

## **Army officer officially labels Christian groups 'domestic hate groups'**

### **Purposely and specifically names AFA and FRC in email to junior officers and soldiers**

April 11, 2013

An Army officer has sent an email to subordinates labeling conservative Christian organizations as "domestic hate groups" and stating their values don't align with "Army values."

AFA has obtained the 14-page email sent out by Lt. Col. Jack Rich telling other officers and soldiers at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, that, specifically, the American Family Association and the Family Research Council are "domestic hate groups" because they oppose homosexuality. Rich said: "When we see behaviors that are inconsistent with Army Values, don't just walk by – do the right thing and address the concern before it becomes a problem." ([See the email here](#))

Rich took inflammatory and incendiary language directly from the website of the anti-Christian Southern Poverty Law Center, then purposely and specifically chose AFA and FRC as examples of "domestic hate groups."

There are thousands and thousands of people enlisted in the United States Army who are themselves Christian and would resent the fact that this one lieutenant colonel is purporting to speak for the whole Army by saying AFA and FRC don't represent "Army values."

### **TAKE ACTION**

**Write your U.S. Representative and Senators today.** Ask them to investigate these slanderous accusations by Lt. Col. Jack Rich and to strongly advise Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel to insure the military ceases its anti-Christian rhetoric.

Fox News Radio

## **Army Email Labels Christian Ministries as “Domestic Hate Groups”**

By Todd Starnes

April 9, 2013

A U.S. Army officer sent an email to dozens of subordinates listing the American Family Association and Family Research Council as “domestic hate groups” because they oppose homosexuality — and warned officers to monitor soldiers who might be supporters of the groups.

“Just want to ensure everyone is somewhat educated on some of the groups out there that do not share our Army Values,” read an email from Lt. Col. Jack Rich to three dozen subordinates at Fort Campbell in Kentucky. “When we see behaviors that are inconsistent with Army Values – don’t just walk by – do the right thing and address the concern before it becomes a problem.”

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, told Fox News he was disturbed by the contents of the email.

“It’s very disturbing to see where the Obama Administration is taking the military and using it as a laboratory for social experimentation — and also as an instrument to fundamentally change the culture,” he said. “The message is very clear – if you are a Christian who believes in the Bible, who believes in transcendent truth, there is no place for you in the military.”

The Army denied there is any attack on Christians or those who hold religious beliefs.

“The notion that the Army is taking an anti-religion or anti-Christian stance is contrary to any of our policies, doctrines and regulations,” said George Wright, Army spokesman at the Pentagon. “Any belief that the Army is out to label religious groups in a negative manner is without warrant.”

Wright said they are checking into the origin of the email. At this point it’s unclear who ordered the email to be sent and why.

The 14-page email documented groups the military considers to be anti-gay, anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim. Among the other groups mentioned are Neo-Nazis, Racist Skinheads, White Nationalists and the Ku Klux Klan.

The Family Research Council and the American Family Association were listed as being anti-gay.

“The religious right in America has employed a variety of strategies in its efforts to beat back the increasingly confident gay rights movement,” the officer wrote. “One of those has been defamation.”

The officer accused the “Christian Right” of “engaging in the crudest type of name-calling, describing LGBT people as ‘perverts’ with ‘filthy habits’ who seek to snatch the children of straight parents and ‘convert’ them to gay sex,” he wrote.

Last week, Fox News reported that an Army training instructor told a Reserve unit based in Pennsylvania that Evangelical Christianity and Catholicism were examples of religious extremism. The Army categorized that episode as an isolated incident.

Ron Crews, executive director of the Chaplain Alliance, told Fox News that the latest revelation is proof of a much larger problem within military leadership.

“We’re concerned that this is more than an isolated incident,” he said. “We’d like answers. Is there a policy in the military concerning people of faith?”

Crews said that soldiers have religious liberty – and they should not be punished for being members of respected religious groups.

“This is part of a trend that is concerning us,” he said. “Several in the military have this belief that evangelicals and people who hold to traditional values seem to be a problem and need to be monitored.”

Perkins, a Marine Corps veteran, said it’s clear that “Army Values” have indeed changed.

“And it’s the values of Evangelicals and Catholics,” Perkins said. “It’s not the values of the vast majority of those serving in our nation’s military. I think it’s the values of this administration trying to superimpose upon our military.”

Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Jerry Boykin, now an executive vice president of the FRC, told Fox News that all Americans should be concerned about the contents of the email.

“If this is the action of a single Army lieutenant colonel, it needs to be investigated,” he said. “On the other hand, if what he reflects is a shifting policy or attitude of the Army or DOD, then I think it is a much bigger issue.”

