

# NORTHWEST COALITION FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

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## NORTHWEST UPDATE

November 1, 1999

**1. BO GRITZ ATTENDING IDENTITY CHURCH:** Announcing his recent wedding in the September *Center for Action* newsletter, Bo Gritz informed his readers that he is attending the Church of Israel in Schell City, Missouri. The Church of Israel teaches the racist theology of Identity, also known as Christian Identity, which holds that Jews are Satanic and people of color are inferior. According to the newsletter, Israel-Pastor Fred Gabler married Gritz and his new wife Judy on September 4<sup>th</sup>. "Judy and I rejoice in the Israel message," said Gritz. Pastor Dan Gayman, leader of the Missouri based Church of Israel, refers to his followers as "Christian Israelites," reflecting their belief that whites are God's chosen people. Gayman who is also staunchly anti-gay has written that if homosexuals refuse to go straight then, "they should be put to death." Accused bomber Eric Rudolph is reported to have attended the Church of Israel's Christian Academy.

**2. NWCHD WORKS TO GET CHRIS TEMPLE REMOVED FROM PROGRAM AT PREPAREDNESS FAIR:** Self-proclaimed national socialist Chris Temple was asked not to attend the Family Preparedness Fair in Spokane on October 8, 9, and 10. A joint effort by the Northwest Coalition for Human Dignity and local human rights groups helped to focus media attention and create enough pressure to get Preparedness Fair organizers to oust Temple. The U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Division and Avista Corp. of Spokane both said that they did not want to share the stage with Temple who was scheduled to be a keynote speaker. In addition to being a self-described national socialist, Temple is also a believer in Christian Identity and has spoken at the Aryan Nations compound in Hayden Lake, Idaho. NWCHD reported earlier that the Joseph Project 2000, which has representatives from the Promise Keepers and Focus on the Family on its Board of Directors, was a cosponsor of the Family Preparedness Fair. The Joseph Project 2000 told NWCHD that they were not, nor had they ever been, cosponsors of the Family Preparedness Fair. The fact that their logo was displayed on the Family Preparedness Fair's web site as a cosponsor was done without their approval. (*Spokesman Review*, October 6, 1999)

**3. RACISTS RUN FOR OFFICE IN IDAHO:** Vincent Bertollini has entered the race for mayor of Sandpoint, Idaho as a write in candidate. Bertollini who made his fortune in the computer chip industry formed the 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Remnant Messenger with Carl Story, also of Sandpoint. Last year Sandpoint residents received a mailing from the duo that contained a 6-foot poster detailing the anti-Semitic and racist beliefs of Christian Identity. In October of this year, Sandpoint residents received a mailing from 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Remnant Messenger that prophesied the coming of Armageddon. Aryan Nations Attorney Edgar Steele is reportedly running for Fire Commissioner Sub District 2 in Sagle, Idaho. Steele, who has also run Taxpayers United for Freedom, has begun a campaign to develop an Aryan Nation Legal Defense Fund using his PO Box in Sagle. The Defense Fund was set up to cover costs from the suit brought against Aryan Nations by the Southern Poverty Law Center. Donors to the fund will be rewarded with autographed photos of Richard Butler or genuine coins from Hitler's Third Reich.

**4. NEO-NAZIS KINHEADS JOIN IN BRAWLS AT SURREY, BC SCHOOLS:** Racial tensions are growing in Surrey, British Columbia. Sikh leaders say the fights between white students and Indo-Canadian students are related to the sentencing hearing of five white supremacists in the beating death of a Sikh man at Surrey's Guru Nanak Temple in 1998. Students and teachers at Queen Elizabeth secondary school reported that a carload of racist skinheads who did not attend the school drove into the school parking lot to take part in the brawls. (*Sun* (Vancouver, BC) October 9)

**5. JOURNALIST, TRADE UNIONIST AND POLICE ARE TARGETS OF NEO-NAZI VIOLENCE IN SWEDEN:** Bjorn Soderberg, 41, was shot in the head when he answered the door to his apartment in Satra, southern Stockholm. He had previously received threats after his complaints forced a neo-Nazi fellow worker out of a union. The same day the story hit the media, someone requested a copy of Björn Söderberg's passport picture from the police registry, (which is a public record in Sweden). The passport picture was requested by fax to a post office box owned by a known Nazi activist. On October 18, Hampus Hellekant, 23, Bjorn Lindberg Hernlund, 22, and Jimmy Niklasson, 20, appeared before Stockholm district court amid tight security. They were held in custody at the end of the hearing, in which all three denied killing Soderberg.

