

SPLC REPORT

Southern Poverty Law Center

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FIGHTING HATE

Nativist rage fuels hate group growth

The Southern Poverty Law Center has documented 888 hate groups operating in the United States, a number that has swelled by a staggering 48 percent since 2000.

The rise, which is being fueled by anti-immigrant fervor sweeping the country, was led by three states on the southern border.

In its latest annual count, released in March, the SPLC found that the number of hate groups operating at the end of 2007 grew by 5 percent from the 844 groups in 2006 and was far above the 602 groups documented in 2000.

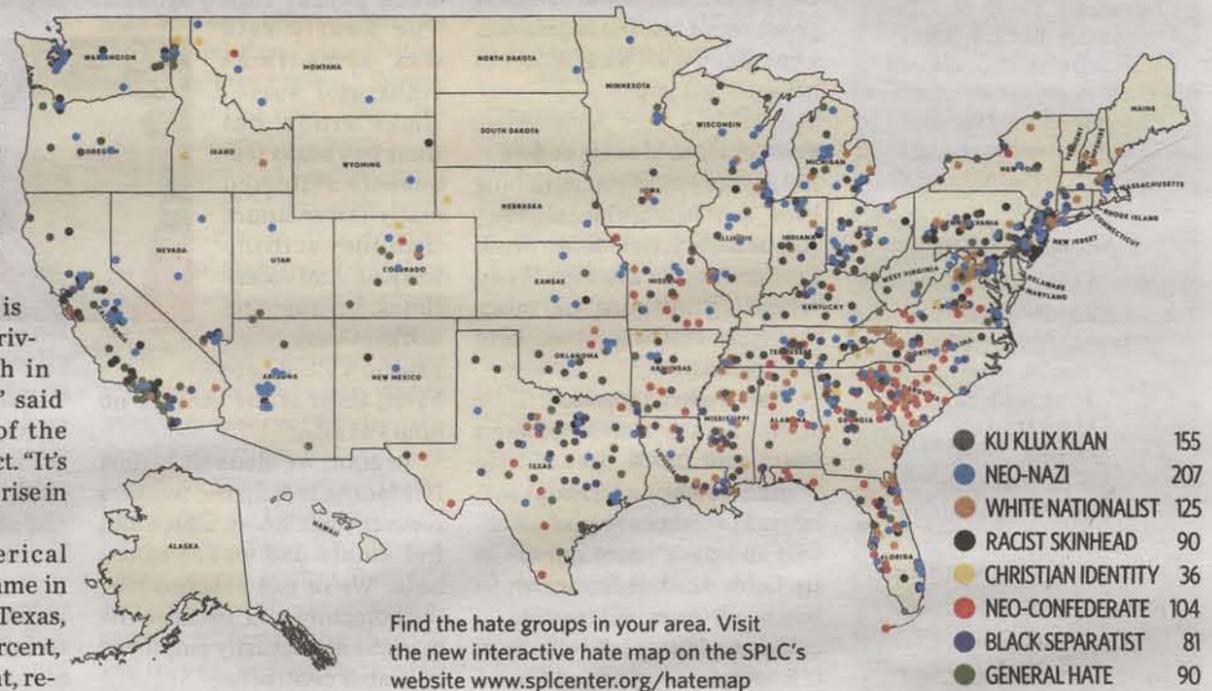
For the most part, the count doesn't include 300 anti-immigration groups, about half listed by the SPLC as "nativist extremist," that were formed in the past three years to harass and intimidate immigrants.

At the same time, FBI statistics suggest that there was a worrying 35 percent rise in hate crimes against Latinos between 2003 and 2006. Experts believe such crimes are typically carried out by people who think they are attacking immigrants.

"Anti-immigrant rage is the number one factor driving the massive growth in American hate groups," said Mark Potok, director of the SPLC's Intelligence Project. "It's no wonder we are seeing a rise in anti-Latino hate crimes."

The greatest numerical growth in hate groups came in California, Arizona and Texas, which had jumps of 27 percent, 70 percent and 22 percent, respectively, in 2007.

