

**Background
Report on**

Racist

and Far-Right

Organizing

in the Pacific

Northwest

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RACIST AND FAR RIGHT ORGANIZING IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

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BACKGROUND REPORT

RACIST AND FAR RIGHT ORGANIZING IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

INTRODUCTION

Nearly three years after the much publicized Order trial in Seattle, Washington, in which 21 neo-Nazis were convicted, the radical right continues to pursue its goals. Much of the work by the far right takes place unnoticed and thus threatens participatory democracy in a number of Northwestern communities.

For the moment, there has been an ebb in the dramatic wave of violence stemming from the hate movement in the Pacific Northwest. The region has been the site of some of the most dedicated human rights activity in the country in recent years. In addition, many of the incidents have been addressed by law enforcement authorities. But the lull in criminality should not be interpreted as the end to hate-inspired violence. In fact, a renewed emphasis on colonizing the Northwest has recently emerged among some of the most violence-prone white supremacist organizations.

This document explores the manifestations of both the avowedly violent white supremacist movement as well as the subtler forms of bigotry practiced by the so-called Christian Patriot and Christian Identity partisans and others on the far right. An upsurge in far right attacks on the rights of Native Americans has been a particular characteristic of recent years.

The Christian Identity and Christian Patriot movements have grown to new levels of strength and are beginning to test their abilities in influencing community mores and public policy. The Christian Identity movement is a racist theological movement popular throughout the white supremacist movement. Identity believers contend that Black people and other people of color are "pre-Adamic," that is, a lower form of humanity than whites. They believe that Jews are literally the "seed of Satan," and that the people of northern Europe are the Lost Tribes of Israel. (See The Christian Identity Movement: Analyzing Its Theological Rationalization for Racist and Anti-Semitic Violence, published by the National Council of Churches, 1986.)

The Christian Patriot movement is a largely anarchic body which contends that the United States is rightfully a republic, not a democracy; that it is a Christian nation, and that it is a "white" nation. People without property should be denied the right to vote and non-Christians and people of color should be denied citizenship, the movement argues. Christian Patriots routinely target the court system and the Federal Reserve system.

The Center for Democratic Renewal believes that both violent activity by uniformed white supremacists and the constitutionally protected political organizing by others on the far right threaten to limit the workings of an open society. Even as legislation and court action curb violent and illegal activities, the danger grows from passive acceptance of other forms of hate group activity.

Since 1979 the Center for Democratic Renewal has been assisting communities in building positive responses to hate group activity. All far right organizations do not pursue the same set of strategies. Once communities have better knowledge of the differences and similarities of hate groups, they are far better equipped to develop strategies to protect themselves from the anti-democratic agendas of the far right.

We believe that this document will help human rights activists throughout the Northwest region.

THE ARYAN NATIONS

In the mid 1970's a former Klansman from Lancaster, California, Richard Butler, settled in Kootenai County, Idaho. Butler was a leader in the Christian Identity movement and established the Church of Jesus Christ-Christian on his new 20-acre compound. At the time Butler was also a member of the Posse Comitatus. The Posse Comitatus is a violent wing of the Christian Patriot movement generally associated with tax protest and Christian Identity. Although the Posse developed its biggest following in the Midwest, there are pockets of explicitly Posse activity throughout the Northwest.

Butler attracted a number of his Identity followers from southern California. They soon moved to northern Idaho and surrounding parts of Washington and Montana. Butler's past Klan ties and Posse membership also gave him access to other parts of the white supremacist movement.

In 1979 Butler convened the first Aryan Nations World Congress on his Idaho property. Klan and neo-Nazi leaders from the United States, Canada and Europe gathered to exchange ideas and strategies. The Aryan Nations Congress became a yearly event, similar to other gatherings in the Midwest and Stone Mountain, Georgia.

Butler, his compound and the yearly meeting were a drawing card and neo-Nazis from around the country began to settle in the Northwest. The relative seclusion and lack of active opposition led the Aryan Nations Congress to become the pre-eminent national meeting of white supremacists by 1982. The annual event routinely attracted between 200 to 300 white supremacists. Many of them were either national or local leaders of Klan or neo-Nazi groups. As a result, the deliberations on Butler's backwoods compound soon established the strategic direction for an entire wing of the white supremacist movement.

