



In Defense of Democracy & Civil Rights

COALITION FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

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NORTHWEST UPDATE

November 15, 1997

1. "WE ARE PATRIOTS" SAY STATE LEGISLATORS: In response to a Sept. 17 memo from the Washington State Patrol's Organized Crime Advisory Board (OCAB) denouncing the harassing tactics used by common law court activists, nine Washington state legislators signed a response identifying themselves as "patriots" and calling for "appropriate legislative inquiry... focused on understanding the reasons for...[the] discontent" of far right activists. The legislators signing the letter included Sen. Val Stevens (R-39th Dist), Rep. Bob Sump (R-7th Dist), Rep. John Koster (R-39th Dist), Sen. Harold Hochstatter (R-13th Dist), Rep. Tom Mielke (R-18th Dist), Rep. Jim Dunn (R-17th Dist), Sen. Joe Zarelli (R-18th Dist), Rep. Mike Sherstad (R-1st Dist), and Rep. Marc Boldt (R-17th Dist).

The Advisory Board memo to which they responded stated in part, "Since the early 1990's there has been a noticeable increase in the number of people who have joined and continue to participate in the anti-government movement." The letter describes "patriots" as individuals who seek to "create their own self-styled government," promote "bizarre conspiracy theories" and employ "paper terrorism...to clog government services...and disrupt schedules." Among the examples of "paper terrorism" given are bogus liens, counterfeit bank checks and subpoenas issued by common law courts. It urges anyone victimized by such harassment to contact the Washington State Patrol Organized Crime Intelligence Unit at (360) 753-3277.

Although the legislators acknowledge that such harassment "should be dealt with firmly," their letter misrepresents the use of the word "patriot" as used in the State Patrol memo, blurring the distinction between patriotic individuals and far right vigilantes, thus lending political legitimacy to the latter. "We ourselves are patriots," they state. "We will not silently consent to the subtle insinuation that American patriots have become a danger to America. Today, as ever in the past, American patriots are the guardians of American liberty."

The Advisory Board letter drew particular heat from the legislators for its description of "patriot" documents and rhetoric as containing, among other things, "biblical passages." The legislators' letter states, "We recognize this as an open attack on individuals with deeply held religious convictions. Moreover, this is an attack on our system of law, for the Bible occupies a central position in the system of law that secures our basic liberty, both in the United States, and in the State of Washington." The content of the Advisory Board letter makes clear, however, that it refers not to Christians, but to the use of biblical quotes as one among a number of indicators of "patriot" activity. By taking this tact, the nine Republican legislators have fashioned the Christian Right's cry of persecution into a weapon to defend not just religious right bigots, but far right racists and anti-Semites as well.

Rep. Karen Schmidt (R-23rd Dist), the chair of the OCAB, responded to the legislators' letter by writing that: "I disagree strongly with your suggestion that a legislative inquiry be held to study the reasons for the discontent of anti-government extremists who break the law. I have no empathy for people who, by their actions, threaten the lives of other people, while cloaking their activities behind such legitimate, honorable and noble ideals as patriotism or religious conviction. They are criminals who should be dealt with accordingly" (Letter dated Oct. 6).

In addition to the nine legislators, the Rep. Schmidt has come under fire from numerous far right activists for sending out the original OCAB letter. Among those who have jumped into the fray are far right attorney Stephan Bertsch and Harold Thomas. Copies of the nine legislators letter were also reprinted in the Identity tabloid *Jubilee* (Sept./Oct.).

2. TERRY NICHOLS TRIAL UPDATE: The federal government's case against accused Oklahoma City bomber Terry Nichols stands to be markedly different from the one that led to the conviction of Timothy McVeigh. Early on, the prosecution has stressed the link between Terry Nichols and Timothy McVeigh; sought to tie Nichols to an Arkansas robbery which prosecutors claim was done to finance the bombing; and provided testimony linking Nichols to involvement in the bomb plot. The defense will likely stress the falling out between McVeigh and

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Nichols as well as Nichols' absence from Oklahoma City the day of the bombing. Highlights of early testimony include:

FBI agent Leslie Earl III testified that William Pierce's pulp fiction novel *Hunter* was found in Nichols' house after his arrest. *Hunter* tells the story of a lone terrorist who wages a race war (*Washington Post*, Nov. 6).