SPLC EXPOSES 888 HATE GROUPS ACTIVE IN THE UNITED STATES



Find the hate groups in your area. Visit the new interactive hate map on the SPLC's website www.splcenter.org/hatemap

FAIR named hate group

The most prominent name added to the hate group list this year was that of the Federation for American Immigration Reform, or FAIR, a group that has become one of the leading anti-

immigrant voices in the country but has for years had strong ties to white supremacists and white supremacist ideology.

"FAIR has been taken seriously for years by both the media and Congress, but it shouldn't be," Potok said. "Its officials have

repeatedly revealed an anti-Latino and anti-Catholic bias, and it has energetically promoted racist conspiracy theories about the immigration situation."

Among other things, FAIR has promulgated the theory that Mexico is involved in a

secret plot to "reconquer" the American Southwest. The spread of such racist propaganda — along with another conspiracy theory that claims a secret plan to merge Mexico, Canada and United States into

Continued on page 3

IN THIS ISSUE



President's message
PAGE 2



SPLC campaign closes girls' prison
PAGE 5



Grant helps school live motto
PAGE 4



Surrounded by dozens of Indian workers, SPLC attorney JJ Rosenbaum speaks at a news conference announcing the new lawsuit.

SPLC seeks damages for abused workers

NEW ORLEANS — Hundreds of guestworkers from India, lured by false promises of permanent U.S. residency, paid tens of thousands of dollars each to obtain temporary jobs at Gulf Coast shipyards only to find themselves forced into involuntary servitude and living in overcrowded, guarded labor camps, according to a class action lawsuit filed by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

The lawsuit, filed on March 7, charges that Signal International

LLC and a network of recruiters and labor brokers engineered a scheme to defraud the workers and force them to work against their will at Signal facilities in Pascagoula, Miss., and Orange, Texas.

"This company and its recruiters exploited foreign workers who legally entered the country under the belief that they were going to be able to live the American dream," said Mary Bauer, director of the SPLC's Immigrant Justice Project. "Instead, they

found themselves chained to an abusive employer, forced to live in crowded, unsanitary conditions and threatened with ruin if they tried to stand up for their rights. This case illustrates everything that's wrong with our guestworker program."

Filed in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, the complaint claims defendants engaged in forced labor, human trafficking, fraud, racketeering and civil rights violations. Signal is a marine and fabrication company with shipyards in Mississippi and Texas. It is a subcontractor for global defense company Northrop Grumman Corp.

After Hurricane Katrina scattered its workforce, Signal used the federal H-2B guestworker program to import employees to work as welders, pipefitters, shipfitters and in other positions. Hundreds of Indian men mortgaged their futures in late 2006 to pay recruiters as much as \$20,000 for travel, visa and other fees after they were told it would lead to good jobs, green cards and permanent U.S. residency.

Many of the workers gave up other jobs and sold their houses, family farms, jewelry and other valuables to come up with the money. Some took out high-inter-

Continued on page 4

SEEKING JUSTICE

Morris Dees discusses new lawsuit against Klan

The Southern Poverty Law Center's case against the Imperial Klans of America (IKA) is scheduled for trial in November in Meade County, Kentucky. The SPLC sued the IKA and two of its officials on behalf of teenager Jordan Gruver, who was brutally beaten by IKA members at a county fair. Over the past couple of months, the trial team, led by Morris Dees, has been in Kentucky preparing for the case. Dees answers questions about the case:

Please provide a brief summary of the case and its status today.

On July 30, 2006, two IKA officials, Jarred R. Hensley, 24, of Cincinnati and Andrew R. Watkins, 26, of Louisville, attacked 16-year-old Jordan Gruver while he was enjoying the Meade County Fair in Brandenburg, Ky. Gruver was beaten to the ground

Continued on page 8

SPLC REPORT

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The Southern Poverty Law Center is dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry and to seeking justice for the most vulnerable members of our society. Using litigation, education, and other forms of advocacy, the Center works toward the day when the ideals of equal justice and equal opportunity will be a reality. The Center also sponsors the Civil Rights Memorial, which celebrates the memory of individuals who died during the Civil Rights Movement, and the Civil Rights Memorial Center.