By 1982 the Aryan Nations was the umbrella structure for several neo-Nazi groups and Klan factions which embraced the more militant Nazi ideology. The Church of Jesus Christ-Christian was subsumed as an organization, but the Identity theology continued to bind disparate parts of the movement. At its height, the Idaho compound housed approximately two dozen people year-round, and another two dozen who temporarily drifted through. The site included a church building doubling as a school, a training camp, and an office complete with a small offset-printing operation.

In 1983 two Aryan Nations leaders formerly associated with Klan groups, Robert Miles and Louis Beam, published a small circulation newsletter which argued for the building of a clandestine substructure to exist side-by-side with visible political organizations known to the public. The clandestine substructure was to pursue a strategy of violence and terror while the public organizations engaged in "political theatre."

Almost immediately, the underground began to form and the activities associated with The Order began. The Order electrified the white supremacist movement and focused public attention on the Aryan Nations compound in Idaho.

THE ORDER

In November 1984, Robert Matthews, a neo-Nazi leader from Metaline Falls, Washington, died in a fiery 24-hour shootout on Whidbey Island in the Puget Sound region of Washington. Over 200 law enforcement officers were at the scene. In the six months that followed more than 35 neo-Nazis were arrested for a spectacular series of murders, robberies and counterfeiting. The group, known as The Order, was incorrectly described as a split-off of the Aryan Nations. Twenty-one members of the group were indicted for racketeering and those that had not previously plead guilty were convicted in December 1985.

Despite FBI claims that the back of neo-Nazi activity in the Pacific Northwest had been broken, bombings and counterfeiting operations by Aryan Nations members continued throughout 1986. In fact, the annual Aryan Nations Congress meeting in July 1986 declared a plan to establish an "Aryan Republic" in the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

Federal investigation of the movement thus continued, and in April 1987 several members of The Order as well as three first-rank Aryan Nations leaders were indicted for sedition. A year later, all 14 defendants were acquitted after a seven-week trial in Ft. Smith, Arkansas. Aryan Nations leaders Richard Butler, Robert Miles and Louis Beam were among the acquitted. The acquittals notwithstanding, evidence presented at the trial indicated that The Order was not an Aryan Nations split-off, but rather a central, clandestine part of the Aryan Nations' strategy.

Although the Aryan Nations has suffered a significant setback, their July 1988 meeting indicates they will remain a magnet drawing neo-Nazi activists to the Washington-Idaho-Montana area.

THE NORTHWEST ARYAN REPUBLIC

During the winter months of 1985, even as the FBI was rounding up members of The Order, Aryan Nations leader Robert Miles called for an Aryan Republic in the Northwest. At an April 1985 meeting of white supremacist leaders at his Michigan farmstead, Miles proposed what he called the "10% solution." Miles premised his "10% solution" on the demographics of the five states (overwhelmingly white), its geographic character (sea ports, mountains, definable borders) and the impossibility of a nationwide victory by the white supremacists.

Miles' proposal was not readily accepted by those in attendance, the overwhelming majority of whom were from the upper Midwest and Southeast. Neo-nazis from Chicago, who were beginning to enjoy some success recruiting among alienated white youths, were opposed to "abandoning the industrial heartland to the Jews."

Throughout the summer Miles reasserted the proposal for a Northwest Republic and for a policy he dubbed "separatism." That fall a small California based group calling itself the National Socialist Vanguard moved into the Dalles region of Oregon. The Northwest Republic proposal began to win new supporters among the neo-nazis. In Cheney, Washington, at a November 1985 conference of the Interstate Task Force on Human Rights, the Center for Democratic Renewal was the first to alert people in the region of the proposed neo-Nazi strategy.