Boykin served more than 36 years in the military before retiring in 2007. Since 2008 he said he’s seen withering attacks on religious liberty.

Among the incidents:

A War Games scenario at Fort Leavenworth that identified Christian groups and Evangelical groups as being potential threats;

A 2009 Dept. of Homeland Security memorandum that identified future threats to national security coming from Evangelicals and pro-life groups;

A West Point study released by the U.S. Military Academy’s Combating Terrorism Center that linked pro-lifers to terrorism;

Evangelical leader Franklin Graham was uninvited from the Pentagon's National Day of Prayer service because of his comments about Islam;

Christian prayers were banned at the funeral services for veterans at Houston's National Cemetery;

Bibles were banned at Walter Reed Army Medical Center – a decision that was later rescinded;

Christian crosses and a steeple were removed from a chapel in Afghanistan because the military said the icons disrespected other religions;

Catholic chaplains were told not to read a letter to parishioners from their archbishop related to Obamacare mandates. The Secretary of the Army feared the letter could be viewed as a call for civil disobedience.

But Boykin called the newly-uncovered email the most “egregious” attack.

“That kind of rhetoric is isolating the institution of the military from a large sector of the American population,” he said. “This is an attack not only on the Christian faith, but on fundamental, traditional American values.”

Crews said the military is getting their information on domestic hate groups from the Southern Poverty Law Center. And the email written by the lieutenant colonel referenced the organization.

“This is disturbing that the military would use this list composed by the Southern Poverty Law Center when these organizations that are highly esteemed and respected in the evangelical community,” he said.

The Chaplain Alliance filed a Freedom of Information Act request – asking if the SPLC list had been widely distributed in the military or if had been used in a formal manner.

The response they got from the Dept. of Defense left Crews troubled.

“They told us they had no record of the SPLC list being used,” he said – even though the email clearly proves otherwise.

“This is part of a trend that is concerning us,” he said. “We believe it is more widespread than the military is acknowledging. We keep getting calls from military personnel telling us of their issues.”

David Jeremiah, the pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church, was among the first to publicly support the FRC and AFA and denounce the attack.

“For it to be coming from a left wing political group is one thing, but for it to be coming from our own government is unconscionable to me,” he told Fox News.

Shadow Mountain is an evangelical mega-church near San Diego – attended by many military families. Jeremiah said he suspects there is a significant disconnect between the Pentagon and the rank and file troops.

“There are so many good and godly people in the military who would be appalled to think that their leaders would be saying things like this,” he said. “The attempt on the part of the social engineers of our day to secularize our culture is in full swing. Everything they can do to remove God, the Bible and morality from the marketplace is being done – not subtly but overtly.”

-----Original Message-----

From: Rich, Jack L Jr LTC USARMY (US)

Sent: Friday, August 10, 2012 10:28 AM

To: Chaney, Kenneth S 1SG USARMY (US); Dekaye, Jason M 1SG USARMY (US); Donavant, Christopher G SFC USARMY (US); Fink, Jeremy L 1SG USARMY 101 ABN DIV 4 BCT (US); Jenkins, Jamal R 1SG USARMY (US); Stipkovich, Christopher Scot (Christopher) MSG USARMY 101 ABN DIV 4 BCT (US); Aguigui, Henry J CPT USARMY (US); Conley, Ryan D CPT USARMY (US); Flores, Benjamin R CPT USARMY (US); Greenleaf, Christian D CPT USARMY (US); Oglesby, Jon V CPT USARMY (US); Richardson, Hengel M CPT USARMY (US); Scharbo, Cory R CPT USARMY (US); Aebischer, Jeffrey D CPT USARMY 101 ABN DIV 4 BCT (US); Barker, Lucas B CPT USARMY (US); Barta, Jeffrey J MAJ USARMY (US); Beal, Chris B MAJ USARMY (US); Boyer, Brad H CPT USARMY (US); Caddell, Jessica J CPT USARMY (US); Evans, Elizabeth L CPT USARMY (US); Gwinn, Jeremy T MAJ USARMY (US); Hackett, Laurain C 1LT USARMY (US); Jeffries, Teela M 1LT USARMY 101 ABN DIV 4 BCT (US); McInnis, Kent W CPT USARMY (US); Pollak, Maranda C CPT USARMY (US); Robinson, Major E Jr CPT USARMY (US); Tryzbiak, Brittany E 1LT USARMY (US); Barnes, Donyet D SFC USARMY (US); Beverly, Lefonte C MSG USARMY (US); Chahal, Mitchell T SGT USARMY (US); Czarnikow, Glen A SSG USARMY (US); Ford, Brandon W SGT USARMY (US); Howard, Andrea L SFC USARMY (US); Jones, Anthony V SGM USARMY (US); McFall, Jaime J SSG USARMY (US); Mitchell, Davon L SSG USARMY (US); Thomas, Lashauna P SFC USARMY (US)

Cc: Christian, Lamont CSM USARMY (US)

Subject: Domestic "Hate Groups" (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Caveats: FOUO

Leaders,

Many events have been taking place across the country - just want to ensure everyone is somewhat educated on some of the groups out there that do not share our Army Values.