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A MESSAGE FROM CENTER PRESIDENT RICHARD COHEN

We all bear moral responsibility to ensure fairness for workers

Recently, we won a major victory against a wholly owned subsidiary of a giant U.S. company that wanted to wash its hands of any responsibility for the abuse of its workers. The parent company is a very familiar one; you surely know its name. In fact, you probably have some of its products in your pantry. Nine out of 10 U.S. households do. I'm talking about Del Monte, the world's biggest producer of canned vegetables, a company with \$3.4 billion in net sales last year.

Motto should be 'cheating workers'

Del Monte's motto is "enriching lives" and "nourishing families." Its subsidiary, Del Monte Fresh Produce Southeast, should add "cheating workers" or, more precisely, "letting its workers be cheated."

Here's what happened:

At various times between 2003 and 2006, Del Monte Southeast employed about 500 migrant workers to plant, harvest and pack sweet onions in its fields west of Savannah in southeast Georgia.

Some of these laborers were U.S. migrant workers, and some were brought in from Mexico under our country's guestworker program. The Mexican guestworkers left their homes and families and spent considerable

sums of money for the opportunity to work for Del Monte.

The workers lived in labor camps operated by Del Monte. They worked in Del Monte's fields and used Del Monte's equipment. They were supervised daily by Del Monte employees.

As often happens with migrant workers, however, they were consistently cheated when payday rolled around.

The hourly rate was sometimes right and sometimes wrong, but their pay stubs frequently reflected many fewer hours than they actually worked. And sometimes, because the workers were often paid on a piece-rate basis, their stubs showed no hours at all.

In 2006, we filed suit against Del Monte to help the workers recover their stolen wages. But Del Monte had an ace in the hole: We're not responsible, the company said, because the workers are actually employed by a labor contractor.

In this case, the "labor contractor" was a 9th-grade dropout who was 18 and had no particular experience in the field when the arrangement with Del Monte

began. She handled the recruiting of the workers, but it was clear that Del Monte was the real employer.

SPLC wins crucial ruling

The federal judge in our case rightly ruled that this labor contractor was really a Del Monte Southeast employee, and so were the hundreds of migrant workers. The case isn't

over; we still have to prove the wage abuse in court or reach a settlement with Del Monte. But the ruling was crucial and was perhaps the most important skirmish in the legal fight against the company.

Sadly, this same scenario happens again and again throughout our country, especially when society's poorest and most vulnerable workers are involved. Big companies try to shield themselves from accountability for the mistreatment of their workers by hiding behind middlemen and subcontractors. We saw this repeatedly in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, when large contractors employed layers of subcontractors

– and migrant workers paid the price. It is one of the major abuses we pointed out in *Close to Slavery*, the report we released last year exposing rampant exploitation in the guestworker program.

Del Monte Southeast's practices may help keep its costs down. And when you pick up a Del Monte product from the grocery store shelf, you probably never think that you are benefiting from exploited labor.

But, in many cases, the people at the bottom of the food chain – the powerless people in our society – are going hungry so that we can eat more cheaply.

As consumers and citizens, we all bear a moral responsibility to ensure that workers are treated with fairness and dignity. In a democracy, our government should stand up for these workers as a reflection of our fundamental values. Unfortunately, as it has demonstrated again and again, we now have an administration that is more interested in coddling the wealthy than improving the lives of the working folks who do the heavy lifting that underpins our economy.

We must demand better from our leaders in government and business.



Richard Cohen

MAILBOX

Thank you so much for classifying FAIR (Federation for American Immigration Reform) as a hate group. I always knew it was. I am a white citizen with an undocumented girlfriend. She has been here since she was five years old, brought here from Mexico, and is now 19. She is American practically in every way.

But to those in FAIR and other hate groups, she is a Mexican, pure and simple, and she will never assimilate, ever. They see her as a criminal, even though she was a child when she was brought here.

And because of this sentiment, she cannot adjust her status. My anger is indescribable. Your new classification will hopefully put a lake of water over the wildfire that is FAIR.

N. L.
Los Angeles, California

Congratulations on drawing the ire of Lou Dobbs. He announced in a promo for a recent show that he would be taking on the Center for something apparently said about his racist, bigoted attitude about "illegal" immigrants. Anyone who can push

his buttons is entitled to a lot of respect and admiration.

