



In Defense of Democracy & Civil Rights

COALITION FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

P. O. BOX 21266 • SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98111-3266 • (206) 233-9775

PORTLAND (503) 281-5823 • FAX (503) 281-8673 • E-MAIL: chdpx@aol.com

NORTHWEST UPDATE

July 15, 1997

1. CHD AT COURT ADMINISTRATOR'S CONFERENCE: CHD executive director Jonathan Mozzochi presented workshops for more than 60 court administrators at the Minnesota Association for Court Administration's annual conference July 8-11, held at the Breezy Point resort in Minnesota. Mozzochi's presentation focused on the relationship between militias and common law courts, the influence of the Posse Comitatus on present day far-right activists and perceived sources and instruments of authority for common law court activists.

2. FAR RIGHT RESPONDS TO MCVEIGH VERDICT: Far right groups are taking a variety of positions on the conviction and sentencing of Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh, ranging from supporting McVeigh's death penalty sentence to applauding McVeigh's act. All generally include some form of conspiracy theory about the "actual" forces behind the bombing. The Spotlight (June 23) compares Timothy McVeigh to Lee Harvey Oswald and James Earl Ray, commenting that "none of them had the brains, organizational abilities or resources to pull off the acts for which they were accused." Asking questions such as "Why did Judge Richard Matsch rule out...evidence pointing to a wide conspiracy and federal involvement in crime?," they conclude that the main unanswered question about the bombing concerns "the facts about the BATF's and the FBI's roles in covering up the worst terrorist act in American history."

The Christian Identity tabloid Jubilee (May/June) ran an article arguing that, "it is difficult to imagine how any jury, after being metaphorically so bound and blinded by the court, could possibly acquit the defendant." Another article reprinted in the same Jubilee claims that "Timothy McVeigh may have unknowingly been an Army/CIA guinea pig involved in a classified telemetric/mind control project - a 'Manchurian Candidate'."

The July Free American is dedicated to the McVeigh verdict and features headlines such as "Finally! Photographic Evidence Proves ATF's Foreknowledge" and "The Mid-East Connection to the OKC Bombing." Despite such articles Free American editor Clayton Douglas soberly writes that, "I think McVeigh should be offered one chance for life. Reveal the names of any others involved, where the money came from and what part he played...or die as he was tried, alone." Douglas argues that "The militia will not rise up to save Timothy McVeigh...However, the militia, really only an extension (sic) of the people of America, will not and should not give up on our country, our Constitution, nor give up on our rights."

The Medford, Oregon-based American's Bulletin (July/August) ran a front-page article proclaiming that "...the McVeigh case only proved once again that the federal jury system can be successfully manipulated by those in charge...For two years now, both the prosecution and the defense have been aware of multiple explosions inside the Murrah Building, and both have participated in furthering this cover-up."

The American Nationalist Union (formerly the Populist Party) also rings in with an attack on the federal government, calling McVeigh's trial an "unsatisfactory affair...Cloaked in secrecy with the defense not allowed to present much of its evidence..." Implying that McVeigh was not likely a "committed revolutionary acting out on his hatred of the federal government," the ANU poses such questions as "Was he nothing but an Army-trained patsy from the beginning, a literal zombie as some suggest? Was he involved in the bombing in a minor role and used by far more sinister forces as the fall guy?" The ANU concludes that "Despite the one-sided demonization of McVeigh by the government-regulated media, polls by establishment groups found that only two-thirds of Americans thought McVeigh was guilty...That result probably correlates fairly closely with the percentage of Americans who still believe what the establishment media tells them..." (Nationalist Times, June).

On his Dial-a-Racist hateline, Oklahoma White Aryan Resistance leader Dennis Mahon takes a different approach: "I noticed where the Ku Klux Klan is getting ready to have another rally. Ridiculous. Another Ku Klux Clown rally. Believe you me, Robert Mathews in the Order and McVeigh did more to hurt this government than

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anything else...Stay away from this rally... If you go to it you're gonna be exposed by federal cameras, BATF and so forth..." Mahon goes on to assure listeners that "if I go to jail for some reason over this bullshit about the bombing...the Dial-a-Racist-hotline will continue" (Oklahoma WAR hateline, July 14).

Michigan Militia leader Norm Olsen stated in a press release that: "By convicting McVeigh, the government has condemned itself by proving that McVeigh, in his own twisted and extreme way, balanced the scales of justice in the way that he thought best. What the government has done is to prove the cause and effect connection between the barbarity of Waco and the barbarity of OKC, thereby indicting Janet Reno, the ATF, and the FBI as the indirect cause of the bombing...The Federales must understand that other McVeighs are potentially ready to exact their 'pound of flesh' after the next abuse of power. If the federales decide not to risk another OKC by launching another Waco, they will make the case for Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) and 'cold war' will be instituted" (Press release, June 2).