When we see behaviors that are inconsistent with Army Values - don't just walk by - do the right thing and address the concern before it becomes a problem.

We need to make sure that we maintain our standards - starting with reception and integration.

Thanks - Rich

(U) Domestic "Hate Groups"

(U) Anti-Gay, Anti-Immigrant, Anti-Muslim, Black Separatist, Christian Identity, Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Confederate, Neo-Nazi, Patriot Movement, Racist Skinhead, Sovereign Citizens Movement, and White Nationalist.

(U) Domestic Hate Groups by Ideology (in alphabetical order):

(U) Anti-Gay:

(U) Opposition to equal rights for gays and lesbians has been a central theme of Christian Right organizing and fundraising for the past three decades ? a period that parallels the fundamentalist movement's rise to political power.

(U) For Christian Right leaders, the gay rights movement and its so-called "homosexual agenda" are the prime culprits in the destruction of American society and culture. In the words of Focus on the Family founder James Dobson; the battle against gay rights is essentially a "second civil war" to put control of the U.S. government in the right hands, meaning those who reject gay rights.

(U) The religious right in America has employed a variety of strategies in its efforts to beat back the increasingly confident gay rights movement. One of those has been defamation. Many of its leaders have engaged in the crudest type of name-calling, describing LGBT people as "perverts" with "filthy habits" who seek to snatch the children of straight parents and "convert" them to gay sex. They have disseminated disparaging "facts" about gays that are simply untrue ? assertions that are remarkably reminiscent of the way white intellectuals and scientists once wrote about the "bestial" black man and his supposedly threatening sexuality.

(U) Associated Anti-Gay Groups:

Family Research Council

Westboro Baptist Church

American Family Association

(U) Anti-Immigrant:

(U) Anti-immigrant hate groups are the most extreme of the hundreds of nativist and vigilante groups that have proliferated since the late 1990s, when anti-immigration xenophobia began to rise to levels not seen in the United States since the 1920s.

(U) Although many groups criticize high levels of immigration and some (categorized by the Southern Poverty Law Center as "nativist extremist" groups) typically confront or harass individual immigrants and their supporters, anti-immigrant hate groups generally go further by pushing racist propaganda.

(U) Most also subscribe to one of two conspiracy theories that have no basis in fact: the idea that Mexico has a secret "Plan de Aztlán" to "reconquer" the American Southwest, and another theory alleging that the leaders of Mexico, Canada and the United States are secretly planning to merge into a European Union-like entity that will be known as the "North American Union."

(U) Associated Anti-Immigration Groups:

American Border Patrol/American Patrol

California Coalition for Immigration Reform

Federation for American Immigration Reform

The Social Contract Press

(U) Anti-Muslim:

(U) Anti-Muslim hate groups are a relatively new phenomenon in the United States, most of them appearing in the aftermath of the World Trade Center terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001. Earlier anti-Muslim groups tended to be religious in orientation and disputed Islam's status as a respectable religion.



(U) All anti-Muslim hate groups exhibit extreme hostility toward Muslims. The organizations portray those who worship Islam as fundamentally alien and attribute to its followers an inherent set of negative traits. Muslims are depicted as irrational, intolerant and violent, and their faith is frequently depicted as sanctioning pedophilia, marital rape and child marriage.

(U) These groups also typically hold conspiratorial views regarding the inherent danger to America posed by its Muslim-American community. Muslims are depicted as a fifth column intent on undermining and eventually replacing American democracy and Western civilization with Islamic despotism. Anti-Muslim hate groups allege that Muslims are trying to subvert the rule of law by imposing on Americans their own Islamic legal system, Shariah law.

(U) Anti-Muslim hate groups also broadly defame Islam, which they tend to treat as a monolithic and evil religion. These groups generally hold that Islam has no values in common with other cultures, is inferior to the West and is a violent political ideology rather than a religion.

