



A National Center for Equal Justice

NW COALITION FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

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NORTHWEST UPDATE

April 15, 2000

58. NWCHD AT BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY: NWCHD Executive Director Terre Rybovich spoke at Victim Rights Week 2000, held at Boise State University on April 5. She provided a "Review of Northwest Hate Crimes" to about 150 students and law enforcement personnel. The conference was sponsored by the US Attorney's Office, the Idaho Attorney General, Hewlett Packard and others, in addition to the University.

59. NWCHD ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN BOISE SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 27TH: The Northwest Coalition for Human Dignity has moved it's annual conference to October 27th in Boise, Idaho. We had previously announced that the conference would be on October 20th but space was not available for that date. We apologize for any inconvenience.

60. NWCHD SPEAKS ON MISUSES OF THE BIBLE: Research Director, Jonn Lunsford, spoke to over 100 members of the Plymouth Congregational Church in Seattle on April 2 about the racism, anti-Semitism and homophobia in Christian Identity. Christian Identity believers promote the idea that Jews are the children of Satan, homosexuality is punishable by death, and that people of color are sub-human. Lunsford's presentation was part of a three part series on misuses of the Bible.

61. PATRIOT RALLY IN LIBBY, MONTANA FIZZLES OUT: About 36 patriots from Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Washington state met at a roadside rest area to burn the United Nations flag. The April 15th rally originally sponsored by Montana State Legislator Scott Orr, predicted 3000 people would attend. Orr later canceled these initial plans for the meeting after local residents voiced fears of violence. After the initial cancellation Idaho patriots, led by Tom Stetson, announced that the rally was still on. Stetson, of Americans for a Constitutional Government, addressed the crowd. In 1992, Stetson participated in a meeting hosted by racist preacher Pete Peters in Colorado. White supremacist, Richard Masker, also promoted the rally as "an official mass White protest." Libby, Montana residents were displeased with the rally with some denouncing it as "useless." The Local VFW Hall refused to participate and threatened to revoke the membership of anyone who did.

62. BRITISH COURTS BRAND DAVID IRVING AS A HOLOCAUST DENIER: The British High Court found that the author David Irving "is an active Holocaust denier; that he is anti-Semitic and racist and he associates with right wing extremists who promote neo-Nazism". The Court rejected Irving's libel case against American academic Deborah Lipstadt and publishers Penguin over her 1994 book, *Denying the Holocaust*. Irving claimed that Lipstadt's book had destroyed his livelihood and generated waves of hatred against him. While rendering his verdict, the Judge said, "Irving has for his own ideological reasons persistently and deliberately misrepresented and manipulated historical evidence". (*Associated Newspapers Ltd.*, April 11th)

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63. WHITE SUPREMACIST MATT HALE TAPS INTO SEATTLE MEDIA MARKET: On February 15, Matt Hale appeared on the "B.J. Shea Show" broadcast from Seattle, Washington. On April 6 at 11:30pm, Seattle's public access television station aired Hale's new video production entitled "White Revolution." Created specifically for cable-access television, the show promotes his anti-Semitic and racist views, and has aired on two central Illinois public access stations. Hale, calling upon his followers to get the show on the air in their own area, said "let's bring "White Revolution" into our people's homes everywhere!" Segments of an interview with Hale also appeared on the *Discovery Channel* on April 14th.

64. RACIST SKINHEAD GROUP TRIES TO DISRUPT PORTLAND CONCERT: On April 15th, eight members of a group of neo-Nazi skinheads calling themselves "Calvary 84" from Vancouver, WA tried to disrupt a punk rock show at a Portland, Oregon nightclub. No arrests were made.

65. IDAHO APPROVES DUBIOUS "RELIGIOUS FREEDOM" BILL: The "Free Exercise of Religion Act" passed 53 to 17 in the House of Representatives. The bill, which is the Christian Coalition's top legislative goal this year, and sponsored by Sen. Grant Ipsen, R-Boise, puts the burden of proof on government to show "compelling interest" whenever it interferes with someone's religious rights. Opponents of the bill argue that it will allow, for example, landlords not to rent to a gay couple based on "religiously motivated" reasons. Rabbi Daniel Fink of Boise's Congregation Ahavath Beth Israel, asked "what's going to stop the Aryan Nations church from discriminating against Jews or African Americans?" Katy Ball, legal counsel for the ACLU, argued that the bill would place religion on a higher level than state laws regarding divorce, domestic violence, adoption and other family law issues. Ball, a vocal opponent to the bill, received a death threat two weeks earlier. Governor Kempthorne recently signed the bill into law. It will take effect in 2001. (*Post Register*, March 22nd)

66. NORTH IDAHOANS CIRCULATE PETITION DENOUNCING RACIST MAILING: The Sandpoint-based white supremacist group 11th Hour Remnant Messenger's latest mass mailing of hate literature, received a resounding condemnation when more than 800 North Idaho residents signed a petition denouncing the group. Anna Bates, a Coldwater Creek employee who mobilized 125 co-workers to sign the petition in two days, said "Let's show our own area, the rest of the state and the country that people with this particular viewpoint do not represent us. They are not the majority." R. Vincent Bertollini and Carl E. Story, principal leaders of 11th Hour Remnant Messenger, a Christian Identity Church, named several human rights groups and individuals, and labeled them as communists and "haters of America." (*Spokane Review*, March 28th)