In a particularly troubling response, Peters Brooks Jaffe, 42, a self-proclaimed "secessionist" angry at the "Yankee government," fired off nearly 60 rounds from a semi-automatic weapon, hitting a private residence and cutting power to nearly 2,000 homes in Redwood City, California. Jaffe left a Confederate flag and a newspaper with the headline "McVeigh Guilty" at the site of the shooting. Jaffe was arrested one day after the shooting and later confessed. Prior to the arrest Redwood City Detective Don Banks told reporters that "Obviously someone is making a statement here. Someone was really angry about the outcome of the Oklahoma City bombing trial" (Mercury News).

The far right John Birch Society chimed in that "Long before this trial commenced, the New American was convinced from its own investigation...that Timothy McVeigh was guilty of participating in the bombing of the Murrah Building...But the same circumstantial and direct evidence [that indicated McVeigh's guilt] also pointed just as compellingly to additional accomplices...Now comes the even more difficult part—to see that this case is not closed until all those responsible are brought to justice" (New American, July 7).

3. ARYAN NATIONS' CONGRESS SHORT ON BIG NAMES: Speakers at the July 25-27 World Aryan Congress, the annual event of the Hayden Lake, Idaho-based Aryan Nations, are largely officers in the organization and well known regulars. In addition to top AN officers Richard Butler, John Miller and Gerald Gruidl, speakers include Ohio AN leader Harold "Ray" Redfeairn, Montana AN leader Chuck Mangels, Minnesota leader Eric Johnson, California leader Neumann Britton and Mike Teague, apparently a local AN officer. In addition, longtime regulars scheduled to speak are National Socialist Vanguard leader Rick Cooper, Montana financial advisor Chris Temple, Katja Lane, the wife of imprisoned Order member David Lane, and Idaho racist Robert Mansker. Others include Charles Lee and Thomas Grumbee, the latter reportedly from Germany. No skinhead bands are scheduled to appear at the event. North Idaho Holocaust denier Michael Hoffman reportedly turned down an invitation to speak.

4. SPOKANE BANK ROBBERY TRIAL UPDATE: Charles Barbee, charged along with Robert Berry and Verne Jay Merrill in two 1996 bombing/bank robberies in Spokane, Washington, took the stand as the group's second trial got underway in late June. The three were convicted of conspiracy, possession of hand grenades and interstate transport of stolen vehicles on April 2. They are being retried on bank robbery/bombing charges because the jury could not reach a unanimous decision on those charges in the initial trial. In his testimony, Barbee told jurors of his fear of the federal government due to events in Waco, Texas and Ruby Ridge, Idaho and described aspects of his "religious" belief. The three could face life in prison without the possibility of parole if convicted on all counts (Spokane Spokesman Review, June 24, June 25, July 3, AP).

On June 30 Dennis Stucker, a Darby, Montana farmer and close associate of Montana militia figure Cal Greenup, testified that Barbee boasted about the robbery/bombings during an August 1996 visit to the Ravalli county jail where Stucker was then incarcerated for obstruction of justice. According to Stucker, Barbee told him that "we got those boogers twice" and that he had "new leads" in Oregon for his "business," drawing a circle with his hands that Stucker took to be the outline of a bomb. Stucker testified that "My understanding was that him and others were involved in delivering a bomb for diversion and robbing a bank in Spokane" (Spokane Spokesman Review, July 1).

In other testimony, military surplus dealer Christopher Davidson Jr. stated that he recognized the bank robbers' clothing and weapons in a bank surveillance video as belonging to the three defendants. Davidson also testified that Barbee told him to "watch the news" the day before one of the robberies (Spokane Spokesman-Review).

Testimony by various federal agents detailed the possessions found in cars driven by the three defendants at the time of their Oct. 8, 1996 arrest. These included hand grenades, rifles, a machine gun, hundreds of rounds of ammunition, bullet-proof vests and gas masks. A search of Barbee's home also turned up a copy of Vigilantes of Christendom, the 1990 book by Richard Hoskins that provides the basis for the Phineas Priesthood. Material left behind at a Spokane Planned Parenthood and at the Spokane Spokesman Review, both targets of the bombings, included the symbol of the Phineas Priesthood.

The far right tabloid Traden' Save continues to run regular articles supporting the defendants. An article in the July 4-17 edition by Carolyn Barbee and Lawren Ellsworth is titled "Spokane jurors subjected to terrorizing selection process" and criticizes prosecutors for asking prospective jurors if they have read the Citizens Rule Book – a far right pocket manual which advocates jury nullification – or if they or friends belong to "the following organizations: Christian Identity Church, Kingdom of Yahweh, America's Promise Ministry, Aryan Nations, New Patriots, Phineas Priesthood, Ku Klux Klan, [or] Concerned Citizens of Washington." Barbee and Ellsworth conclude that "We have been greatly blessed by the knowledge found in the Citizen's Rule Book. We urge all seekers of truth to obtain one of these books."