(U) Associated Anti-Muslim Groups:

Bare Naked Islam

Christian Guardians

Concerned American Citizens

Escaping Islam

United States Justice Foundation

Sharia Awareness Action Network

Insight USA

United West

Islam: The religion of peace and a big stack of dead bodies

Christian Phalange

Aggressive Christianity

9/11 Christian Center at Ground Zero

The American Defense League

Atlas Shrugs

Stop the Islamization of America (SIOA)

Casa D'Ice Signs

Citizen Warrior

Political Islam

Tennessee Freedom Coalition

Christian Action Network

Faith Freedom

(U) Black Separatist:

(U) Black separatists typically oppose integration and racial intermarriage, and they want separate institutions, or even a separate nation for blacks. Most forms of black separatism are strongly anti-white and anti-Semitic, and a number of religious versions assert that blacks are the Biblical "chosen people" of God.

(U) A leading example of a black separatist group is the Nation of Islam led by Louis Farrakhan. In 1997, and in less explicit ways since then, Farrakhan made clear that he had renounced none of the anti-white, anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic and anti-gay views of the previous Nation leader, Elijah Mohammed. Those beliefs include the view that Yacub, a renegade black "scientist," created whites 6,600 years ago as an inherently evil and ungodly people ? "blue-eyed devils." Farrakhan has described Catholics and Jews, who he said practice a "gutter religion," as preying on blacks. He regrets the "tone" of a former principal subordinate who called for slaughtering white South Africans, but agreed with the message. He called for racial separatism and inveighed against interracial relationships.

(U) Associated Black Separatist Groups:

Nuwaubian Nation of Moors

Nation of Islam

New Black Panther Party

(U) Christian Identity:

(U) Christian Identity is a unique anti-Semitic and racist theology that rose to a position of commanding influence on the racist right in the 1980s. "Christian" in name only, the movement's relationship with evangelicals and fundamentalists has generally been hostile due to the latter's belief that the return of Jews to Israel is essential to the fulfillment of end-time prophecy.

(U) Although nominally Christian, it owes little to even the most conservative of American Protestants. Indeed, its relationship with evangelicals and fundamentalists has generally been hostile due to the latter's belief that the return of Jews to Israel is essential to the fulfillment of end-time prophecy.

(U) Identity has created for itself a unique anti-Semitic and racist theology, but notwithstanding its curious beliefs, it rose in the 1980s to a position of commanding influence on the racist right. Only a prolonged period of aggressive efforts by law enforcement, together with the demise of influential leaders who were not replaced, brought about its present decline.

(U) Associated Christian Identity Groups:

Kingdom Identity Ministries

America's Promise Ministries

(U) Ku Klux Klan:

(U) The Ku Klux Klan, with its long history of violence, is the most infamous and oldest of American hate groups. Although black Americans have typically been the Klan's primary target, it also has attacked Jews, immigrants, gays and lesbians and, until recently, Catholics. Over the years since it was formed in December 1865, the Klan has typically seen itself as a Christian organization,

although in modern times Klan groups are motivated by a variety of theological and political ideologies.

(U) Started during Reconstruction at the end of the Civil War, the Klan quickly mobilized as a vigilante group to intimidate Southern blacks - and any whites who would help them - and to prevent them from enjoying basic civil rights. Outlandish titles (like imperial wizard and exalted Cyclops), hooded costumes, violent "night rides," and the notion that the group comprised an "invisible empire" conferred a mystique that only added to the Klan's popularity. Lynching's, tar-and-featherings, rapes and other violent attacks on those challenging white supremacy became a hallmark of the Klan.

(U) After a short but violent period, the "first era" Klan disbanded after Jim Crow laws secured the domination of Southern whites. But the Klan enjoyed a huge revival in the 1920s when it opposed (mainly Catholic and Jewish) immigration. By 1925, when its followers staged a huge Washington, D.C., march, the Klan had as many as 4 million members and, in some states, considerable political power. But a series of sex scandals, internal battles over power and newspaper exposés quickly reduced its influence.

(U) The Klan arose a third time during the 1960s to oppose the civil rights movement and to preserve segregation in the face of unfavorable court rulings. The Klan's bombings, murders and other attacks took a great many lives, including, among others, four young girls killed while preparing for Sunday services at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala.

(U) Since the 1970s the Klan has been greatly weakened by internal conflicts, court cases, a seemingly endless series of splits and government infiltration. While some factions have preserved an openly racist and militant approach, others have tried to enter the mainstream, cloaking their racism as mere "civil rights for whites." Today, the Center estimates that there are between 5,000 and 8,000 Klan members, split among dozens of different - and often warring - organizations that use the Klan name.

