitary group 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 (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

¹³³ Ibid.

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.¹³⁴

The two were posing as paramilitary extremists for a photographic fabrication exaggerating the threat from the far right. The charges were subsequently dropped at the request the ADL's Irwin Suall, Rosenbergs direct supervisor.

In 1984 Rosenberg was also identified as an ADL agent provocateur in a major court case.¹³⁵ 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.

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 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.¹³⁶ My own conversations with Rosenberg and his associates settled the issue.

So here we have 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. This is but one more reason why journalists and others should be extremely wary of this organization.

Hate Groups in America

It wasn't until Judge William Webster became its director in 1978 that the a FBI bowed to political pressures from the White House and significantly stepped up its cooperation with the ADL. This relationship fully blossomed during the Reagan administration when the FBI issued a "memo" in 1985 requiring all FBI field offices to develop formal liaison with some thirty ADL offices around the nation. This memo remained secret until it was uncovered in a 1990 FOIA request to an FBI field office in

¹³⁴ "Nabbed With Weapons," *Daily News* (8 October 1981), n.p.

¹³⁵ *Lyndon LaRouche vs. National Broadcasting Company*, Civil Action 84-0136-A, U. S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia (1984).

¹³⁶ Patsey Sims, *The Klan* (New York: Stein & Day, 1978), 334.

Minnesota, where it was released to a journalist by mistake. The memo was accompanied by two ADL publications and instructed each SAC [Special Agent in Charge] to “contact each [ADL] regional office to establish a liaison and line of communication...”¹³⁷ One of those publications was the ADL’s controversial 1984 publication, *Hate Groups in America*.¹³⁸

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 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.¹³⁹

Alexander further noted that the ADL report “bordered on jingoism.” Like all 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. 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.

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

¹³⁷ Federal Bureau of Investigation AIRTEL, “Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith (ADL), Information Concerning Civil Rights Matters,” 4 February 1985.

¹³⁸ Anti-Defamation League, *Hate Groups in America: A Record of Bigotry and Violence*, (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1983).

¹³⁹ Paul Alexander, Acting General Counsel, Letter to John Hope, III, Acting Staff Director, United States Commission on Civil Rights, 8 March 1982.

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.¹⁴⁰

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.¹⁴¹

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."¹⁴² 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.¹⁴³ 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.¹⁴⁴ He was also head of Concerned Citizens on Police Matters, a group that monitors police

¹⁴⁰ Mary Jane MacLennan, "Fedorkiw Wins \$400,000 for Slurs," *The Winnipeg Sun* (26 November 1987), 5.

¹⁴¹ David Roberts, "B'nai B'rith Guilty of Libel, Jury Finds," *Winnipeg Free Press* (26 November 1987).

¹⁴² Geoffrey York, "B'nai B'rith Won't Change Despite Judgment," *Globe and Mail* (27 November 1987).

¹⁴³ 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.

¹⁴⁴ 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.

conduct towards minorities and others in Fort Collins.¹⁴⁵ 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 ADLs 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.¹⁴⁶

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*:

In Colorado, Duncan Philp, who was closely aligned with Pete Peters, formed the White Patriots Militia in Fort Collins...¹⁴⁷

Philps, 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.¹⁴⁸

With resources exceeding even the ADLs, 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.¹⁴⁹

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

¹⁴⁵ Daphne Richards, "Citizens Group Works to get Watchdog for Police Activities," *The Rocky Mountain Collegian* (13 October 1989), 8

¹⁴⁶ Jill Kahn Meltzer, Associate Director, Legal Affairs Department, Anti-Defamation League, to Duncan Philp (12 December 1994).

¹⁴⁷ Morris Dees, "Gathering Storm: America's Militia Threat," (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 90.

¹⁴⁸ Kevin Flynn, "Man Threatens To Sue Over 'Militia' Label," *Rocky Mountain News* (1 May 1996), 18.

¹⁴⁹ Mona Charen, "ADL Playing Upon Old Fears?," *Washington Times* (7 July 1994), A17.

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.¹⁵⁰

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*.¹⁵¹

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*.¹⁵² Most religious right leaders were stunned because, as Senator Boschwitz alluded, they were among the most fervent supporters of Jewish interests. Not a peep 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 "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 the unfounded charges." Their counterattack was unusually strong and unlike the usual whiny 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.¹⁵³

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*,¹⁵⁴ 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.

¹⁵⁰ Senator Rudy Boschwitz Op-Ed submitted to the New York Times (25 July 1994).

¹⁵¹ Don Feder, "ADL Attacks Discredits Organization," *Boston Herald* (16 June 1994).

¹⁵² David Cantor, "The Religious Right: The Assault On Tolerance and Pluralism in America," (New York: Anti-Defamation League), 1994.

¹⁵³ Christian Coalition, *ADL Report*, (Washington, DC: Christian Coalition, 1993).

¹⁵⁴ Elliot Abrams, *Faith or Fear: How Jews Can Survive in Christian America*, (New York: The Free Press, 1998).

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."¹⁵⁵

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 it's 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 and this is what happened here. In April 1995 Ralph Reed spoke before an ADL meeting in Washington, DC:

Ralph Reed, executive director 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."¹⁵⁶

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...¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Allen C. Brownfeld, "Only As A Religious Community Is Jewish Survival Possible," *Issues Of The American Council For Judaism* (Winter 1998).

¹⁵⁶ Larry Witham, "Christian Activist Tries to Mend Ties With Jews: ADL Chief Welcomes 'New Beginning,'" *Washington Times* (4 April 1995).

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

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.

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.¹⁵⁸ What Klanwatch apparently did is 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 of only of but one person and many "patriot groups" consist of but three or four people. 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 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 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

¹⁵⁸ Mark Mayfield, "Hate Groups Increase - As Do Their Crimes," *USA Today* (20 February 1992).

“groups” in both Klanwatch files and my directories are either unconfirmed or they consist of a single individual. One example is the Farmers 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.

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.”¹⁵⁹

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.”¹⁶⁰

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.”¹⁶¹ 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.

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...¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ Drew Jubera, “A Wealth of Contradictions,” *Atlanta Constitution* (26 October 1989).

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Dan Morse and Greg Jaffe, “Charity of Riches,” *Montgomery Advertiser* (November 1994).

¹⁶² Greg Jaffe and Dan Morse, “Rising Fortunes: Morris Dees and the Southern Poverty Law Center,” *Montgomery Advertiser* (November 1990).

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.¹⁶³

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.¹⁶⁴ 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+.¹⁶⁵ 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.¹⁶⁶

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.¹⁶⁷

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

¹⁶³ Letter, Morris Dees, Southern Poverty Law Center, to Dennis Sweet (5/9/91).

¹⁶⁴ Dan Morse, "Equal Treatment?," *Montgomery Advertiser* (November 1994).

¹⁶⁵ American Institute of Philanthropy, *AIP Charity Rating Guide and Watchdog Report* (Spring 1998).

¹⁶⁶ Letter, Robert D. Segall, Southern Poverty Law Center, to Richard Amberg, *Montgomery Advertiser* (November 1994).