67. COEUR d' ALENE, IDAHO HIRES HUMAN RIGHTS COORDINATOR: The mayor of Coeur d' Alene, announced the creation of a new city position that will coordinate community responses to hate group marches, as well as, research the possibilities of a center or memorial to honor the area's diversity. According to Mayor Steve Judy, the city will fill the position in response to racist activities and their economic and social consequences. He or she will work with the media, advertising agencies and civic and religious groups in North Idaho, and focus on the city's "unique challenge" concerning the Aryans' marches. Skip Kuck, vice president of the Northwest Coalition for Human Dignity, said the new position will be "an answer to prayers" if the person deals with diversity issues, and concentrates on making North Idaho a positive place to live." (*Spokesman Review*, March 24th)

68. RACIST GRAFFITI RETURNS TO SCHOOL IN PUYALLUP, WA: After racist incidents rocked Puyallup High School last September, new racist graffiti has appeared. School principal Wanda Berndtson called the school's 1,900 students together to ask for help in finding the culprits. Four African American families are suing

the Puyallup School District over racial harassment in the local school system. (*The News Tribune*, March 29th)

69. PENTAGON ADMITS WIDESPREAD HARASSMENT OF HOMOSEXUALS IN MILITARY:

Military officials say anti-gay actions are more widespread than thought. A report prepared by the Pentagon's deputy inspector general, Donald Mancuso, concluded that 80 percent of GIs questioned around the world had heard anti-gay remarks in the past year, and 37 percent had witnessed or experienced harassment. In an attempt to improve Clinton's "don't ask, don't tell" policy, Defense Secretary William Cohen announced he was establishing an oversight panel of senior military and civilian leaders to develop steps to deal with problem. The panel will be responsible for ensuring that the Pentagon's anti-harassment guidelines are followed. The policy states that troops that are harassed can complain to their commanders without fear of setting in motion an investigation into their sexuality. The policy comes after the July murder of an Army recruit at Ft. Campbell, Ky., who was suspected of being gay. (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, March 25th)

70. WYOMING GROUP RECEIVES PRINCESS DIANA AWARD: An alliance from the Wind River Indian Reservation, Fremont County and United Gay and Lesbians of Wyoming received a \$20,000 grant. The U.S. Diana Fund supported the Wind River County Initiative for Youth to promote diversity training and bias crime prevention. (*Casper Star Tribune*, April 13th)

71. OREGON CLERGY VOICE PUBLIC OUTRAGE OVER HATE LITERATURE: Several local clergy in Corvallis, Oregon have signed a public letter condemning WCOTC's distribution of racist flyers in February. In a statement addressing the entire community, clergy voiced their outrage that "people of color have been attacked by hate literature littering our neighborhoods." "We write to bear witness that our faith refutes racism and affirms each person as precious in God's sight." (*Gazette-Times*, March 4th)

72. LATINO COUPLE REPORTS RACIST ATTACK IN SOUTHERN OREGON: Police in Roseburg, Oregon report that a Latino couple were attacked by a group of 8-10 white youths who allegedly attacked the couple's car, breaking windows and yelling racial slurs. The investigation is continuing. (*News-Review*, April 3rd)

73. ANTI-GAY ACTIVIST SCOTT LIVELY PAYS IN LAWSUIT: Scott Lively, formerly of the anti-gay Oregon Citizen's Alliance (OCA) was recently forced to pay damages to reporter he attacked back in 1991. Lively, former Membership Director of the OCA, forcibly removed *Just Out* journalist, Catherine Stauffer, from an OCA event at Portland's Foursquare Church. Lively was forced to make the overdue payments because he has just graduated from law school and has applied to the California Bar. Before Lively can practice law he must pay his outstanding judgement. (*Willamette Week*, April 5)

74. BOTHELL MAN'S FAMILY SAYS HE'S A "HARMLESS COLLECTOR": The family of Stephen Clifford Ferguson, who was arrested after authorities found 60 guns, including 20 fully automatic - and fully loaded - military machine guns, along with 127 marijuana plants, and a house decorated with Nazi regalia, have come to his defense. In a hearing in U.S. District Court in Seattle, Ferguson's mother described him as "a collector for years and years." She said, "He wouldn't hurt a fly. He never has. He's very, very sensitive and he always has been." Federal prosecutors disagree, and ordered the 51-year-old held without bail pending a grand-jury indictment. (*Seattle Times*, March 21st)

75. ANTI-IMMIGRANT GROUP ATTACKS AFL-CIO: In their March 2000 report, The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), purports the AFL-CIO is abandoning its defense of the American worker

by calling for a repeal of employer sanctions and a massive amnesty for illegal aliens. FAIR claims that the reasoning behind the appeal is simply to boost union membership, and exploit illegal workers. They conclude that labor is moving away from trade unionism, and toward unionized government bureaucrats and teachers, "all of whom benefit from having a larger 'clientele' of poor immigrants. According to FAIR executive director Dan Stein, "The folks at the bureaucrats' union and the teachers' union have jobs that are insulated from illegal alien competition, and whose jobs in fact depend on providing services to needy immigrants."

76. EUGENE SCHOOLS IMPLEMENT HARASSMENT & DISCRIMINATION TRACKING SYSTEM: As a result of a 1997 complaint filed on behalf of two bi-racial students, the Eugene, Oregon school district has plans to develop a "pilot project" tracking system that would document all forms of harassment and discrimination charges. The project will have detailed complaint forms for victims or witnesses, as well as incident documentation forms for school administrators. It is intended to help the district design intervention and staff training programs, according to the Deputy Superintendent, David Piercy. (*Register-Guard*, March 28th)

•••The NWCHD 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 at the numbers listed below. NWCHD Research staff rely upon such information to fill out much of the Northwest Update and we appreciate your contributions. •••