(U) Associated Ku Klux Klan Groups:

Knights of the Ku Klux Klan

Brotherhood of Klans

Imperial Klans of America

Church of the National Knights of the Ku Klux Klan

(U) Neo-Confederate:

(U) The term neo-Confederacy is used to describe twentieth and twenty-first century revivals of pro-Confederate sentiment in the United States. Strongly nativist, neo-Confederacy claims to pursue Christianity and heritage and other supposedly fundamental values that modern Americans are seen to have abandoned.

(U) Neo-Confederacy also incorporates advocacy of traditional gender roles, is hostile towards democracy, strongly opposes homosexuality, and exhibits an understanding of race that favors segregation and suggests white supremacy. In many cases, neo-Confederates are openly secessionist.

(U) Neo-Confederacy has applied to groups including the United Daughters of the Confederacy of the 1920s and those resisting racial integration in the 1950s and 1960s. In its most recent iteration, neo-Confederacy is used by both proponents and critics to describe a belief system that has emerged since the early-1980s in publications like Southern Partisan, Chronicles, and Southern Mercury, and in organizations including the League of the South, the Council of Conservative Citizens and the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

(U) Overall, it is a reactionary conservative ideology that has made inroads into the Republican Party from the political right, and overlaps with the views of white nationalists and other more radical extremist groups.

(U) Associated Neo-Confederate Groups:

League of the South

(U) Neo-Nazi:

Neo-Nazi groups share a hatred for Jews and a love for Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany. While they also hate other minorities, gays and lesbians and even sometimes Christians, they perceive "the Jew" as their cardinal enemy, and trace social problems to a Jewish conspiracy that supposedly controls governments, financial institutions and the media.

(U) While some neo-Nazi groups emphasize simple hatred, others are more focused on the revolutionary creation of a fascist political state. Nazism, of course, has roots in Europe, and links between American and European neo-Nazis are strong and growing stronger. American neo-Nazi groups, protected by the First Amendment, often publish material and host Internet sites that are aimed at European audiences -- materials that would be illegal under European anti-racism laws. Similarly, many European groups put up their Internet sites on American servers to avoid prosecution under the laws of their native countries.

(U) The most visible neo-Nazi group in the U.S. is the National Alliance. Until his death, it was led by William Pierce, the infamous author of the futuristic race-war novel *The Turner Diaries*, a book believed by some to have served as the blueprint for the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.

(U) Associated Neo-Nazi Groups:

National Vanguard

National Alliance

White Revolution

Church of the Creator

The Creativity Movement

(U) Patriot Movement:

(U) The antigovernment "Patriot" movement has experienced resurgence, growing quickly since 2008, when President Obama was elected to office. Factors fueling the antigovernment movement in recent years include changing demographics driven by immigration, the struggling economy and the election of the first African-American president.

(U) In 2012, the Southern Poverty Law Center identified 1,274 anti-government ?Patriot? groups that were active the prior year. Of these groups, 334 were militias and the remainder includes ?common-law? courts, publishers, ministries and citizens? groups.

(U) Generally, Patriot groups define themselves as opposed to the ?New World Order,? engage in groundless conspiracy theorizing, or advocate or adhere to extreme antigovernment doctrines. Antigovernment groups do not necessarily advocate or engage in violence or other criminal activities, though some have. Many warn of impending government violence or the need to prepare for a coming revolution. Many antigovernment groups are not racist.

(U) A particularly prominent conspiracy in the antigovernment movement is that the United Nations, which is usually seen as spearheading the ?New World Order,? is imposing a global plan, called Agenda 21, to take away citizens? property rights. There is a UN program with that name to develop sustainable communities across the globe. Agenda 21 was agreed to by political leaders from dozens of countries, including the first President Bush. But in typical fashion, these antigovernment activists have twisted it into a global conspiracy.

(U) Other notable conspiracies found in the antigovernment movement include the idea that the government is secretly planning to round up citizens and place them in concentration camps run by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA. Another conspiracy alleges that there are plans to merge the United States, Canada and Mexico into a single country. Fears of impending gun control or weapons confiscations, either by the government or international agencies, also run rampant in antigovernment circles. As a result, many antigovernment activists believe that being well armed is a must. The militia movement engages in paramilitary training aimed at protecting citizens from this feared impending government crackdown.

(U) The antigovernment movement hit its previous high of 858 groups in 1996, the year after the Oklahoma City bombing. Timothy McVeigh, the Oklahoma City bomber, was motivated by extreme antigovernment beliefs then circulating in the militia movement. He was also inspired by the racist novel, The Turner Diaries, modeling his attack on a scene from the book.