Michael Fortier testified that "Tim [McVeigh] told me that he – him and Terry – were thinking of blowing up a building." He reported that later, "Tim told me that Terry no longer wanted to help mix the bomb," but "Terry would have to help him because he was in it so far." He also testified that in Fall 1994 McVeigh and Nichols took him to a storage shed in Arizona where McVeigh showed him explosives (*Washington Post*, Nov. 13; AP, Nov. 13).

Robert Nattier, president of the Mid-Kansas Co-op, testified that 80 50-pound bags of fertilizer were purchased by "Mike Havens" in fall 1994, a name prosecutors allege was an alias used by Nichols. Two other employees testified that they each sold "Havens" one ton of fertilizer. The employees, however, could not identify Nichols as "Havens." The former bookkeeper at the Kansas storage company where McVeigh and Nichols are alleged to have stored bomb making materials identified Nichols as "Ted Parker," one of the two names under which the storage space was rented (*Washington Post*, Nov. 7; *Denver Post*, Nov. 7).

A tool markings expert testified that markings found on a drilling tool belonging to Nichols were a "textbook, picture perfect" match to those found on a drilled-out padlock from a 1994 break in at a Kansas rock quarry. According to an employee at the quarry, more than a thousand blasting caps, several lengths of blasting cord and 150 "sausage" explosives were taken. Michael Fortier testified that McVeigh told him that Nichols had robbed a gun dealer in Arkansas. Prosecutors allege that Nichols robbed the dealer, Roger Moore, of \$60,000 in guns, gems and precious metals to finance the bombing (*Washington Post*, Nov. 13; Nov. 11; *Rocky Mountain News*, Nov. 10).

Meanwhile, far right activists continue to crank out conspiracy theories about the bombing. James Nichols, Terry's brother, has released a book, *Freedom's End: Conspiracy in Oklahoma* which, according to *Media Bypass* (Nov.), argues that "the government's much-publicized bombing 'investigation' has been an intricate web of deceit." *The Spotlight* is peddling Jon Rappaport's *Oklahoma City Bombing: The Suppressed Truth*, which argues that the bombing was a government sting operation that "went bad."

3. JAMES NICHOLS TO HIGHLIGHT JUBILEE 1998: James Nichols, the brother of accused Oklahoma City bomber Terry Nichols, is scheduled to speak at the May 22-24, 1998 conference of the Christian Identity tabloid *Jubilee*. Others scheduled to appear include Washington state Identity advocate Ken Anderson, Randy Parson of the Montana-based Freedom Center and Bob Popavich. Washington far right figure Kevin Harris has been invited but is "not 100% yet." Music will be provided by Carl Klang, The Goldman Family and Jonathan David Brown. The Jubilee is taking added security precautions this year, asking prospective attendees to write for a pre-conference survey. Jubilee: P.O. Box 310; Midpines, CA 95345 (*Jubilee*, Sept./Oct.).

4. SUPREME COURT CASTS NON-VOTE FOR WHITE PRIVILEGE: On Nov. 3 the U.S. Supreme Court decided not to hear challenges by civil rights advocates to an April ruling by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that California's anti-affirmative action Proposition 209 is a neutral measure that promotes equality. The Supreme Court decision leaves standing the state's ban of affirmative action, a ban which, according to the appeal, leaves racial minorities and women in the status of second class citizens. The appeal by civil rights advocates argued that "Proposition 209 leaves public universities free to grant admissions preferences" to "children of alumni, donors or friends of university officials...Municipalities are free to grant hiring preferences to veterans or those with close political ties to local officials." The only preferences banned by Circuit Court decision are those involving gender and race (AP, Nov. 3).

5. GAY RIGHTS INITIATIVE LOSES IN WASHINGTON: An initiative which would have outlawed workplace discrimination against gay men and lesbians was defeated 59% to 41% Nov. 3 in Washington state. I-677 won in only two Washington state counties, King and San Juan. Supporters of the initiative speculated that its defeat was aided by the concurrent effort to pass I-676, a gun control measure which spurred some \$2 million in spending by the National Rifle Association and mobilized conservative voters to go to the polls.

Anti-gay activists, encouraged by the margin of defeat, are claiming that their victory will spur greater efforts to pass a legislative measure barring marriage between gays and lesbians. Robert Larimer, a longtime Christian Right activist, told the *Seattle Times* (Nov. 5) that "When you see a margin this big, it's sending a powerful message to the Legislature that they should continue to refuse bestowing special status for sexual behavior."