¹⁶⁷ Morse and Jaffe, *Charity of Riches*, op cit.

not a politician in the country who won't fight the Klan now. It's a scheme. It's a joke.¹⁶⁸

Mr. Farmer refers to Morris Dees as "the civil rights movement's television evangelist."¹⁶⁹ Dees replies "I wouldn't put any stock in anything Millard Farmer says about anything. He's a bitter man."¹⁷⁰ 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. . . The pretend to be on the side that has moral underpinnings (but) they do damage by their dishonesty...¹⁷¹

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."¹⁷² 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.¹⁷³

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.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁸Dan Morse, "Marketing the Klan," *Montgomery Advertiser* (November 1994).

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³Dan Morse and Elizabeth Hays, "The Right Buttons," *Montgomery Advertiser*, (February, 1994).

¹⁷⁴ Dan Morse, "Marketing The Militias," *Montgomery Advertiser* (26 June 1995).

The SPLC's *Klanwatch Intelligence Report* of June 1995 claimed that "over 200 militia and support groups operate nationwide."¹⁷⁵ 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."¹⁷⁶

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 unsupportable 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. No militias

¹⁷⁵ Southern Poverty Law Center, "Over 200 Militias and Support Groups Operate Nationwide," *Klanwatch Intelligence Report* (June 1995).

¹⁷⁶ Dick Foster, "10 Militias at Home in Colorado" *Rocky Mountain News*, (6 September 1995).

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 Asians and including a number of interracial marriages.¹⁷⁷ 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 multi-cultural 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.¹⁷⁸

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.

¹⁷⁷ 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.

¹⁷⁸ Brandon M. Stickney, *All-American Monster: The Unauthorized Biography of Timothy McVeigh* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus, 1996), 92-93.

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.¹⁷⁹

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 organizations 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 defame, degrade and stigmatize has made it descriptively useless. It has become merely a weapon in the word war between opposing interest groups.

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 doner to the SPLC who learned that the organization had amassed \$60,000,000 in reserve funds:

"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.¹⁸⁰

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.¹⁸¹

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

¹⁷⁹ Lawrence W. Myers, "Tim McVeigh: An Interview," *Media Bypass* (February 1996), 36.

¹⁸⁰ Dan Morse, "Marketing The Militias," op cit.

¹⁸¹ Gary Mitchell, "Civil Rights Leader Praise Verdict Against Klan," *The Tampa Tribune* (14 February 1987).

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.¹⁸² 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.¹⁸³

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.¹⁸⁴ 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." 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.¹⁸⁵

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

¹⁸² Robin Toner, "Experts Say Verdict on Klan May Chasten Other Racists," *New York Times* (14 February 1987).

¹⁸³ Elinor Langer, "The American Neo-Nazi Movement Today," *The Nation* (July 16/23 1990), 98.

¹⁸⁴ *Berhanu v. Metzger*, A 8911-07007 (Cir. Ct., Multnomah Co., Ore.)

¹⁸⁵ "Finding the Forum for A Victory," *The National Law Journal* (11 February 1991).

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.¹⁸⁶ 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.

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.¹⁸⁷

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.¹⁸⁸

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

¹⁸⁶ Appeal No. CA A67833, In The Court of Appeals of the State of Oregon (1992).

¹⁸⁷ "Everything But the Truth: Dave Mazella's Perjury Could Be Tom Metzger's Salvation," editorial, *Williamette Weekly* (29 October 1990).

¹⁸⁸ John Schrag, "Supremacy Verdict Hurts Civil Liberties," *In These Times* (31 October - 6 November 1990), 2.

[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...."¹⁸⁹

The SPLC vs. Constitutional Rights

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.¹⁹⁰

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

¹⁸⁹ Jim Redden, "Dave Mazzolla: Saint or Sinner?", *PDXS* (27 February - 12 March, 1995).

¹⁹⁰ Ray Jenkins, "Even a Scoundrel is Due a Fair Trial," *Los Angeles Times / Washington Post Service* (November 1990).

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.¹⁹¹

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 members were visible and influential on the defense committee, and the party frequently set up rallies of support around the country.

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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..."¹⁹³

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 Pot Calls the Kettle Black!

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.¹⁹⁴

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.¹⁹⁵

Most of the infidelities involved subordinates of Dees at the SPLC or women who worked with him on various cases. One case in particular provides insight into Dees character. The incident that finally broke up their marriage was Morris' two-year affair with Vicki Booker McGaha, who had been on the

¹⁹¹ Bill Stanton, *Klanwatch: Bringing the Ku Klux Klan To Justice* (Penguin Books, NY: 1991), 17-18..

¹⁹² Mark Pinsky, *Columbia Journalism Review* (March/April 1976).

¹⁹³ 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.

¹⁹⁴ Southern Poverty Law Center, "Demise Of A Pedophile," *SPLC Intelligence Report* (Winter 1998), 1.

¹⁹⁵ Alabama Court of Appeals, Case No. Civ 2114, Maureen Bass Dees, appellant, vs. Morris S. Dees, Appellee.

jury in a case Dees was trying. Maureene Dees first found out about Vicki when Vicki's husband turned over letters and tape telephone conversations to her.¹⁹⁶

Vicki was the last straw for Maureene Dees. She separated from Morris and first filed for divorce in May 1978. About six weeks later, Morris called Maureene claiming he had made a mistake and set up another meeting for 3 July 1978. In a three-way conversation Morris would first ask Vicki to say how much she loved him, and would then turn to Maureene to ask her how much she loved him. After a period of time, Morris said he wanted both of them, which was unacceptable to Maureene. Morris agreed to leave Vicki and reconcile with Maureene, but his promise did not last long and Maureene filed suit again on 8 March 1979.¹⁹⁷

On 11 August 1978 Dees and his wife met with Charley Springman, who was gay, following dinner at the Watergate Hotel in Washington, DC. Dees asked Springman to come up to their room. Soon Dees and Springman were on the bed naked, hugging and kissing. Morris tried to get Springman to have relations with Maureene, but Springman said he would be unable to. During their encounter, Springman kissed Morris' penis, causing Dees to complain that he had hurt him. Dees kissed Springman's penis as well.¹⁹⁸

Morris Dees' step-daughter, Holly Buck, Maureene's daughter by a previous marriage, was 7 years old when her mother and Morris Dees married. Holly testified that in the summer of 1977 Morris Dees attempted to molest her. According to Holly, after she had gone to bed, Dees entered her bedroom and tried to instruct her in the use of a vibrator. He left when she complained, only to return two hours later and put the vibrator between her legs. She again complained and he left the bedroom.¹⁹⁹

Karen Sherman Dees is married to Morris' son Scooter. Before their marriage, the young couple was over for dinner at Dees' house and Morris asked Karen to go swimming. Five or ten minutes later, Maureene and Scooter started down the path toward the pool. As she approached the gate, Maureene could see Morris and Karen standing with their arms around each other and with no clothes on. Morris had an erection. Maureene immediately turned and told Scooter that she did not want to go swimming and the two of them headed back to the house without Scooter having seen anything.²⁰⁰

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

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., (R 1459-1468, R 361-362).

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. (R. 361-370).

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, (R 331-341).

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, (R. 345).

²⁰⁰ Ibid, (R.345-347).

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 Zeiskind offer a dreadfully distorted view of American political realities.²⁰¹

²⁰¹ Alexander Cockburn, *The Nation* (9 November 1998).

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 Marxist-Leninist 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....²⁰²

²⁰² Terry Eastland, "The Communists And The Klan," *Commentary* (May 1980), 65-66.

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. In this the CWP ironically made a kind of common cause with its avowed enemy, the Klan.²⁰³

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 demonstrators civil rights in 1984.²⁰⁴

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 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.²⁰⁵

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Elizabeth Wheaton, *Code Name Greenkill : The 1979 Greensboro Killings* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987).