(U) The antigovernment movement of the 1990s, typified by the proliferation of militias, was fueled by a string of incidents, including the 1993 government assault on the Branch Davidians compound, that were seen as evidence of an out-of-control government willing to attack citizens. Other factors included the struggling economy in the early 1990s, particularly in Western states, and the

election of President Clinton, who was perceived by these activists as a liberal intent on seizing their weapons.

(U) Associated Patriot Movement Groups:

(U) In 2012, the Southern Poverty Law Center identified 1,274 anti-government ?Patriot? groups that were active the prior year. Of these groups, 334 were militias and the remainder includes ?common-law? courts, publishers, ministries and citizens? groups.

(U) Racist Skinhead:

(U) Racist Skinheads form a particularly violent element of the white supremacist movement, and have often been referred to as the "shock troops" of the hoped-for revolution. The classic Skinhead look is a shaved head, black boots, jeans with suspenders and an array of typically racist tattoos.

(U) At first, the skinheads seemed like just another rebellious youth subculture. But since the 1980s, each decade has brought eruptions of racist skinhead violence splashed across the evening news. Criminal attacks by shaved-head, boot-wearing white youths ranging from vandalism to murder have served to remind minority populations that maybe we haven't made that much progress in social relations. The skinhead "fad" shows no sign of fading. In November 1988, three skinheads in Portland, Ore., beat an Ethiopian student named Mulugeta Seraw to death with baseball bats. In April 1999, a Mexican immigrant named Irineo Soto Aguilar was murdered in Lakeside, Calif., by three skinheads who crushed his skull with chunks of concrete. In October 2007, a skinhead strangled a 62-year-old gay man in Oklahoma City as a rite of passage in his gang.

(U) These stories are now such a consistent part of the American criminal landscape that most large police departments have bias-crime detectives, and many focus on skinheads as part of their gang enforcement strategies. Racist skinheads have also become a regular element in prisons and juvenile corrections facilities. The threat of a skinhead rally can lead whole communities to mobilize in opposition. The U.S. military has had to contend with racist skinheads in its ranks. Hate rock from racist skinhead bands has bled into the flow of rebellious teen music. And skinheads have taken their "boot parties" from the street to the Internet, targeting young people for recruitment into their supposed movement.



(U) Associated Racist Skinhead Groups:

Blood & Honour

Keystone United

Vinlanders Social Club

(U) Sovereign Citizens Movement:

(U) The strange subculture of the sovereign citizens movement, whose adherents hold truly bizarre, complex antigovernment beliefs, has been growing at a fast pace since the late 2000s. Sovereigns believe that they get to decide which laws to obey and which to ignore, and they don't think they should have to pay taxes.

(U) Sovereigns believe that they ? not judges, juries, law enforcement or elected officials ? get to decide which laws to obey and which to ignore, and they don't think they should have to pay taxes. Sovereigns are clogging up the courts with indecipherable filings and when cornered, many of them lash out in rage, frustration and, in the most extreme cases, acts of deadly violence, usually directed against government officials. In May 2010, for example, a father-son team of sovereigns murdered two police officers with an assault rifle when they were pulled over on the interstate while traveling through West Memphis, Ark.

(U) The movement is rooted in racism and anti-Semitism, though most sovereigns, many of whom are African American, are unaware of their beliefs' origins. In the early 1980s, the sovereign citizen's movement mostly attracted white supremacists and anti-Semites, mainly because sovereign theories originated in groups that saw Jews as working behind the scenes to manipulate financial institutions and control the government. Most early sovereigns and some of those who are still on the scene, believed that being white was a prerequisite to becoming a sovereign citizen. They argued that the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which guaranteed citizenship to African Americans and everyone else born on U.S. soil, also made black Americans permanently subject to federal and state governments, unlike themselves.

(U) The Sovereign Belief System

(U)The contemporary sovereign belief system is based on a decades-old conspiracy theory. At some point in history, sovereigns believe, the American government set up by the founding fathers ? with a legal system that the sovereigns refer to as "common law", was secretly replaced by a new government system based on admiralty law, the law of the sea and international commerce. Under common law, or so they believe, the sovereigns would be free men. Under admiralty law, they are slaves, and secret government forces have a vested interest in keeping them that way. Some sovereigns believe this perfidious change occurred during the Civil War, while others blame the events of 1933, when the U.S. abandoned the gold standard. Either way, they stake their lives and livelihoods on the idea that judges around the country know all about this hidden government takeover but are denying the sovereigns' motions and filings out of treasonous loyalty to hidden and malevolent government forces.