I don't know what he said on his show because I don't have the stomach to watch his nonsense.

Thanks again for the work the Center does to promote humanity in this country. There are precious few persons and organizations today pursuing that agenda.

D. R.
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

I was introduced to *Teaching Tolerance* magazine today. WOW! I am the chaplain of a residential treatment center for teens. We are conducting a peace worship service in chapel centered on MLK, Jr. The article and poster in the magazine are brilliant tools. Please send five copies of the latest *Teaching Tolerance* to me for use throughout our agency.

J. M.
Worthington, Ohio

I am 17 years old and a junior in high school. I recently saw the History Channel presentation on Nazism in America and saw what the SPLC is doing. It saddens me to see such hate and injustice thriving in America.

There is nothing stronger in this country, or anywhere else in the world for that matter, than people who are diverse in ethnicity and religion joining forces to achieve what can't be done separately.

In my humble opinion, those who choose racism and choose to cause injustice to those they see as inferior are choosing a path of destruction – not only destruction of others, but in turn the destruction of themselves. Separation, hate and injustice are only good for one thing, the destruction of all that is, or has potential to be, good in this world. If we choose to join forces with each other in this world, there is no limit to what we as a people joined together can accomplish.

I highly appreciate the SPLC's work and pray that you can continue to work against the forces of hate and injustice.

T. M.
Reedley, California

I must tell you what a difference the *Mighty Times* video makes every year. I received a copy a few years ago, and ever since I have shown the film to 4th and 5th graders. They are transfixed. Your [*Teaching*

Tolerance] magazine is also excellent. Thanks for making a difference.

J. N.
Union, Maine

Let me commend your organization on the fantastic level of research that you do. As an investigator for the Niagara Falls Police Department, I reference your work all the time.

K. B.
Niagara Falls, New York

Thank you for the amazing book *I Will Be Your Friend*. I am a music teacher, and my students LOVE the songs. Thanks so much for your excellent [*Teaching Tolerance*] resources!

B. B.
Centerville, Ohio

I commend and support the work of the SPLC. You are the gatekeepers of freedom. I am glad that you use the courts and the pocketbook to fight and, if possible, destroy any and all hate groups that seek to undermine the rights and freedoms of all Americans. God bless those who fought and died for freedom.

H. N.
Hendersonville, Tennessee

FIGHTING HATE

Neo-Nazi radio host accused of working as informant for FBI

New Jersey radio host Hal Turner, 45, has developed a reputation as one of the most hard-line neo-Nazis on the radical right since starting up his radio show seven years ago. He has routinely ranted about those he hates, using such slurs as "savage Negro beasts," "faggots" and worse.

But it is his threats that are legendary. Turner has written that "we need to start SHOOTING AND KILLING Mexicans as they cross the border" and has argued that killing certain federal judges "may be illegal, but it wouldn't be wrong." In 2006, after he published an attack on New Jersey Supreme Court justices that also included several of their home addresses, state police massively beefed up security for the members of the court, checking on one justice's house more than 200 times.

And in a July letter, Turner told *Southern Poverty Law Center* founder Morris Dees: "If

you do not change your stance soon, you will face a wrath of fury that you will never be able to defend yourself against. We have the ability to reach out and touch someone."

But it turns out that Turner, whose tactics terrorized many and cost cities and states many thousands of dollars in security costs, may be on the FBI payroll. For its part, the FBI has declined comment.

On Jan. 1, unidentified hackers told Turner that they had successfully hacked into his e-mails and found correspondence with an FBI agent who is apparently Turner's handler. Then they posted on the Web an alleged July 7 e-mail to the agent in which Turner transmits a message from someone who sent in a death threat against U.S. Sen. Russ Feingold, a Wisconsin Democrat. "Once again," Turner writes to his handler, "my fierce rhetoric has served to flush out a possible crazy."



Hal Turner

After the e-mails were made public, Turner said he was quitting white supremacy. "I hereby separate from the 'pro-White' movement," he said on his radio show.

Interestingly, in May 2006, Turner wrote of a visit paid to him by the FBI agent and another man who had come to his house to warn him about his activities. "It's become so routine," Turner said of the FBI visits, "they are like my private FBI agents."