²⁰⁵ Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross: The Ku Klux Klan in America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 391.

“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 1940s.²⁰⁶ 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 with Communist front organizations. Carl, for example, was one of the leaders of the NAARPR, co-chaired by the CPUSA's Angela Davis.²⁰⁷ Ann Braden was elected Vice-Chair of the NAARPR in May, 1983.²⁰⁸ 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.²⁰⁹ 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.²¹⁰

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.²¹¹

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.²¹² Also on the NAKN's

²⁰⁶ David J. Garrow, *The FBI and Martin Luther King* (New York: Murrow, 1986), 116.

²⁰⁷ Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle and Dan Georgakas, *Encyclopedia of the American Left* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 105, 183.

²⁰⁸ Flyer, National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, n.d.

²⁰⁹ *Organizer* (April-June 1990); Harvey Klehr, *Far Left Of Center: The American Radical Left Today* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1988), 165.

²¹⁰ *Ibid*, 30.

²¹¹ *Newsletter of the Historians of American Communism* (September, 1992, Vol 11, No. 3), 1.

²¹² Klehr, op cit, 33.

board is Marilyn Clement, who is active with the New York Marxist School (NYMS) and a writer for the *Guardian*, a now defunct Marxist-Leninist weekly tabloid. Martha Nathan, wife of Communist Workers Party member Michael Nathan who died in a shootout with Ku Klux Klansmen is also present.²¹³

Lyn Wells and 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 thusly:

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.²¹⁴

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.²¹⁵

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.²¹⁶

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. It's most active front group was the National Fight Back Organization, which focused on "anti-racist" issues.

²¹³Wheaton, op cit., 170.

²¹⁴ Francis M. Watson, Jr., *The Alternative Media* (Rockford, IL: Rockford College Institute, 1979), 69.

²¹⁵ George Vickers, "A Guide To The Sectarian Left," *The Nation* (17 May 1980), 596.

²¹⁶ Lyn Wells, *The Call* (April 1973) n.p.

Leonard Zeskind, Lyn Wells and NAKN/CDR

The NAKN has been regarded with sectarian skepticism by other Marxist-Leninist 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.²¹⁷

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."²¹⁸

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.²¹⁹ 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.²²⁰ Jean Hardisty of Political Research Associates and Randall Williams of the Southern Poverty Law Center also have been CDR board members.²²¹

Leonard Zeskind and 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-Leninist 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.²²²

²¹⁷ "Killer Klan Must Be Smashed," *Workers Vanguard* (12 November 1982), 1, 11-12.

²¹⁸ Lyn Wells, "Cedartown and the Klan," *Shmate: A Journal of Progressive Jewish Thought*, Issue #11-12 (Summer 1985), 52.

²¹⁹ *The Monitor* (January 1986) 2.

²²⁰ *Southern Changes* (August 1987), 7,

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² V. I. Lenin, *The Urgent Tasks of Our Movement*, pamphlet (n.d.)

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.²²³

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.²²⁴

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 Marxist-Leninist 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.

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.²²⁵

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.²²⁶

²²³ Leonard Zeskind, "The Events In Afghanistan: A State-Capitalist Viewpoint," *Urgent Tasks*, No. 8, (Spring 1980).

²²⁴ Leonard Zeskind, "Workplace Struggles in Kansas City," *Urgent Tasks* (1978).

²²⁵ Sojourner Truth Organization, *Towards A Revolutionary Party: Ideas on Strategy and Organization* (Chicago: Sojourner Truth Organization, 20 June 1976), 26.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 37.

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-Leninist groups during the 1960s and 1970s.

Noel Ignatiev, Revolutionary

An associate of Zeskind in the STO was Noel Ignatin (he now spells it Ignatiev), who served as one of several rotating editors of *Urgent Tasks*.²²⁷ 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.²²⁸

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.”²²⁹ 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:

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.

²²⁷ *Urgent Tasks* (No 7, Winter 1980).

²²⁸ Joel Olson, “Re: Proletarian Survival: The Federation Advances,” *Love and Rage* (Jan/Feb 1995).

²²⁹ *Love and Rage* (Jan/Feb 1997), 2.

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.²³⁰

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*.²³¹

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? Consider that some of this information is over 25 years old and people change over time. 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. 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:

Speaking freely is something Lenny 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,

²³⁰ Martin Glaberman, "The Working Class and Social Change," (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1975), 8, 17, 19.

²³¹ Martin Glaberman, "The American Working Class in Historical Perspective," *Radical America*, Vol 7, No 6 (November-December, 1973).

seek justification for their beliefs, and pay homage to a former slave and 19th century champion of black and women's rights.²³²

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),²³³ 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.²³⁴

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...²³⁵

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.²³⁶

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

²³² Bruce Rogers, "Radical Chic, Kansas City Style," *City* (January 1981).

²³³ Annual Registration Report, Institute for Research and Education of Human Rights, Inc., Missouri Secretary of State (16 July 1984).

²³⁴ Elizabeth Kaplan, "Keeping Tabs On Anti-Semitism a Full-Time Job", *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* (28 March 1986), 2A.

²³⁵ Rick Hellman, "K.C. Klan-watcher Continues the Fight Against Hate Groups, *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* (1 December 1989).

²³⁶ Rick Hellman, op cit.

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.²³⁷

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.²³⁸

Ridgeway discusses Zeskind's elaborate security precautions in some detail, including his use of a false address on his Missouri drivers 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.²³⁹

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.²⁴⁰

This could be 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.

Leonard Zeskind, Gerry Gable and *Searchlight*

It's 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.²⁴¹ In May 1988 *Searchlight* published a full-

²³⁷ James Ridgeway, "Klanbuster: Penetrating the Racist Underground in America's Heartland," *Details* (February 1991), 19-22.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Rick Hellman, "Zeskind Draws Fire From Extremist Critic," *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* (1 December 1989).

²⁴¹ *The Hammer* (February 1983).

page laudatory review of Zeskind's work and publications.²⁴² 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, with Maurice Ludmer as its editor and Gerry Gable second-in-command. 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.²⁴³

Under Ludmer's leadership the ANL the organization 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.²⁴⁴

In December 1976, a British magistrate accused *Searchlight* of actually inciting racial violence. Magistrate John Milward condemned what he described as the "grave and sinister" feature of the magazine:

What purpose can there be in advertising opponents 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.²⁴⁵

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

²⁴² *Searchlight* (May 1988).

²⁴³ *News Line* (10 July to 13 July 1978).

²⁴⁴ *Guardian* (25 February 1980).

²⁴⁵ "Magazine Accused of Race Incitement," *Birmingham Post* (31 December 1976).

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 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.²⁴⁶

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. 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 1962.²⁴⁷ 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.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ *Associated Press*, "Town Heads Off KKK Rally With Cash," (11 April 1998).

²⁴⁷ *Hackney Gazette and North London Advertiser* (8 May 1962 and 15 May 1962).

²⁴⁸ "Bogus GPO Men Tried To Grab Nazi Papers," *Evening Standard* (18 December 1963); *Focal Point* (30 May 1981).