(U) Though this all sounds bizarre, the next layer of the argument becomes even more implausible. Since 1933, the U.S. dollar has been backed not by gold, but by the "full faith and credit" of the U.S. government (in fact, President Franklin D. Roosevelt ended private ownership of gold in large amounts in 1933; governments could still sell gold for dollars to the U.S. Treasury for a fixed amount after that, until that practice was ended by President Richard Nixon in 1971). According to sovereign "researchers," this means that the government has pledged its citizenry as collateral, by selling their future earning capabilities to foreign investors, effectively enslaving all Americans. This sale, they claim, takes place at birth. When a baby is born in the U.S., a birth certificate is issued, and the hospital usually requires that the parents apply for a Social Security number at that time. Sovereigns say that the government then uses that birth certificate to set up a kind of corporate trust in the baby's name, a secret Treasury account, which it funds with an amount ranging from \$600,000 to \$20 million, depending on the particular variant of the sovereign belief system. By setting up this account, every newborn's rights are cleverly split between those held by the flesh-and-blood baby and the ones assigned to his or her corporate shell account.

(U) The sovereigns believe evidence for their theory is found on the birth certificate itself. Since most certificates use all capital letters to spell out a baby's name, JOHN DOE, for example, is actually the name of the corporate shell identity, or "straw man," while John Doe is the baby's "real," flesh-and-blood name. As the child grows older, most of his legal documents will utilize capital letters, which means that his state-issued driver's license, his marriage license, his car registration, his criminal court records, his cable TV bill and correspondence from the IRS all will pertain to his corporate shell identity, not his real, sovereign identity.

(U) The process sovereigns have devised to split the straw man from the flesh-and-blood man is called "redemption," and its purpose is two-fold. Once separated

from the corporate shell, the newly freed man is now outside of the jurisdiction of all admiralty laws. More importantly, by filing a series of complex, legal-sounding documents, the sovereign can tap into that secret Treasury account for his own purposes. Over the past 30 years, hundreds of sovereigns have attempted to perfect the process by packaging and promoting different combinations of forms and paperwork. While no one has ever succeeded, for the obvious reason that these theories are not true, sovereigns are nonetheless convinced with the religious certainty of a true cult believer that they're close. All it will take, say the promoters of the redemption scam, is the right combination of words.

#### (U) Numbers of Sovereigns'

(U) It is impossible to know how many sovereigns there are in the U.S. today, in part because there is no central leadership and no organized group that members can join. Instead, there are a variety of local leaders with individualized views on sovereign citizen ideology and techniques. Those who are attracted to this subculture typically attend a seminar or two, or visit one of the thousands of websites and online videos on the subject and then simply choose how to act on what they've learned. Some start by testing sovereign ideology with small offenses such as driving without a license, while others proceed directly to taking on the IRS as tax protesters.

(U) In the mid-1990s, the IRS estimated that there were approximately 250,000 tax protesters in the U.S., people who believe that the government has no right to tax income. Not all of them were full-blown sovereign ideologues. Since the late 1990s, an abundance of evidence suggests that the sovereign citizen movement's growth has been explosive, although there have been no more recent IRS estimates because Congress in 1998 prohibited the agency from tracking or labeling those who file frivolous arguments in lieu of paying their taxes. But a conservative estimate of the number of all kinds of tax protesters today would be about 500,000.

(U) Using this number and information derived from trials of tax protestors and reports from government agencies, a reasonable estimate of hard-core sovereign believers in early 2011 would be 100,000, with another 200,000 just starting out by testing sovereign techniques for resisting everything from speeding tickets to drug charges, for an estimated total of 300,000. As sovereign theories go viral throughout the nation's prison systems and among people who are unemployed and desperate in a punishing economy, this number is likely to grow.

#### (U) The Sovereign Tactics

(U) The weapon of choice for sovereign citizens is paper. A simple traffic violation or pet-licensing case can end up provoking dozens of court filings containing hundreds of pages of pseudo-legal nonsense. For example, a sovereign was involved in 2010 in a protracted legal battle over having to pay a dog-licensing fee. She filed 10 sovereign documents in court over a two-month period and then declared victory when the harried prosecutor decided to drop the case. The battle was fought over a three-year dog license that in Pinellas County, Fla., where the sovereign lives, costs just \$20. Tax cases are even worse. Sovereign filings in such legal battles can quickly exceed a thousand pages. While a normal criminal case docket might have 60 or 70 entries, many involving sovereigns have as many as 1,200. The courts are struggling to keep up, and judges, prosecutors and public defenders are being swamped.