6. IDAHO PATRIOTS CONVICTED ON FEDERAL CHARGES: Six "constitutionalists" were found guilty by a federal grand jury in early October of conspiring to defraud the government and extort public officials in Idaho. According to the *Idaho Statesman* (Oct. 10), Joseph Bordin of Meridian; Richard Iverson of Union Town, Ohio; John Camilla Burns of Gem County; and G. Michael and Elaine Gott of Boise were convicted on "23 counts of mail fraud, conspiring to defraud and make false claims against the federal government, mailing threatening communications, attempting to intimidate a federal court officer and trying to interfere with interstate commerce through extortion." Iverson was held in contempt for refusing to stand as the jury announced its verdict. He stated that he would not respect the decision of a court whose authority he did not recognize. Sentencing is set for December.

7. NEW ANTI-IMMIGRANT GROUPS IN CALIFORNIA, ARKANSAS: The Bay Area Coalition For Immigration Reform (BACIR) is helping to form an anti-immigrant group in Contra Costa county in California. The new group, as yet unnamed, will reportedly affiliate with BACIR to coordinate community events and lobby elected officials. The group met Oct. 4 at the home of Jacquie Clويد in Orinda. Others involved in the effort include John Thomas, Jay Todesco, Don Lively, Julie Powell and Chris Olson. John Thomas: (510) 283-6940.

Americans for an Immigration Moratorium has formed in northwest Arkansas. Leaders of the group include Dan Morris (501-633-4145) and Scott Leachman (501-936-8067). AIM: 100 N. Dixieland Rd, D2-255; Rogers, AR 72765.

8. KLICKITAT COUNTY GOES "ENGLISH ONLY": The Klickitat County, Oregon Board of Commissioners voted 3-0 to pass a resolution that recognizes the county as an "English-speaking county." The resolution was apparently instigated by a Cerritos, California resident, Thomas Brachko, who mailed the text of a similar resolution to the commissioners with a letter requesting action. "This is the language we speak and that's that," said Commissioner Lane Smith. "That doesn't mean we hate everybody else," he added. In a similar vein, Washington State Representative Doc Hastings recently co-sponsored HR 123, a bill that would amend federal law to make English the official language of the United States (*Hood River News*, Sept. 27).

9. METCALF AND SMITH JOIN "IMPEACH CLINTON" CRUSADE: Washington state Representatives Jack Metcalf and Linda Smith joined Bob Barr (R-GA) and 13 other representatives in calling on the House Judiciary Committee to hold an impeachment inquiry of President Clinton. Barr's resolution claims that Clinton has "engaged in a systemic effort to obstruct, undermine, and compromise the legitimate and proper functions of the legislative branch." Metcalf told reporters that "I'm not a Clinton hater, and I'm not headhunting in any way...I don't respect him a lot, but this is about clearing the air of all these rumors and innuendoes we keep hearing." Smith bases her involvement in the effort in part on Clinton's alleged violations of campaign finance law (AP; *Seattle Times*, Nov. 7).

Several far right organizations and leaders have undertaken campaigns to "Impeach Clinton." The conspiracy-weaving John Birch Society has formed the Activate Congress to Improve the Nation Committee (A.C.T.I.O.N) to take up the crusade and plans to distribute a "monthly newsletter" to "provide members with 'Impeach Clinton' campaign progress reports" (*JBS Bulletin*, Nov.). Alan Denham is the head of the Committee to Impeach Bill Clinton, an organization sharing the mailing address of the anti-Semitic *Spotlight* (Nov. 10).

10. MCLAREN GET 99 YEARS FOR ABDUCTION: Republic of Texas leader Richard McLaren was sentenced to 99 years in prison for the abduction that led to a 1996 stand-off with over 300 state troopers and Texas Rangers. His cohort in crime, Robert Otto, was sentenced to 50 years in prison. After being sentenced, McLaren gave a 10 minute speech in which he declared that the case against him had been nullified by a suit he had filed against court officials. "I stand that this action is now abated because of the political issues," he said before being escorted away to begin serving his sentence (AP).