Carpel, an intimate *Searchlight* associate was convicted of assaulting P.C. William Nield and having an "offensive weapon" in 1963.²⁴⁹ Carpel and *Searchlight* secretary Michael Cohen plead guilty to attempting to break into W. H. Jones Ltd. printing works on 20 July 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 1981.²⁵⁰

Harry Bidney, another *Searchlight* associate, 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.²⁵¹

Interestingly, the June 1987 *Searchlight* glowingly described Harry Bidney's "long and honorable life fighting fascism."²⁵²

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.²⁵³

In 1981 *Searchlight* reporter David Roberts was convicted at Birmingham Crown Court with conspiracy to burn down an Asian restaurant.²⁵⁴

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.

²⁴⁹ *Jewish Chronicle* (26 August 1966)

²⁵⁰ *Focal Point* (30 May 1981).

²⁵¹ *Daily Telegraph* (6 August 1977).

²⁵² *Searchlight* (June 1987).

²⁵³ *The Guardian* (18 April 1979).

²⁵⁴ *Focal Point* (30 May 1981).

According to Atkinson, "Our job is to stick the Nazi label on right-wingers. We keep the issue of Nazis before the general public."²⁵⁵ 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."²⁵⁶

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."²⁵⁷

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 black supporter of the Anti-Nazi League who was killed by police in 1979 and became a much-needed martyr to the cause.²⁵⁸

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."²⁵⁹ 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.²⁶⁰

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 to remedy.

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:

²⁵⁵ Graeme Atkinson, Interview with Jeffrey Kaplan, (27 February 1997).

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ "Rallying Point For Harmony," *Yorkshire Evening Post* (24 April 1989).

²⁵⁸ *Searchlight* (May 1989); flyer, Blair Peach 10 Anniversary Committee, nd.

²⁵⁹ "Neo-Nazism On The Rise," *Jewish Chronicle* (5 May 1989).

²⁶⁰ Steve Penn, "Attacks On Minorities Climb With Communism's Collapse," *Kansas City Star* (22 November 1990), C-16.

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...²⁶¹

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."²⁶²

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."²⁶³

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.²⁶⁴

It's fairly common for extremist groups to welcome former police "infiltrators" of opposing extremist groups into their ranks. These people are a credible appearing source for "links and ties" claims and impress contributors who imagine they are now getting inside information. During the 1960s, 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 didn't last long, however. In May 1991 he was convicted of embezzlement in LaCrosse, WI.²⁶⁵ 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.

²⁶¹ Alan Sverdlik, "Keeping An Eye On The Hate Groups," *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* (3 November 1989), B-2.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ James Ridgeway, op cit.

²⁶⁴ James Ridgeway, op cit.

²⁶⁵ "Former Klan Spy Found Guilty of Embezzlement," *Tribune*, (9 May 1991).

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.²⁶⁶

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.²⁶⁷

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 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.²⁶⁸

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."²⁶⁹ This may have already happened to Zeskind and Berlet.

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.'"²⁷⁰

²⁶⁶ James Ridgeway and Leonard Zeskind, "Revolution U.S.A.," *Village Voice* (2 May 1995).

²⁶⁷ James Ridgeway and Leonard Zeskind, op cit.

²⁶⁸ Eric Ward, editor, *Conspiracies: Real Grievances, Paranoia, and Mass Movements*, (Washington: Peanut Butter Press, 1997).

²⁶⁹ Kent Chadwick, "Conspiracies of Hate," *Washington Free Press*, (1977).

²⁷⁰ Convention Summary, National Convention, United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, 21-25 September 1997; *EU News* (September 1997).

“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.²⁷¹

Bert Cochran of Columbia University in his *Labor and American Communism*, criticizes 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.²⁷²

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 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.²⁷³

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.”²⁷⁴

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:

²⁷¹ Harvey Klehr and John Earl Haynes, *The American Communist Movement: Storming Heaven Itself* (New York: Twain, 1992), 82.

²⁷² Bert Cochran, *Labor and Communism: The Conflict That Shaped American Unions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 285-286.

²⁷³ Michael Fumento, “Politics and Church Burnings,” *Commentary* (October 1996).

²⁷⁴ Fred Bayles, *Associated Press* article (5 July 1996).

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.²⁷⁵

Michael Fumento, a former attorney for the U. S. Civil Rights Commisison, 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 organizations to build a movement to counter right-wing rhetoric and public-policy initiatives."²⁷⁶ 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.²⁷⁷

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.²⁷⁸

Fumento also observed that the person in charge of the Burned Churches Fund was a NCC employee by the name of Don Jojas, former press secretary to the late Marxist-Leninist leader of Grenada, Maurice Bishop.

²⁷⁵ Michael Kelly, "Playing With Fire," *New Yorker* (15 July 1996).

²⁷⁶ Fumento, Op Cit.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

Chapter Four

Political Research Associates

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.²⁷⁹ Although often described as a "senior analyst" at PRA, Berlet is, in fact, 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 holds the distinction of having been inducted into the "Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame" in October 1995.

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:

²⁷⁹ Unmasking The Political Right: A Ten Year Report, 1981-1991 (Cambridge: Political Research Associates, 1992).

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.²⁸⁰

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*²⁸¹, 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-contra 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.²⁸²

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."²⁸³

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].²⁸⁴ 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.²⁸⁵ What was not included in the biographical sheet is Berlet's history as a writer for *High Times*, the virtual house organ of the recreational drug industry. Berlet's articles appeared from 1976 to 1981.²⁸⁶

Professor Harvey Klehr of Emory University, in his detailed book *Far Left of Center: The American Left Today*, details the Marxist-Leninist 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

²⁸⁰ Chip Berlet: *Prepared Lectures for 1989* (Cambridge, MA: Political Research Associates, 1989).

²⁸¹ Russ Bellant, *Old Nazis, The New Right and the Reagan Administration* (Cambridge: Political Research Associates, 1988).

²⁸² Tim Wheeler, "The Bush Campaign - Fascists On Board," *People's Daily World* (22 September 1988).

²⁸³ "Reviews," *Searchlight* (May 1989), 20.

²⁸⁴ Political Research Associates, *Biographical Information: Chip Berlet* (1989).

²⁸⁵ *The Public Eye*, Volume III, Issues 1 and 2 (1981).

²⁸⁶ 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).

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.²⁸⁷

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.²⁸⁸

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 Lawyer's 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 1973...His younger brother, Francisco Kiko Martinez, also an attorney, was killed in a car when a bomb they were transporting exploded.²⁸⁹

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, Catholic priest who happened to attend a meeting where anti-Semitic signs were present. 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.

²⁸⁷ Klehr, 1988, 161.

²⁸⁸ Gunter Lewy, *The Cause That Failed: Communism in American Political Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 285.

²⁸⁹ Sgt. A. McCree, "A Case For Self-Defense," *Military Police* (Summer 1981).

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.²⁹⁰

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 1968.²⁹¹

Berlet's one-sided view of civil liberties runs through his entire career, or perhaps he has constructed a definition 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.²⁹²

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. 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 then they should also be wrong for all.

Chip Berlet, Jean Hardisty and 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

²⁹⁰ Dalia Miller, "Salem Priest Resigns After Probe," *The Jewish Advocate* (6-12 November 1992), 1.

²⁹¹ Dalia Miller, op cit.

²⁹² Chip Berlet, "Civil Liberties," *Ibid.*, 37-41.

(LRW), May 19th 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).²⁹³

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.²⁹⁴

The PFOC also published *Breakthrough*, a quarterly journal which routinely called for widespread 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.²⁹⁵ 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 Organization.²⁹⁶ 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 Granada, 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

²⁹³ *Guardian* (11 January 1984).