(U) The size of the documents is an issue, but so is the nonsensical language the documents are written in. They have a kind of special sovereign code language that judges, lawyers and other court staff simply can't understand (nor can most non-sovereigns). Sovereigns believe that if they can find just the right combination of words, punctuation, paper, ink color and timing, they can have anything they want; freedom from taxes, unlimited wealth, and life without licenses, fees or laws, are all just a few strangely worded documents away. It's the modern-day equivalent of "abracadabra."

(U) Since most sovereigns favor paper over guns, when sovereigns are angry with government officials, their revenge most often takes the form of "paper terrorism." Sovereigns file retaliatory, bogus property liens that may not be discovered by the victim until they attempt to sell their property. Sovereigns also file fake tax forms that are designed to ruin an enemy's credit rating and cause them to be audited by the IRS. In the mid-1990s, a period when the sovereign movement was also on the rise, several states passed laws specifically aimed at these paper terrorism tactics.

#### (U) Sovereign Recruiting

(U) In the late 2000s and early 2010s, most new recruits to the sovereign citizens' movement are people who have found themselves in a desperate situation, often due to the economy or foreclosures, and are searching for a quick fix. Others are intrigued by the notions of easy money and living a lawless life, free from unpleasant consequences. Many self-identified sovereigns today are black and apparently completely unaware of the racist origins of their ideology. When they experience some small success at using redemption techniques to battle minor traffic offenses or local licensing issues, they're hooked. For many, it's a political issue. They don't like taxes, traffic laws, child support obligations

or banking practices, but they are too impatient to try to change what they dislike through traditional, political means.

(U) In times of economic prosperity, sovereigns typically rely on absurd and convoluted schemes to evade state and federal income taxes and hide their assets from the IRS. In times of financial hardship, they turn to debt- and mortgage-elimination scams, techniques to avoid child support payments, and even attempts to use their redemption techniques to get out of serious criminal charges.

(U) Once in the movement, it's an immersive and heady experience. In the past three decades, the redemptionist subculture has grown from small groups of like-minded individuals in localized pockets around the nation to a richly layered society. Redemptionists attend specialized seminars and national conferences, enjoy a large assortment of alternative newspapers and radio networks, and subscribe to sovereign-oriented magazines and websites. They home-school their children so that a new generation will not have to go through the same learning curve that they did to see past the government's curtain to the common-law utopia beyond.

(U) While the techniques sold by promoters never perform as promised, most followers are nonetheless content to be fighting the battle, and they blame only the judges, lawyers, prosecutors and police when their gurus' methods fail. While most have never achieved financial success in life, they take pride in engaging the government in battle, comparing themselves to the founding fathers during the American Revolution.

#### (U) Sovereign Violence

(U) When a sovereign feels particularly desperate, angry, and battle-weary and cornered, his next government contact, no matter how minor, can be his final straw. The resulting rage can be lethal. In 1995 in Ohio, a sovereign named Michael Hill pulled a gun on an officer during a traffic stop. Hill was killed. In 1997, New Hampshire extremist Carl Drega shot dead two officers and two civilians, and wounded another three officers before being killed himself. In that same year in Idaho, when brothers Doug and Craig Broderick were pulled over for failing to signal, they killed one officer and wounded another before being killed themselves in a violent gun battle. In December 2003, members of the Bixby family, who lived outside of Abbeville, S.C., killed two law enforcement officers in a dispute over a small sliver of land next to their home. And in May 2010, Jerry and Joseph Kane, a father and son sovereign team, shot to death two West Memphis, Ark., police officers who had pulled them over in a routine traffic

stop. Later that day, the Kanes were killed in a fierce shootout with police that wounded two other officers.

(U) Associated Sovereign Citizens Movement Groups:

(U) It is impossible to know how many sovereigns there are in the U.S. today, in part because there is no central leadership and no organized group that members can join.

(U) White Nationalist:

(U) White nationalist groups espouse white supremacist or white separatist ideologies, often focusing on the alleged inferiority of nonwhites. Groups listed in a variety of other categories - Ku Klux Klan, neo-Confederate, neo-Nazi, racist skinhead, and Christian Identity - could also be fairly described as white nationalist.

(U) These groups range from those that use racial slurs and issue calls for violence to others that present themselves as serious, non-violent organizations and employ the language of academia.

(U) For many years, the largest white nationalist group in America has been the Council of Conservative Citizens, a reincarnation of the old White Citizens Councils that were formed to resist desegregation in the 1950s and 1960s.

(U) Associated White Nationalist Groups:

American Renaissance

EURO

Council of Conservative Citizens

Stormfront

VDARE

American Third Position

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED  
Caveats: FOUO

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED  
Caveats: FOUO