The July 1986 Aryan Nations Congress, attended by over 200 Klan and neo-Nazi leaders representing 4,000 to 5,000 racist activists was organized around the "Northwest Territorial Imperative." For the first time the idea won widespread support among a section of the white supremacist movement. The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan - headquartered in Tuscumbia, Alabama, with members concentrated in the Midwest and Southeast - has endorsed the Northwest Republic, as have other Klan and neo-Nazi groups in other regions. Key activists have begun to move to the area, including a former North Carolina White Patriot Party leader and

the former Grand Dragon of the Illinois Knights.

The Aryan Nations strategy of settling members from other regions into the Northwest is not likely to succeed in establishing a separate racist republic. It is, however, likely to increase the potential level of racist violence in the region. Incidents have included:

* In August 1986 an Aryan Nations member in Twin Falls, Idaho was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon and threatened IRS agents with a handgun.

* In September 1986 Aryan Nations members bombed three buildings in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, including a government office building and a Catholic rectory. The same people were also reportedly engaged in a counterfeiting operation.

* In October 1986 Aryan Nations members gathered for a cross-burning at the home of a member in Jerome, Idaho.

* The occurrence of unattributed racially-motivated violence against religious centers and residences of minorities in Seattle, Portland and Spokane metropolitan areas.

Nevertheless, violence and terror have not been the most successful strategy pursued by the white supremacist movement in the region. Other, subtler forms of organizing are less well known and more likely to have long term effect.

WHITE ARYAN RESISTANCE AND COMMUNITY ACCESS CABLE TELEVISION

One of the most innovative national leaders of the white supremacist movement has been Tom Metzger of Fallbrook, California. Metzger graduated from the tax-protest movement to the Ku Klux Klan. In 1980 he presaged a new era for the racists when he ran for United States Congressman and won the Democratic Party nomination. (He lost in the general election.)

Metzger is an open supporter of The Order and a leader in the Aryan Nations milieu. Metzger regularly visits the Northwest to speak and to organize. He has also pioneered the use of community access cable television with his program "Race and Reason."

Metzger has produced over 40 different half hour programs featuring a talk show format with leaders of various sections of the white supremacist movement. The "Race and Reason" programs are unabashedly racist and confrontational. They are franchised to local organizers, who sponsor the program through community access cable television.

"Race and Reason" programs have become hotly contested issues in several communities in the Northwest, most recently in Pocatello, Idaho. Other communities in the Northwest where the programs have aired have been Chubbock and Inkom, Idaho.

In addition, Metzger has established a chapter of his affiliated youth group, Aryan Youth Movement on the college campus in Missoula, Montana.

Northwest Knights of the Ku Klux Klan organizer K.A. Badynski began using community access cable television in Spokane to air racist programming. Badynski, who is a former Illinois Knights organizer, uses Cox Cable Network. To the Center's knowledge, most of Badynski's programming has actually been produced in communities other than Spokane. Cable franchise agreements usually require community access programs to be produced in the communities in which they are shown.

THE CHRISTIAN IDENTITY MOVEMENT IN THE NORTHWEST

Christian Identity theology undergirds many of the violent white supremacist organizations, such as the Aryan Nations, in the Northwest. It is also a central component of the so-called Christian Patriot movement which attacks the Federal Reserve System, protests taxes, and engages in courtroom "guerrilla warfare." However, the Identity movement is also organized throughout the Pacific Northwest with groupings that represent themselves as primarily religious.

Pre-eminent among the "religious" organizations is Karl Schott's Christ Gospel Fellowship. Schott's group maintains a small church building in Spokane. He conducts regular weekly services and a Sunday school. Schott also maintains a radio ministry on KKEY in Portland, KCVL in Colville, Washington, and KBLE in Seattle, among other stations.

Schott's group held its annual conference from August 26-28 in Spokane. Identity activists from Nebraska, Georgia, Maryland and California were in attendance.

There are also smaller Identity groups in Washington that meet regularly in King and Snohomish Counties. Known Identity churches also exist in Boundary County, Idaho, (Church of Israel) and in the Boise area.