²⁹⁴ Klehr, 1988, 109.

²⁹⁵ *Montgomery Journal* (10 February 1983).

²⁹⁶ John George and Laird Wilcox, *Nazis, Communists, Klansmen and Others on the Fringe* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1992), 158.

members of the ruling class and government. We did not choose to kill any of them at this time...²⁹⁷

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.²⁹⁸

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.²⁹⁹

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 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:

²⁹⁷ "Armed Resistance Unit Bombs US Capitol," *Death To The Klan* (Winter, 1984, No. 3).

²⁹⁸ May 19th Communist Organization, *Press Release* (2 November 1981).

²⁹⁹ *Guardian* (11 July 1984), reprinted in *Stop The Grand Jury*, John Brown Anti-Klan Committee (November 1984).

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...³⁰⁰

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.³⁰¹

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....³⁰²

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.³⁰³

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 Marxist-Leninist 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

³⁰⁰ *Guardian Special Report* (Fall, 1981), reprinted by *Public Eye*.

³⁰¹ Chip Berlet, "Right-wing Conspiracists Make Inroads Into Left," *Guardian* (11 September 1991), 3.

³⁰² *The Public Eye* (Volume IV, Issues 1 & 2, 1983), 20-21.

³⁰³ *Ibid*, 23.

People's Socialist Republic of Albania."³⁰⁴ In 1985 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.³⁰⁵

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. According to Freedom House, which monitors human rights around the world:

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.³⁰⁶

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.³⁰⁷

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.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁴ Chicago Area Friends of Albania, *form letter signed by Sally Olson* (6 June 1983).

³⁰⁵ Chicago Area Friends of Albania, *form letter signed by Sally Olson* (12 April 1985).

³⁰⁶ Raymond D. Castill, *Freedom In The World: Political Rights and Civil Liberties, 1987-1988*, (New York: Freedom House, 1989).

³⁰⁷ Chicago Area Friends of Albania, *flyer*, (26 June 1987).

³⁰⁸ H2JArticle 16502...in alt.conspiracy, From: NLG Civil Liberties Committee <cberlet@igc.apc.org>. Date: 13 Aug 93 20:29 PDT. Subject: 4mRe: Who Is Chip Berlet?.

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!³⁰⁹ 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

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.”³¹⁰

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.³¹¹

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.³¹²

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

³⁰⁹ Millennial Studies Conference, Boston University, 2-4 February 1997.

³¹⁰ Chip Berlet and Linda Lotz, *Reading List on Intelligence Agencies and Political Repression* (NY: National Lawyers Guild Civil Liberties Committee, 1991).

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² S. Steven Powell, *Covert Cadre: Inside the Institute For Policy Studies* (Ottawa, IL: Green Hill Publishers, 1987), 72-73.

Welch, their death.³¹³ 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.³¹⁴

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 Mr. Welch?"³¹⁵ Butz, incidentally, was on the editorial staff of *The Public Eye*, along with Chip Berlet and Russ Bellant.³¹⁶

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.³¹⁷

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...³¹⁸

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.

In the Spring of 1997 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

³¹³ "Richard S. Welch," *Washington Post*, (29 December 1975), p. A16.

³¹⁴ "To The Surprise Of A Few....," *Security Intelligence* (24 August 1992), 5.

³¹⁵ Welch, Op Cit.

³¹⁶ "Public Eye Staff," *The Public Eye* (Vol II, Issues 1 & 2, 1979), 3.

³¹⁷ "For The Record," *Washington Post*, 27 July 1980.

³¹⁸ Peter Studer, "Philip Agee — Turncoat CIA Agent," *Tages Anzeiger* (Zurich, Switzerland), March 1975 (undated clipping).

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)."³²⁰ 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.³²¹ 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.

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.³²²

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*.

³¹⁹ Chip Berlet, "Secret Police Political Spying Network Revealed," *Overthrow*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Spring 1987, np.

³²⁰ Flyer, United Front Against Fascism, Seattle, WA, n.d.

³²¹ Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle and Dan Georgakas, *Encyclopedia of the American Left* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992).

³²² *Freedom Socialist Party – Its Program and Principles: Where We Stand*, Freedom Socialist Party, n.d.

Chip Berlet, along with Dennis King (a 10-year veteran of the Stalinist Progressive Labor Party), 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.³²³

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.³²⁴

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).³²⁵ 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*.³²⁶

In September 1994 Chip Berlet conducted a three lecture seminar under the auspices of the Brecht Forum on "The Resistible Rise of Neofascism."³²⁷ 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;³²⁸ and a "two-week intensive study entitled "Marxism vs. The Contract On America."³²⁹ 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

³²³ Flyer, Tenth Annual Socialist Scholars Conference, April 24, 25, 26 1992, Borough of Manhattan Community College, NY, n.d.

³²⁴ Quoted in Irving Howe and Lewis Coser, *The American Communist Party: A Critical History (1919-1957)*, (New York: Praeger, 1962), 505.

³²⁵ Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle, and Dan Georgakas, *Encyclopedia of the American left* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 650.

³²⁶ Schedule of Events, January-March 1997, Brecht Forum.

³²⁷ Brecht Forum / New York Marxist School / Institute for Popular Education, Sept-Oct 1994 Schedule.

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Brecht Forum / New York Marxist School / Institute for Popular Education, May-July 1995 Schedule.

York Marxist School on 4 June 1991.³³⁰ King is author of *Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism*.³³¹

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.

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.³³²

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 have for the now-defunct Marxist-Leninist 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

³³⁰ Catalog, New York Marxist School (Spring, 1991), 12.

³³¹ Dennis King, *Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism* (New York: Doubleday, 1989).

³³² 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).

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.³³³

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

This camp looks like a holiday resort in Switzerland. The atmosphere is also nearer that of a luxury holiday resort than a POW camp³³⁴

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."³³⁵

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

³³³ Robert Manne, *Agent of Influence: The Life and Times of Wilfred Burchett* (Toronto, McKenzie Institute, 1989).

³³⁴ New China News Agency (18 May 1952).

³³⁵ Manne, *Op Cit*, 20.

Korea he was to play a far more important role in publicizing to the world germ warfare “confessions” of captured American pilots.”³³⁶

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.”³³⁷

Burchett was typical of the Marxist-Leninist 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 1987.³³⁸

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 thusly:

The *Guardian* maintained friendly but problematic relations with the CP. A major area of difference was the *Guardians’* 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.³³⁹

³³⁶ Ibid, 25.

³³⁷ 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.

³³⁸ Cedric Belfrage and James Aronson, *Something to Guard - The Stormy Life of the National Guardian, 1948-1967*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978).

³³⁹ Dan Georgakas, in Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle and Dan Georgakas, *Encyclopedia of the American Left* (New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1990), 503.

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."³⁴⁰

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.³⁴¹

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 "links and ties" of their subjects.

Summary

Watchdog organizations, although 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 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

³⁴⁰ *Guardian* (23 March 1968).

³⁴¹ *Guardian* (13 April 1968).