The apparent revelation set off a torrent of criticism from experts in the use of informants, which are rightly used by law enforcement agencies that have no other way of proving suspected criminal activity. "These are frightening groups whose members deserve to be investigated and infiltrated," said Jack Levin, a criminology professor and expert on the radical right at Northeastern University. "My concern is that Turner's methods actually are more dangerous and destructive than the evil they are seeking to cure. His threatening messages may actually inspire neo-Nazis to up the ante, to engage in even more destructive behavior."

Hate group growth continues

Continued from page 1

a single country — is being aided by many mainstream politicians and pundits. Indeed, 18 states' houses of representatives have now passed resolutions opposing the "North American Union" — an entity that does not exist and has never been planned, but nonetheless inhabits nativists' nightmares.

The new hate group list also includes neo-Nazis, white nationalists, neo-Confederates, racist skinheads, Klansmen and black separatists. Other groups listed specifically target gays or immigrants, and some specialize in producing racist music, literature or propaganda denying the Holocaust.

Groups openly express hate

While some groups like FAIR work to maintain a veneer of respectability, many hate groups make no secret of their hatred of Jews, Latinos, blacks and others. "America is being destroyed from within by a modern version of Genghis Khan's army," the Emigration Party of Nevada posted on its website. The group's leader, Don Pauly, wants to send government "sniper teams" to the border and forcibly sterilize Mexican women after a first child. The Florida state lead-

er of the neo-Nazi American National Socialist Workers Party, Michael Blevins, wrote: "If the Jew government waits, and hell breaks out here in the USA, our citizens will not be asking to see any documentation. They will go after anyone they think an illegal alien based on race first."

Last year's hate group growth came despite continuing disarray on the neo-Nazi scene, where a battle over members between the two largest groups erupted. Another group collapsed when its leader pleaded guilty to possessing child pornography. The number of skinhead groups rose, as several chapters of the Hammerskin Nation were established and a peace agreement was reached between two groups, ending a 10-year blood feud.

The number of Klan chapters continued to fall. The Imperial Klans of America (IKA) declined from 23 chapters in 2006 to just 16 last year as a case filed by the SPLC against IKA chief Ron Edwards, five followers and the group itself moved toward trial. The lawsuit seeks damages for a boy who was attacked and severely beaten during an IKA recruiting drive at a Kentucky county fair (See related story on pages 1 and 8.).

The number of violent race hate incidents in 2007 was also staggering. Sheriff's deputies were gunned down by "Aryan" gangsters in Bastrop, La. Two prominent tax protesters with bombs were arrested in New Hampshire. Several gun-toting white supremacists marched in Jena, La. A police officer was murdered in Salt Lake City by a head-to-toe tattooed white supremacist.

INTELLIGENCE BRIEFS

Intelligence Report wins awards

The *Intelligence Report* — the quarterly magazine published by the Southern Poverty Law Center — recently won two significant awards. *The Utne Reader*, which reprints selected articles from some 1,300 publications around the country, gave the *Report* its award for best U.S. periodical in the "In-Depth/Investigative Reporting" category of its 2007 Utne Independent Press Awards.

Nominated in the same category were *The Chicago Reporter*, the *Columbia Journalism Review*, *GeneWatch*, *High Country News*, *Mother Jones*, *The Texas Observer* and *The Village Voice*.

The *Intelligence Report* also won a major award for overall excellence, this one from the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD). It was the winner of the 19th annual GLAAD Media Award in the "Special Recognition" category for overall excellence in coverage of issues that affect the lives of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

Racist threats against Obama intensify

White supremacists are posting increasingly ugly and even threatening remarks about Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama on the Internet.

"OBAMA WILL DIE, KKK FOREVER," concluded a Feb. 15 post by "Rodney" to a blog run by a person identified only as Strider333. Above that signoff, Rodney wrote: "The KKK or someone WILL assassinate Obama! If we get a NIGGER President all you NIGGER's [sic] will think you've won and that the WHITE people will have to bow to you."

Neo-Nazi websites such as Stormfront and Vanguard News Network contain lengthy discussions concerning the prospect of Obama becoming the nation's first African-American president. Dozens of posts are derogatory and employ all kinds of racist slurs.