THE CHRISTIAN PATRIOT MOVEMENT

A part of the so-called Christian Patriot movement since 1980 has been a widely circulated newsletter Jurisdiction Journal and Sovereign Review, published in Provo, Utah. The Jurisdiction Journal has promoted several notions widely held in the Christian Patriot movement. They include:

- 1) The Federal Reserve System is unconstitutional.
- 2) The income tax and other forms of taxation are unconstitutional.
- 3) Drivers' licenses, social security numbers, and marriage licenses are unconstitutional.

4) The proper method to address these and other perceived grievances is through the practice of pro-se Common Law in the courts. One of the results of these widely held beliefs is the flooding of the courts with frivolous law suits by members of the Christian Patriot movement.

The editor of Jurisdiction Journal, however, finally decided to stop publishing his newsletter when he decided he could no longer support the entire Christian Patriot movement he was promoting. He asserted:

" I am frightened by the so-called "Christian Patriots" who have a self-ordained mandate to save the white race. I attended a conference of these racists where they showed the different characteristics of the 'Jew' face so those attending could know who the enemy was...

Whether or not we all accept the 'Identity' philosophy ...has nothing to do with the common law and the struggle to restore the Constitution."

The decision to discontinue publishing by the editor of Jurisdiction Journal and Sovereign Journal is the most straightforward possible testimony to the real racism and anti-semitism that is covered by a thin veneer of concern for the Constitution by most of the Christian Patriots.

THE CHRISTIAN PATRIOT MOVEMENT AND VIOLENCE IN THE NORTHWEST

Although the so-called Christian Patriot movement as a whole is not characterized by a commitment to terrorist violence, the potential for violence by elements within the movement is always present.

In November 1985 a shootout between Jerry Jeppesen and law enforcement officials occurred on Interstate 5 in the Seattle area. Jeppesen was stopped by traffic officers and didn't have a driver's license - a common practice among members of the movement. After the shootout investigators found racist and anti-semitic literature in Jeppesen's car.

Far more ominous, however, were the activities of Seattle area Duck Club member Donald Rice. The Duck Club is one of several dozen "patriot" groups operating in the Northwest.

On Christmas Eve 1985 Rice burst into the Goldmark family home in a fashionable residential district of Seattle. Rice subdued the family and bludgeoned to death all four family members, including two children. Rice believed that the Goldmarks were communists and Jews, part of an international conspiracy to take over the world. The Goldmarks were neither communist nor Jews.

Rice had been a regular at meetings of the Duck Club and was living with an officer of the organization. The small organization is part of a network of racist and anti-semitic organizations that believes an international conspiracy of Jews, people of color, and aliens is subverting the country.

Through the Duck Club, Rice became familiar with propaganda by Jack Mohr. Mohr is a well known racist and anti-semite who led the paramilitary arm of the Christian Patriots Defense League. He has been a frequent speaker at Patriot events in Washington and Oregon. It was Mohr who convinced Rice that communists were about to make an imminent invasion of the U.S. It was Rice who decided that killing the Goldmarks was his "patriotic" duty.

THE POPULIST PARTY AND OTHERS

The largest Christian Patriot operation in the Northwest is an organization calling itself the Populist Party. The party was begun in 1984 as a coalition of racists and anti-semites interested in the electoral arena. Initial party leaders included former Klansmen and National States Rights Party and Posse Comitatus leaders, among others. The party's first chairman was a Mississippi Grand Dragon named Robert Weems.

The Populist Party has been riddled with factionalism since it was organized in 1984. At that time state organizations existed in Washington, Oregon, Montana, and Idaho. After a serious internal split in 1986, the Party was reorganized by the hard-core racist faction. The reorganization was completed at a National Committee meeting in March 1987. At that meeting over 175 delegates and members heard speeches by former Knights of the Ku Klux Klan Imperial Wizard David Duke and former Idaho Congressman George Hansen. Both Hansen and Duke publicly proclaimed their Populist Party membership, and both stated their willingness to run for President on the Populist Party platform.

Populist Party state organizations currently exist in Washington and Montana. The Washington organization, headquartered in Tacoma, is relatively large and active. It regularly holds county level meetings throughout the state. The Party has also run several candidates for local-level political office.