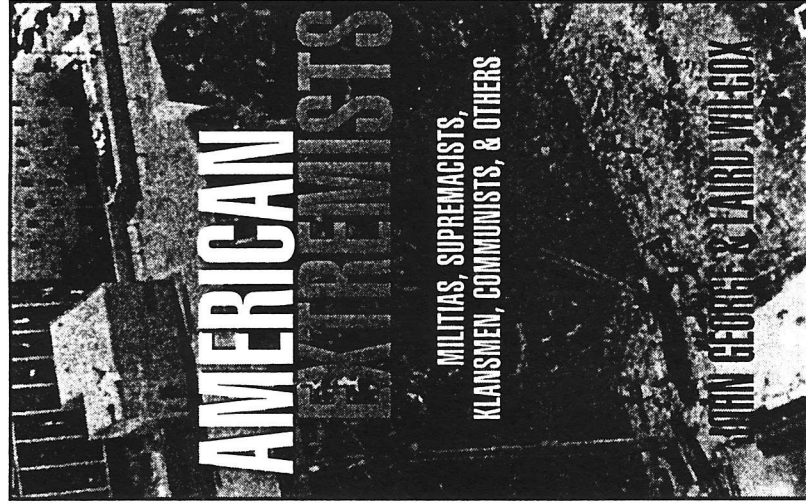
enemies. While claiming “human rights” as an agenda, they make it clear that not everyone is “human” enough to enjoy those rights. In this respect, they merely mimic the jingoism and bigotry of the movements ostensibly oppose, including neo-nazis and the Ku Klux Klan.

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 hyper-vigilance. 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 journalists 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.

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.

Laird Wilcox



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John George (Edmond, OK) is professor of political science and sociology at the University of Central Oklahoma. Laird Wilcox (Olathe, KS) is founder of The Wilcox Collection of Contemporary Political Movements, the largest collection of extremist literature in the United States.

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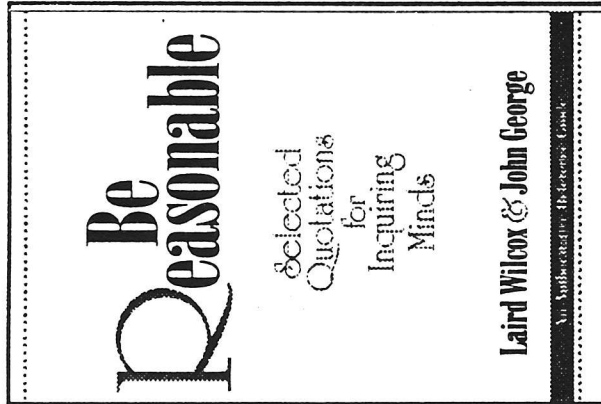
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John George (Edmond, OK) is professor of Political Science and Sociology at the University of Central Oklahoma. Laird Wilcox (Olathe, KS) is the founder of the Wilcox Collection of Contemporary Political Movements. Together they authored *Nazis, Communists, Klansmen, and Others on the Fringe*.

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Going to extremes... and learning tolerance

Unique collection chronicles heritage of freedom of expression

By **BILL CRAVEN**
Topeka Metro News Staff

"We are not afraid to entrust the American people with unpleasant facts, foreign ideas, alien philosophies, and competitive values. For a nation that is afraid to let its people judge truth and falsehood in an open market is afraid of its people."

-John F. Kennedy

One important role performed by a segment of the legal profession is defending those who have, for one reason or another, adopted political or social views not considered "mainstream" or even normal by most of society. Many of these individuals belong to groups generically called "extremists" and for every prosecution of an extremist or an extremist group there is a defense lawyer who argues that the content of the extremist's speech is protected by the First Amendment.

The United States tradition of extremist politics is considered by many to be an important part of our political history. The contention is that whether or not we subscribe to extremist beliefs, important free speech considerations and psychological lessons can be learned by remembering and documenting the extremist groups in our history.

For example, have you ever been or known a member of the Communist Party, the Black Panthers, or Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)? Did you adorn your cars in the 1960's or 1970's promoting extreme points of view such as "Rally around Calley" or "Support Gun Control-Disarm

"Personally, I don't like extremists or extremist organizations. But they are human beings, too, even if, as individuals some of them may be a little sad, or the groups may be a little kooky."

—Laird Wilcox

the FBI." Do you still have copies of Abbie Hoffman's "Steal this Book" or Jerry Rubin's "Do It" in a bookcase somewhere? Do you remember the single-issue political parties like the "Anti-Lawyer Party" or the rantings of the extreme anti-communists

who believed that every disagreement on policy issues masked communist tendencies?

A better question might be: If you are under "thirtysomething" do you even recognize these names or these organizations?

An exhibit at the Spencer Research Library at the University of Kansas brings these extreme and arcane groups into the present in order to remind us of their historical existence and to teach us a lesson about the importance of free speech, free press, and what, in First Amendment parlance, has been called the "marketplace of ideas."

The exhibit is part of the collection begun by Laird Wilcox, a former KU student now living in Olathe. Wilcox, a self-described civil libertarian and free speech supporter, sold the beginnings of his collection, the Wilcox Collection of Contemporary Political Movements, to the university in 1965. Since that time, he has added to it and the university itself has made acquisitions so that the collection now occupies several hundred square feet of stack space in the research library. The exhibit therefore represents only a small portion of the total collection, which he says is a "monument to the political diversity of this country."

Groups with extreme views on issues such as race relations, taxes, gun control, communism and socialism (pro and con), atheists and anti-Catholics, and even extremists on current issues such as abortion are represented along with a multitude of documents for most every conspiracy group of modern times.

Within the library, this collection is housed in the Kansas Collection. Rebecca Schulte, the Kansas Collection's assistant curator who has been working with the collection for four years, said it now contains "more than 10,000 books, pamphlets, and periodicals, more than 800 audio tapes, and over 80,000 pieces of ephemera," defined as newsletters and single items from groups usually with a short life span.

Schulte began her work cataloging the collection in 1986 when the university received a \$345,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education. She said that from a historical perspective, preserving these documents is important in order to "illustrate protest and various ways protest has been done." She said it is interesting to see and catalog these magazines and fliers in order to assess the funding levels supporting various groups. The collection houses document ranging from four color



Metro Staff Photo

Laird Wilcox is the developer of an extensive collection of extremist literature, part of which is now on display at the Spencer Research Library on the University of Kansas campus. The collection contains more than 10,000 books, pamphlets, and periodicals, plus audio tapes, and other artifacts from all categories of extremist causes.

glossy magazines to newsletters "mimeographed in somebody's basement," she indicated. Over 7500 organizations and publications of the American left and right wings are preserved in the collection.

"The collection is nationally significant," she said. "It is one of the finest in the country. Whatever issue there is, there are always two sides," she said. The purpose of the collection is to make sure all sides are represented and keep these documents so they don't disappear."

Schulte said that the collection is balanced more than others in that it contains both left and right wing literature. She said Wilcox is today concentrating on right wing organizations because "they are pretty active, they publish, and we try to make a place for them."

Wilcox confirmed that the collection is now "about 2/3 right wing and 1/3 left wing."

Both Schulte and Wilcox said that collecting this material is a process that is completely separate from their own political views. Schulte said "I don't let my personal views interfere in what I do with the collection."

Wilcox said his motivation in beginning the collection is still motivating him today. "Basically, I started it because of my interest in the psychology of ideological belief

systems and to learn the reason why individuals join these groups. I learned that an individual's motivation to join is sometimes pretty far removed from what the group stands for. Sometimes peer pressure and subculture pressures are formative on these individuals." For Wilcox, the psychology of why individuals join extremist groups is of equal interest to the philosophy espoused by those groups.