5. GRAND JURY TO LOOK INTO OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING: Oklahoma state representative Charles Key has succeeded in his effort to force a grand jury review of the Oklahoma City bombing. Along with Glenn Wilburn, a recently deceased man who lost two grandsons in the bombing, Key headed up the gathering of 13,500 signatures to force the review. The grand jury was impaneled in late June and will look into whether more people were involved in the bombing and whether the federal government had prior knowledge that the Murrah building was to be bombed. Oklahoma officials are lukewarm to hostile about the idea of impaneling a grand jury. Oklahoma County District Attorney Robert Macy initially opposed the petition, though later told reporters that he hope the grand jury will "find out what the truth was in the Oklahoma City bombing, if there is any additional evidence." Oklahoma Attorney General Drew Edmondson was quoted as saying, "The notion that it [grand jury] can learn something that the FBI was unable to learn is, I think, ludicrous. The witnesses that Mr. Key is talking about, we know who they are, we know what they have to say. That doesn't get us any closer to knowing the truth of it, hearing them say it again (Reuter, AP June 30).

6. CONSERVATIVES FORM GROUP IN EPISCOPAL CHURCH: A group of conservatives have formed the American Anglican Council as a means of stopping liberal reforms in the Episcopal Church. John Rodgers Jr., a board member of the group, told the Moon-backed Washington Times (June 9) that "The AAC is a way to stay in the Episcopal Church and declare yourself not to be a member of the revisionist movement," referring to those in the church who support the ordination of women, changes in the church prayer book, abortion rights and same sex marriages. Mr Rodgers expressed his hope that more of the church's 2.3 million members will flock to the AAC if liberals are victorious in the church's July General Convention. The AAC, which held its first national meeting in Washington D.C. in May, remains split on some of these issues, such as the ordination of women. The group has had a limited impact on the church, with Pamela P. Chinnis, president of the Episcopal Church's House of Deputies, reporting that she is more familiar with other small conservative groups than she is with the AAC.

7. MOONIES IN SOUTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA: The Family Federation for World Peace (FFWP), a front group for the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, hosted an "Affirmation of True Love" rally in Coquitlam, British Columbia in late June. Group members distributed promotional material for Moon and the event in nearby Pitt Meadows (Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Times, June 22).

8. MULTNOMAH COUNTY CHRISTIAN COALITION: Taking up slack from the flagging Oregon Citizens Alliance (OCA), the Multnomah County chapter of the Christian Coalition of Oregon (CCO) is now holding regular monthly meetings for members. Meetings are held at the New Beginnings Church (7600 NE Glisan). On June 24 Sandy Snavely spoke on "the responsibilities of the Christian in the political arena." Molly Bordonaro is scheduled to speak at 7:00 PM on July 15. Christian Coalition of Oregon is also circulating the OCA's anti-abortion and anti-gay initiative petitions and encouraging members to attend the Western Regional conference of Americans for a Safe Israel which was held June 22 at the Greenwood Inn in Beaverton, Oregon.

9. HANDS OFF WASHINGTON SUBMITS SIGNATURES: Hands Off Washington (HOW), the group that has successfully helped defeat anti-gay initiatives in the state in recent years, submitted over 230,000 signatures to the secretary of state's office on July 4. Initiative 677, if approved by Washington voters, will make it illegal to discriminate in employment based on sexual orientation.

10. WEST VIRGINIA MILITIA LEADER PLEADS GUILTY: On July 3 West Virginia-based Mountaineer militia member Jack Phillips pleaded guilty to one count of conspiring to unlawfully manufacture explosives. Federal prosecutors stated that at a May 1996 militia meeting Phillips told an FBI informant that he could obtain various explosives and agreed to prepare a list of equipment and chemicals needed to make explosives. Phillips, who faces

up to five years in prison, is the second of seven defendants in the case to plead guilty. The seven were indicted in November on charges that included plotting to blow up the FBI's national fingerprint center in Clarksburg, West Virginia (Reuters, July 3).

11. MONTANA FREEMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO BANK FRAUD: Lavon T. Hanson, arrested in March 1996 along with "Freemen" leaders LeRoy Schweitzer and Daniel Peterson, pleaded guilty in federal court on July 3 to one count of bank fraud. The arrest of the three near Jordan, Montana set-off the infamous 81 day stand-off between federal agents and self-proclaimed "Freemen." In his plea, Hanson admitted to using a fake "certified money order" in an attempt to pay off a \$428,000 debt owed to the Farm Credit Bank by a neighbor. In return for the dismissal of two other charges and a grant of limited immunity, Hanson has also agreed to be "debriefed" by the FBI about the other Freemen. Hanson faces up to two years in prison (AP, July 3).

••• 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. •••