George Hansen had a long association with the Populists which resulted in his receiving the party's presidential nomination in the fall of 1987. Two months later he declined the nomination and announced his desire to work inside the Republican Party.

The Populists then turned to Louisianan David Duke, who had begun his 1988 Presidential campaign bid as a Democrat. After Super Tuesday in March he accepted the Populist nomination. Spokane Klan leader K. Badynski announced his support for Duke

after a July 23 Washington state Populist Party meeting. Both Duke and Jack Mohr were scheduled to speak at that meeting.

To date, none of the Populist candidates in Washington and Oregon have won. The electoral power of the party is potential rather than actual. It remains, however, a useful indicator of significant Christian Patriot activity in the region.

There are other pockets of so-called Christian Patriot activity in the Northwest. Republic V. Democracy led by Robert Wangrud in Oregon City, Oregon, is a small explicitly racist Christian Patriot organization. Republic V. Democracy promotes the notion, common in the Christian Patriot movement, that the Constitution is, and should be, an explicitly racist document; that only white people can and should be citizens of the United States; and that the proper form of government for the U.S. is a "republic" governed by what Wangrud terms "White Law." Wangrud is a popular speaker at Christian Patriot meetings around the Northwest and has spoken at the Aryan Nations Congress in Idaho in the past. Republic V. Democracy's newsletter, Behold, is edited by Aryan Nations leader Ed Arlt. The small organization's network in the Northwest extends to Yakima and Cle Elum in Washington.

The Barristers' Inn School of Common Law based in Boise, Idaho, is another Patriot element based in the Northwest. The Barristers' Inn sells materials designed to train its followers to use so-called common law to engage in courthouse maneuvers and to stop paying taxes. One ten-dollar packet is labeled "Obstruct and Delay." The Barristers' Inn also publishes a widely read newsletter, Alert, which serves as a clearinghouse for other Northwest Christian Patriot groupings. The Barristers' Inn concentrates on courtroom tactics - constitutional "sovereignty" and court status - but it also quietly promotes the religious tenets of the Identity movement.

Other small Christian Patriot organizations with an emphasis on court status and constitutional "sovereignty" are located in Clackamas, Medford and Grants Pass, Oregon, as well as Kent, Washington.

Many of the Christian Patriot groupings in the Northwest are part of a fuzzily defined spectrum between the extremist conservatism of the John Birch Society and the explicit racism associated with the Liberty Lobby's tabloid The Spotlight.

One of the principal centers for this activity has been the National Association to Keep And Bear Arms (NAKBA) and its newspaper Armed Citizen News, published from Seattle and Des Moines, Washington. Ostensibly a more "hard core" alternative to the National Rifle Association, NAKBA promotes both the Birch Society and the Liberty Lobby. NAKBA members are scattered throughout the Northwest with Advisory Board members in Billings, Montana; Medford and Tiller, Oregon; and Kent, Colfax, Renton and Issaquah, Washington.

The Golden Mean Society and the infrequent periodical The Correspondent are two centers of Christian Patriot activity in Missoula, Montana. Both groups specialize in "tax protest" activity, promoting various anti-tax schemes based on the some of the same arguments of "sovereignty" and common law used in the Identity movement.

A more straightforward anti-tax organization is the Citizens Taxpayers Association based in Kent, Washington. Although the Kent organization is part of the Patriot movement, it does not concentrate on individual tax protest and court status. Instead, the Citizens Taxpayers group concentrates on issues affecting public policy.

ORGANIZING AGAINST NATIVE AMERICANS

The Center for Democratic Renewal is concerned about growing levels of anti-Indian activity by the far right. A national organization calling itself the Citizens Equal Rights Alliance headquartered in Big Arm, Montana, is leading a drive to deny Native Americans their treaty rights. Similar local constituent organizations, All Citizens Equal (ACE) and Steelhead/Salmon Protective Association and Wildlife Network (S/SPAWN), exist in Montana and Washington respectively.