Another point made by Wilcox is that the materials currently on display are for the public to enjoy and the research materials are for research. Because of the intense law enforcement scrutiny of many of these groups, he says some officials have tried to gather intelligence data from his collection. "I tell them this is not an intelligence collection. It is not a collection designed to help

"The collection is nationally significant. It is one of the finest in the country.

Whatever issue there is, there are always two sides. The purpose of the collection is to make sure all sides are represented and keep these documents so they don't disappear."

**—Rebecca Schulte
Spencer Research Library**

persecute political minorities."

Because Wilcox himself has met many of the extremists whose writings appear in his collection as well as attended numerous meetings, demonstrations, and other events sponsored by extremist groups of one sort or another, he has special knowledge of the fact that most of them have as members "snitches, informants, and undercover law enforcement types." He has also learned that his presence at these events has not gone unnoticed by domestic political surveillance units. "I am getting my FBI file and it is close to 300 pages long," he said. "And I'm just a nobody. I just go to these events, I'm not a criminal."

"Personally, I don't like extremists or extremist organizations," he said. "But they

Collection *Continued from Page 13*

are human beings, too, even if, as individuals some of them may be a little sad, or the groups may be a little kooky."

He mentioned that some members of extremist groups tend to "lose themselves" in the group because of their insecurity and reject their own individuality.

In articles and essays he has written, Wilcox describes extremists as often possessing traits such as character assassination, use of irresponsible sweeping generalizations, more than a touch of paranoia, argument by intimidation, and claims of moral superiority.

Kansas is not the place where Wilcox has met many of the extremists whose works he has collected. He did say that Kansas did have a few communists at one point, and that other groups (like the Posse Comitatus) have had

In articles and essays he has written, Wilcox describes extremists as often possessing traits such as character assassination, use of irresponsible sweeping generalizations, more than a touch of paranoia, argument by intimidation, and claims of moral superiority.

members here. There is also a small presence of the Socialist Workers Party and the Libertarian Party, but for the most part, Wilcox described Kansas as never having been active in extremist politics. "Kansas is like the hole in the middle of the donut," he analogized.

But for Wilcox the most important lesson to be learned from his study of extremist literature and groups revolves around the importance of the First Amendment. "The First Amendment is not popular anymore," he asserts. "There is a growing atmosphere of intolerance. Even if groups have a hateful message, they have to be protected. We have to defend extremists or it won't be long before any political speech or conduct can be regulated by the government."

The display from the Wilcox Collection will be open through July. Hours are from 8-6 Monday through Friday and 9-1 on Saturdays during the spring semester at KU.

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Special to The New York Times



LAWRENCE, Kan. — This town of 68,000, home to main-

stream icons like the University of Kansas Jayhawks sports teams and a Hallmark Cards plant, might seem an unusual choice of locales for what many experts call the pre-eminent collection of American extremist political literature.

But for 27 years, the manifestoes, broadsides, books and taped speeches of Communists and crypto-fascists, witches, white supremacists and U.F.O. conspiracy theorists, not to mention countless other fringe ideologies, have been growing in number in the climate-controlled rooms of the Wilcox Collection of Contemporary Political Movements at the University of Kansas library.

The chief nurturer of this eponymous collection is Laird Wilcox, a 49-year-old writer and retired carpenter who studied at the university in the early 60's, became a member of the radical Students for a Democratic Society, dropped out of college and began collecting what he calls "my monument to the great diversity of free speech in this country."

He sold three file drawers of political material for \$1,100 to the university in 1965, and the Wilcox Collection was born. For the 27 years since then, he has been donating an average of two or three boxes of extremist literature a month.

The Wilcox Collection now includes more than 10,000 books, pamphlets and periodicals; 800 audio tapes, and close to 100,000 other pieces including correspondence, posters and clippings from more than 8,000 organizations from the 1920's to the present. University officials declined to estimate the collection's value, though Mr. Wilcox says it is worth \$2 million.

Among the rarities in the collection, Mr. Wilcox said, is a tape of a pro-Fascist speech by Charles A. Lindbergh in the 1930's and American Communist documents from the same era.

He collects his material through his network of contacts in extremist political movements and through reading their publications, which often have advertisements for books and tapes. "I've bought, been given or

traded for all of it," he said.

A steady stream of students and researchers use the closed-stack collection, which has minimal restrictions.

"It is so far the leading collection of its kind; it is extraordinary," said Lyman Tower Sargent, a professor of political science at the University of Missouri in St. Louis, who has used the collection for a textbook on contemporary political ideologies.

• • • • •

Mr. Wilcox, the son of a construction accountant who moved his family frequently, has had a near-lifelong fascination with extremists: he grew up listening to intense political debates between relatives who ran the political gamut, from socialists to members of the John Birch Society.

"Why does someone become a Communist?" he asks. "Why does someone become a Birchite? What makes them vulnerable to extremist politics — and not necessarily the particular kind they end up with, which really is almost accidental?" Mr. Wilcox, who describes himself as a "classical free-speech liberal," has a few theories, based on his ac-

quaintance with a number of extremists. He says all extremists take a political notion to its limits, regardless of the price they may pay in their personal lives. They brook no opposition to their views, often feeling morally superior to others. They also often show a disturbing fondness for letting the ends justify the means.

Despite what he sees as almost a pathetic cast to many extremists' lives, he argues that they are sometimes prophetic, and that today's fringe movement may be tomorrow's mainstream organization.

"Most of the social movement that has taken place in the United States in the last century started out as being viewed as the work of extremist groups," Mr. Wilcox said. "The women's movement, you know, was like a bunch of nuts, a bunch of feminists, suffragettes, crackpots, kooks. That's how they were viewed.

"The civil rights movement was viewed as marginal also, watched by the F.B.I., suspected of all kinds of terrible things," he said. "Yet these were groups that developed a significant following that actually attached themselves to legitimate issues."

Far Left and Far Right Meet in a Midwest Library

Emergence of Extremist Groups Reflects Changing U.S. Society, Researcher Says

By DENNIS FARNEY

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

OLATHE, Kan. — "Extremists are the first to sense that society is changing—and, often, the first to get it wrong."

So says Laird Wilcox, who ought to know. For three decades now, this intriguing man with the look and the burly build of a motorcycle rider — has been studying extremists the way a lepidopterist studies moths. He has interviewed their leaders and collected their often-paranoid literature. Along the way, he founded the Wilcox Collection of Contemporary Political Movements at the nearby University of Kansas. It is one of the largest collections of extremist literature in the U.S.

Eroding Freedoms

Now, as a civil libertarian, the 52-year-old Mr. Wilcox is worried. He fears the growing backlash against Oklahoma City's tragic bombing will result in new laws that erode the freedoms of everyone. "This is a fairly typical civil-liberties crisis, where a notorious, horrifying crime has been committed and they're casting a very wide net," he said. "What I think is going to happen is a civil-liberties rollback from the great gains made in the '60s. . . . What they're going to do is go back to the FBI of the '50s, with all of the abuses that existed then."

Mr. Wilcox is the first to concede that his is an unpopular view, especially now. Violence, of course, cannot be tolerated. But violence and perceptions are two different things, and he argues that extremist groups aren't *always* wrong in their perceptions that society is changing around them — or that it needs changing. Until the '60s, after all, many civil-rights groups were regarded as extreme for protesting segregation. Extremist groups are like the miner's canary, the first indicators that the political atmosphere is changing.