11. BRADLEY SMITH ON WILLIS CARTO: Bradley Smith, the head of the Committee for the Open Debate of the Holocaust (CODOH) took a shot at Willis Carto in the Oct. *Smith's Report*. Referring to an August ruling that Willis Carto has no standing to sue on behalf of the Legion for Survival and Freedom – the organization controlled by a descendant of Thomas Edison which financially backs the Institute for Historical Review – Smith writes, "The pattern appears clear. In effect, Carto is using the Edison bequest of millions...to attempt to bankrupt those for whom the money was intended in the first place. He has nothing to lose by continuing the process, other than a further diminution of his character, so he will likely continue it."

12. RANDALL TERRY AGAINST THE INCOME TAX: Operation Rescue founder Randall Terry is appealing to anti-tax radicals and conservatives in his bid for the U.S. Senate. A Terry flyer announces his highest priorities as "Repealing the 16th Amendment...Introducing a constitutional amendment to ban property tax...[and] restoring legal protection to the innocent pre-born babies." Randall Terry for Congress: P.O. Box 600; Windsor, NY 13865.

13. ANTI-IMMIGRANT ALLIANCE ANNOUNCES 1998 LOBBYING PLANS: The National Grassroots Alliance, a recently formed coalition of anti-immigrant organizations, has announced plans to organize congressional lobbying by anti-immigrant activists April 18-22, 1998 in Washington, D.C. Contact: Joe Daeleiden; (847-733-1875)(9*1*1).

14. BYRON DALE RUNS FOR U.S. SENATE: South Dakota Christian Patriot Byron Dale is running for the U.S. Senate. According to the *Jubilee*, Dale's campaign will focus on "why the U.S. Federal government is \$6 Trillion in debt when it has the authority to print and coin money" (Sept./Oct.). Byron Dale for U.S. Senate: HCR 64 Box 108; Timberlake, SD 57656.

15. NEGATIVE POPULATION GROWTH ANNUAL MEETING: The anti-immigrant group Negative Population Growth will hold its annual membership meeting Dec. 3 at The Association of the Bar of the City of New York at 42 West 44th St. in New York City. Vivian Higgins and Margaret Quirici have been nominated to join the board of directors.

16. RACISM IN LONGVIEW, WASHINGTON SCHOOLS: R.A. Long High School has suspended five students for racially charged fights in the new school year, including an incident that drew more than 100 students in early October. 15%-20% of the student population is non-white. School officials have begun meeting with parents and students to deal with racial harassment in the schools (*Longview Daily News*, Oct. 7).

17. GAY & LESBIAN WORKERS' RIGHT TO SUE STRUCK DOWN: On Sept. 22 Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Pro-Tem Monte Bricker ruled that private parties cannot bring suit protecting their rights to non-discrimination in employment in a state court under Portland, Oregon's city ordinance. Remedies that continue to exist include recourse through the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) Civil Rights Division, which will process cases based on sexual orientation. The Portland City Council unanimously passed the ordinance barring discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or source of income in 1991. The city will appeal the ruling (*Northwest Labor Press*, Oct. 3, 1997).

18. OCA BACK WITH TWO STATEWIDE INITIATIVES: The Oregon Citizens Alliance claims to have collected 45,000 signatures of 90,000 needed on an initiative to ban late-term abortions, and is also backing an initiative that rejects gay and lesbian partnerships and defines "marriage" as heterosexual union. The OCA has been racked by declining membership and finances, while a number of former OCA statewide and county leaders bolted from the group.

19. MINORITY ENROLLMENT IN MEDICAL SCHOOL DROPS: According to a study by the American Association of Medical Colleges, the number of minority students entering medical schools in the United States dropped this year, particularly in those states that have overturned affirmative action. The study of the country's 125 accredited medical schools reported an 11% drop in African-American, Native American, Mexican-American, Chicano and Puerto Rican applicants between 1996 and 1997. In addition, 6.8% fewer minority students were accepted in 1997 than 1996. The report states that 17% fewer minority students applied to medical schools in California, Texas, Mississippi, and Louisiana, states which have recently overturned affirmative action programs in higher education. The number of applicants accepted in those states fell by 27% (AP, Nov. 2).

•• The CHD Research Department prefers incident reports, newspaper clippings, event write-ups, questions and comments to be e-mailed to chdpdx@aol.com. Alternatively you can mail such items to the address below or call us either in Portland or Seattle at the numbers listed below. CHD Research staff rely upon such information to fill out much of the Northwest Update and we appreciate your contributions. ••