ACE and S/SPAWN are part of a network which includes the Wisconsin-based Protect Americans' Rights and Resources (PARR). PARR began to promote "Treaty Beer" in an attempt to raise funds for anti-Indian activity. Dubbed the "Klan in a can" the beer quickly ran into a consumer boycott which stymied PARR's efforts.

ACE and S/SPAWN have attracted far right activists throughout the Northwest. Severe drought conditions in Montana, however, have heightened tensions between water-hungry white farmers and Native Americans with treaty recognized water rights. This has led to a growth of ACE activity in the areas of dispute.

Washington State Senator Jack Metcalf has joined a S/SPAWN lawsuit filed in August against the state Department of Wildlife agreement with Puget Sound tribes over hunting rights. Metcalf has been active on anti-treaty issues in the past. He has also co-operated extensively with the far right during its joint campaign against the Federal Reserve System.

Metcalf's newsletter "Honest Money For America" promoted a 1986 meeting in Richland, Washington, which featured tax protest leader Peggy Christiansen from Montana, the Christian Patriot publication Justice Times and the Tri-City Citizens For Constitutional Government. The Tri-City group is widely regarded as a Posse Comitatus-type organization.

According to the July 23, 1984, edition of the Washington-based anti-semitic weekly The Spotlight, Metcalf was scheduled to speak at a convention of the Washington Populist Party. Despite the political character of the party's original leadership, Metcalf reportedly eschews conspiracy theories and claims he is not anti-semitic.

OTHER PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES

Although most of the racist and anti-semitic, far-right movement primarily engages in extra-parliamentary activity, efforts are now being initiated to influence public policy through the electoral process.

One example was the short-lived candidacy of Red Beckman for Montana governor. Beckman is a well-known national leader in Christian Patriot circles. Another example was the anti-Federal Reserve initiative on the November 1987 ballot in Washington. The Federal Reserve has been a popular target on the far-right for many years. The Washington state initiative would have required the state of Washington to sue the Federal Reserve for being unconstitutional. The measure garnered 38% of the ballots. The campaign for the initiative was organized by State Senator Metcalf.

The high proportion of votes accorded the Metcalf initiative, the growing strength of the anti-treaty and fishing rights campaigns, and the proliferation of Christian Patriot organizations are all signs that far right in the Pacific Northwest warrants greater public scrutiny.

Center for Democratic Renewal
September 1988

CENTER FOR DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL

The Center for Democratic Renewal, a national clearinghouse, was established in 1979 (then the National Anti-Klan Network) as a repository for documentation, strategy and action against hate group activity. It has become the leading national organization which fosters community action and response to such activity. The CDR is the primary source of information and assistance for those who wish to deepen their knowledge of hate groups and who wish to support viable, peaceful counter-activities to Klan marches, far right legal scams in the Farm Belt, Nazi skinhead violence and other manifestations of such white supremacist and anti-semitic organizing.

The CDR uses its extensive research on trends within the far right movement as a mechanism for community education against those who would bring about racial, religious and homophobic violence. With offices in Atlanta, Georgia; Kansas City, Missouri; and Seattle, Washington, the Center combines advocacy, training, public education and victim's assistance/community support as a means of working to alter national public opinion on the issue of racial violence. The CDR resources members of a wide variety of national, regional and local networks so that a common understanding of the nature of hate group activity can be injected into as broad a community as possible.

Recent activities of the CDR include:

* Issuing They Don't All Wear Sheets, a 92-page chronology of hate crimes from 1980-86.

* Testifying before the House Judiciary Committee to support passage of the Hate Crimes Statistics Bill, which calls for uniform recordkeeping of hate crimes at the federal level. The bill was passed overwhelmingly by the House of Representatives and is now before the U.S. Senate.

* Training hundreds of farmers, farm activists and clergy to recognize the recruitment tactics and objectives of the white supremacist movement in the crisis-ridden farm belt.

In its tenth anniversary year, the Center will place a special emphasis on educating young people about hate crimes and the far right. For more information or to subscribe to the Center's bimonthly newsletter, The Monitor, write: Center for Democratic Renewal, P.O. Box 50469, Atlanta, GA 30302, tel. 404-221-0025.