So what kind of change is "the populist right," as he calls it, sensing now? From its perspective, he said, it senses an American society growing steadily less tolerant of lower-middle-class values and lifestyles even as — indeed, precisely because — it is growing more tolerant of gays, of careerist women, of nonsmokers in restaurants, of endangered species.

"There has been a reversal of roles," he said. "The left is becoming the law-and-order group in society."

As a case in point, he said civil-rights attorney Morris Dees was among the first to propose tighter security laws in the wake of the Oklahoma bombing. Now, in something rare, President Clinton, Newt

Gingrich and Orrin Hatch seem to have united in a push to tighten security laws: indeed, a kind of political bidding war seems to be in its early stages.

"What I think the militias picked up on is that there are huge changes coming in society," he said. One is a growing "intolerance" of dissent — from the left as well as the right. Another is the growing role of women in politics; women are more alarmed by gun ownership than men, and their concern is being translated into laws that gun owners find threatening. Still another is the growing erosion of the importance of national boundaries by the ever-more-important global economy. All these trends, while comforting to many, also are threatening to many, particularly those in the lower-middle class. "They sense a theft of their culture," he said.

Individualists' Rage

It's doubtful that the typical right-wing militia member would voice his sense of loss this articulately, though. "They're not deep thinkers," said John George, the co-author with Mr. Wilcox of a 1991 study of political extremism in America. This, the authors say, hints at one of the major differences between right-wing and left-wing extremist groups. Leftists tend to be more articulate and more inclined to cluster around a shared ideology; rightists, in general, are too individualistic to share any elaborate ideology and less verbal when it comes to expressing their rage.

Mr. Wilcox himself, who joined the leftist Students for a Democratic Society in his 1960s college days at the University of Kansas, left that group after becoming disenchanted with the rigid ideology that progressively enveloped it. Today, he has grown skeptical of ideologies — all ideologies. He sees them as traps of the mind. As an antidote, he compiled a book entitled "Selected Quotations for the Ideological Skeptic."

Taken as a whole, the quotations constitute a warning against extremism — and a warning against government overreaction to extremism.

On the one hand is James Baldwin, the novelist, who warned: "A devotion to humanity . . . is too easily equated with a devotion to a Cause, and Causes, as we know, are notoriously bloodthirsty."

But on the other is James Madison, who wrote in 1778: "I believe there are more instances of the abridgement of the freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments by those in power than by violent and sudden usurpations."

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A thoroughly documented and extensively footnoted study of false and fabricated racist, anti-Gay, and anti-Semitic "hate crimes" actually perpetrated by the "victims" themselves to gain sympathy, advance a political agenda, or for monetary gain. Reviews: (Wilcox's *Report*) "contains one documented example after another of extremists of all political stripes - but mostly from groups generally considered societal victims - who have been caught attempting to fabricate "hate crimes." Phil Stanford, *The (Portland) Oregonian*, 13 January 1993. "Hoo boy, talk about a powderkeg! This explosive book examines a subject nobody wants to talk about - people who fake hate crimes, such as physical attacks and the destruction or defacing of property that are alleged to be motivated by the victim's race, religion, sexual orientation, etc." Russ Kick, *Outposts*, 1995. From the notorious Tawana Brawley hoax to cases reported only locally, each hoax is analyzed in terms of apparent motives, techniques employed, and payoff to the "victim." *Crying Wolf* also discusses the intended and unintended consequences of these hoaxes, and the role of special interest groups in generating irresponsible 'hate crime' statistics. A list of traits to help identify hoaxes is included.

Laird Wilcox, Author

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The Watchdogs: A Close Look at Anti-Racist Watchdog Groups

The anti-racist "watchdog" movement in the United States consists of a number of organizations who "monitor" and combat the activities of their ideological opponents, which includes a wide range of organizations and individuals who have nothing to do with racism. The watchdog elite consists of the Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center, both noted for enormous resources, massive legal staffs, and access to media and law enforcement to promote their agenda. The watchdog "second string" which includes the Center For Democratic Renewal and Political Research Associates, are noted for their radical political agenda and extensive "links and ties" to extremist groups of the far left. These four organizations are closely studied in this detailed investigative report, which reveals a little-known side that they would prefer kept from the public. Included are documented instances of illegal spying, theft of police files, fund-raising irregularities, irresponsible and fraudulent claims, perjury, vicious and unprincipled name-calling, ritual defamation, libel, harassment, stalking, and a callous disregard for the civil liberties of their opponents and critics.

Laird Wilcox, Author.

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The Wilcox Collection On Contemporary Political Movements

Laird Wilcox is founder of the *Wilcox Collection on Contemporary Political Movements* in Kenneth Spencer Library at the University of Kansas. The collection, established in 1965 and maintained by the library staff, occupies over 2,100 feet of shelving and contains over 5,600 books and pamphlets, 4,100 serial titles, 1,000 audio tapes, an extensive collection of flyers, brochures, leaflets, and other ephemera, and files on more than 8,000 organizations. From 1986 to 1989 the collection underwent a \$345,000 cataloging project funded by a U. S. Department of Education grant. It is regularly used by researchers and scholars and is widely recognized as one of the largest collections of its kind. Stories on the collection have appeared in a wide variety of publications, including the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*. Over the years the collection has been the primary source for numerous books, articles, theses and dissertations. Mr. Wilcox is co-author (with John George) of *Nazis, Communists, Klansmen and Others on the Fringe* (Prometheus: 1992), and *Be Reasonable: Selected Quotations for Inquiring Minds* (Prometheus: 1995). Mr. Wilcox lectures widely on the psychology of ideological belief systems and related topics.

Laird Wilcox, Editorial Research Service, PO Box 2047, Olathe, KS 66051

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The Watchdogs

A close look at Anti-Racist "Watchdog" Groups

by Laird Wilcox

1998

Just who are the "Watchdogs?" They're the people who refuse to debate the issues in an open forum, who spy on their opponents, who defame and degrade them at every opportunity, who work vigorously for laws to outlaw their opposition, and whose real agenda will shock you! They are not just civil rights groups!

The Anti-Defamation League, Southern Poverty Law Center, Center For Democratic Renewal and Political Research Associates are highly ideological agenda-driven interest groups. The ADL has stolen police files and its agents have posed as right-wingers. The SPLC targets victims who cannot fight its lawsuits and has amassed \$100 million in reserves through questionable fundraising practices. The Center For Democratic Renewal and Political Research Associates have documented instances of cooperation with far-left extremists, including Marxist-Leninists, in the U.S. and abroad. Fighting "racism, sexism and homophobia" is merely part of a deeper agenda.

All "Watchdog" organizations use the technique of "links and ties" to establish bogus connections between their adversaries. For example, if some but not all members of an organization offend them, the entire organization is characterized as a "hate group." This is unfair and is used to stigmatize and stereotype -- practices the "Watchdogs" claim to oppose. Although they all oppose the "McCarthyism" of the 1950s, they practice it to the hilt when their own interests are involved. "Watchdogs" are the witch hunters of today, costing their victims jobs, careers and reputations. Their goal is to eliminate dissent and not to promote real diversity -- diversity of values, opinions and beliefs in the traditional American way of fair play and open debate.

This extensively documented 102-page report containing over 330 footnotes tells the real story behind the anti-racist "Watchdog" organizations and why they are a serious threat to civil liberties and freedom of speech.

Laird Wilcox, Editorial Research Service, PO Box 2047, Olathe, KS 66051

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