But the most heated and violent anti-Obama talk appeared to be on Internet sites that allow individuals to post messages anonymously. One such site, JD Underground, is a list ostensibly devoted to lawyers. It carried a particularly venomous thread, entitled "Nigger President," that began in January.

"I'm hoping someone will do his public duty of putting a bullet through Obama's head," said a poster identified as "Kill Da Nigga."

Hate groups on the move

In December, the National Socialist Movement (NSM), currently the largest neo-Nazi group in the country, announced that it was relocating its national headquarters and business operations from the Minneapolis area, its base of operations since it was founded in 1974, to Detroit.

While the NSM was active in Michigan in 2007, holding rallies in Lansing and Grand Rapids and distributing literature in several counties, it had previously steered clear of Detroit, a city with largely black leadership.

Also in December, the Church of Jesus Christ Christian, the religious alter ego of the neo-Nazi Aryan Nations, held an organizational meeting at a community center in Longview, Wash., after announcing its intention to open a new branch there.

THEY SAID IT

"[T]he loving, kind lesbian who just assaulted you ... [is] the type that stuffed ovens in Hitler's concentration camps."

— Host MICHAEL SAVAGE, responding on the Nov. 8 edition of his Talk Radio Network show to a caller describing a short-haired woman who had criticized him for listening to Savage

"[W]e are being overrun [by undocumented Hispanic immigrants] but we are being outpopulated by blacks also."

— An e-mail made public on Nov. 29, written by Arkansas state Sen. DENNY ALTES, a nativist who is also the Senate GOP leader, that was denounced by Republican Party officials

"[I]f slavery was the price that a modern American's ancestors had to pay in order to make one an American, one should get down on one's knees every single day and thank the Lord."

— Republican New Jersey State Rep. MICHAEL PATRICK CARROLL, speaking out against a proposed apology for slavery, in remarks reported Jan. 1 by The Associated Press

"How do we know the difference between you and those that are trying to kill us?"

— Host GLENN BECK, on the Oct. 4 edition of his CNN Headline News show, questioning a Muslim American woman with a head scarf who he deemed "reasonable"

Lawsuit claims Signal engaged in fraud, trafficking

Continued from page 1

est loans. Many were also told that for an extra \$1,500-per person fee, they could bring their families to live in the United States.

When the men arrived in early 2007, they discovered they wouldn't receive the green cards as promised but only 10-month, H-2B guestworker visas. They were forced to pay \$1,050 a month to live in crowded company housing in isolated, fenced labor camps where as many as 24 men shared a

trailer with only two toilets. When they tried to find their own housing, Signal officials told them they would still have the \$1,050 deducted from their paychecks.

The camps were miles from the nearest shopping areas, places of worship and residential neighborhoods. With the exception of rare occasions, such as Christmas, visitors were not allowed into the camps. Company employees regularly searched the workers' belongings.

Workers who complained about the conditions were threatened with deportation.

'I never saw such conditions'

"I have been a guestworker all my life in many parts of the world, and I never saw such conditions," said former Signal employee Rajan Pazhambalakoode. "We spoke out to break this chain of human trafficking and protect future workers."

By March 9, 2007, the workers had started organiz-

ing. Signal responded with an early-morning raid by armed guards on the labor camp in Pascagoula, Miss. Three of the organizers were locked in a room for hours. They were told they would be fired and deported. Another tried to commit suicide (See sidebar below).

The incident prompted hundreds of workers to strike. Signal fired the organizers.

In early March, 100 of the workers in Pascagoula re-

ported themselves to the U.S. Department of Justice as victims of and witnesses to human trafficking. They demanded federal prosecution of Signal.

"These workers endured horrific conditions no company would dream of forcing their local workers to endure," said Kristi Graunke, the SPLC attorney leading the case. "Yet, there are companies that believe they can get away with treating guestworkers like animals and denying their rights because they are a captive workforce."

This litigation arose out of a broader organizing campaign spearheaded by the Alliance for Guest Workers for Dignity, a project of the New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice. The legal team also includes Tushar Sheth of the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, and New Orleans attorney Tracie L. Washington of the Louisiana Justice Institute.