In May two neo-Nazis, both former Swedish national servicemen, were charged with murder after killing two policemen following a bank robbery. They have yet to come to court. In June a journalist who documented the white supremacist movement in Sweden was seriously injured when a bomb exploded as he opened the door to his car parked outside his Stockholm home. (Reuters, October 18)

**6. ANTI-IMMIGRANT BILLBOARD TO GO UP IN WASHINGTON:** Washington State Citizens for Immigration Control will put up a billboard on Lake City Way starting December 13<sup>th</sup>. The billboard will read: "Tired of sitting in traffic? In your lifetime, U.S. population will double because of immigration. Call your congressman (sic) because Congress must act!" The billboard will cost \$1,200 to put up, of which WSCIC is donating \$100.

**7. WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATOR SPEAKS TO MILITIA GROUP:** Washington State Representative Joyce Mulliken spoke to the Yakima County Militia at their September 28<sup>th</sup> meeting. Representative Mulliken (R- Moses Lake) spoke on a series of topics including her endorsement of Initiative 695, and her frustration with Department of Ecology environmental regulations. The Yakima County Militia holds public meetings on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month. Call (509) 653-2970 for location. (*Upper Valley Press*, October 6)

**8. HATE CRIMES ON THE RISE IN EUGENE, OREGON:** With hate crimes increasing, local civil rights organizations are hoping elected officials will take a stronger stand in confronting white supremacists. In 1997, a total of 25 hate crimes were reported to Eugene police. That number nearly doubled in 1998 to 49 reports, and already is on a record track in 1999 with 93 reports as of the end of October. Both police and human rights activists caution that much of that increase may be due to increased public awareness and willingness to prosecute. But make no mistake, they emphasize, hate crimes are increasing. Eugene's efforts include the formation of a new hate-crimes coalition, increased surveillance by law enforcement officials and high-profile leadership from local officials.

The new initiative began in January. A new coalition arranged a meeting with officials including Mayor Jim Torrey, City Manager Jim Johnson, police Chief Jim Hill, and Lane County District Attorney Doug Harclerod. Michele Lefkowitz of Communities Against Hate described for officials how the ranks of white supremacists

had grown in recent years. According to Lefkowitz, "We sat down with these folks and told them it was critically important for city leadership to take a strong role in fighting hate crimes." Police have also begun "knock and talk" visits to homes where hard-core white supremacists live. Authorities have estimated there may be as many as 20 avowed supremacists living in Eugene. Chief Hill says the increased surveillance isn't harassment. "The folks we're talking about are people who have been convicted of similar crimes, who publicly advertise their interest in this sort of crime," he says. (Associated Press, October 25)

**9. NOVEMBER 2 VOTE ON GAY RIGHTS IN SPOKANE:** An effort to repeal the Spokane City Council's Human Rights Ordinance will go to voters on Tuesday, November 2. The organization leading the repeal efforts, Equal Rights Not Special Rights, is headed by Pastor Ron Johnson of Indian Trail Community Church. In January, the City Council adopted a policy that echoed state and federal laws against discrimination based on race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, marital status or disability. The City Council also prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation which it defined as "actual or perceived bisexuality, heterosexuality, or homosexuality." (*Spokesman Review*, October, 14)

**10. ASHLAND, OREGON FIRST CITY IN STATE TO RECOGNIZE LESBIAN AND GAY COUPLES:** On October 5<sup>th</sup> the Ashland City Council voted to officially recognize homosexual couples. Couples can pay \$25 and choose to have their union recorded publicly or privately. Advocates for the registry say it will allow gay and lesbian couples to gain visitation rights at hospitals and take advantage of family benefits offered by businesses. (*Statesman Journal*, October 7)

**11. FORMER KKK BOSS' HOPE TO RELOCATE RESTS ON SEWAGE PLAN:** Former KKK Grand Dragon Louis Beam hopes that he will be able to build on acreage he owns near Sandpoint, Idaho. Beam, who is now the Aryan Nations' ambassador-at-large, has been thwarted in previous efforts to build on his land because he was unable to get a permit for a septic tank. Now developers Jeff Pfaeffle and Paul Trunell are proposing a 1.8 million gallon sewage lagoon that would accommodate 30 new homes in the area, including Beam's. Beam owns 36 acres near Oden Bay with Paul Hall, the publisher of the racist Christian Identity tabloid, *The Jubilee*. (*Spokesman Review*, October 14)

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