Last year, the SPLC released *Close to Slavery*, a report that documented the widespread, systematic abuse of guestworkers by U.S. employers. It found that guestworkers are routinely cheated out of wages, forced to pay thousands of dollars in fees to obtain low-wage temporary jobs and held virtually captive by employers or labor brokers who seize their documents. It also found that these workers are often forced to live in squalid conditions and denied medical benefits for on-the-job injuries.

The SPLC has worked in the courts and Congress to reform this system fraught with abuse and exploitation. "We are taking action to protect these workers because the Bush administration is refusing to enforce their rights," Bauer said. "We need Congress to reform this shameful system."

'American dream' is nightmare for worker

Sabulal Vijayan believed he found the opportunity he had dreamed about for his family.

An advertisement in his native India offered jobs in the United States. It even offered green cards for workers and their families to become permanent U.S. residents.

The job was a chance to live the American dream. He jumped at the opportunity.

"I heard that in America everybody will get liberty and justice," he later told a congressional subcommittee about his experience. "So, I paid nearly \$20,000 [to recruiters] to get this chance."

The advertisement was for work as a pipefitter for Signal International, a company that services offshore oil rigs in Mississippi and Texas. Vijayan, who had 20 years of experience, took a test and got the job.

He left for America, hoping to build a new life for the family that remained behind in India. Like the other workers, he was told that he would eventually be able to

bring family members for permanent residency — for an additional fee of \$1,500 per person.

There was little that could prepare him or the 500 other Indian workers for what they encountered at the company's labor camps in Mississippi and Texas in early 2007.

"They gave me a bed in a trailer with 24 people," he said of the Pascagoula, Miss., camp. "I had never lived in a room like this anywhere in my lifetime. We were like pigs in a cage."

Living facilities cramped, isolated

The trailer only had two bathrooms for about 24 men, so the workers had to get up at 3:30 a.m. so that everyone could take a turn. The company deducted about \$1,000 each month from each worker's paycheck for rent and meals. The camps were isolated and enclosed by

fences, with limited access to come and go. Company security guards regularly searched their belongings.

Even worse, they discovered they wouldn't receive the green cards needed to become permanent residents. Their guestworker visas were good for only 10 months. Buried in debt, they endured the cramped conditions, bad food and intimidation.

Vijayan began organizing the workers to complain about the conditions.

"The management threatened us and told me that Signal invested millions of dollars in this labor camp and we are doing business," he said. "This is not your India, this is America. If you want to stay in this country, keep quiet and shut up. Sabulal sit down. I did so because I was not ready to lose this job, because of my great debt."

On March 9, 2007, Signal responded to their organizing

efforts with a pre-dawn raid by armed guards on the labor camp in Pascagoula, Miss.

Vijayan describes the day as "the worst tragedy I ever faced in my life."

Three of the organizers were rounded up by security guards and locked in a room for hours. They would later be released and fired.

When an armed guard and camp manager came for Vijayan, he panicked. He had sold his wife's jewelry and borrowed from friends to pay the recruiters who brought him to America. Facing financial ruin and shame, he slit his wrist.

"I was losing my control, afraid that [the] company was going to harm me and deport me to India," he said. "I was afraid to [go] back home ... empty-handed in front of my poor family and the society. I cut my wrist with a razor blade — forced by the threatening situation created by Signal. I was in the hospital for three days, my family wept for weeks and my child told me, 'Come back, I need my dad.'"



Sabulal Vijayan

Grant helps students stand against genocide

DANVILLE, Ill. — The Fall 2007 semester at Schlarman High School was like no other. History, social science, religion, art and English classrooms were transformed into hubs for social action.

"Our goal was to educate students about the destructive power of prejudice by studying the conflict in Darfur and past genocides such as Rwanda and the Holocaust and their effects on all of humanity," said educator Judy Turner. "We drew parallels to other genocides and racial and ethnic discrimination throughout history so that we might open our students' eyes to the harm that intolerance and hate can cause."

Funded with a grant from the SPLC's Teaching Tolerance program, the Catholic school set out to transform its motto, "Stand

Up, Stand Out, Stand Together," from six words on a page into a living, breathing call to action for students.

Across classrooms and subject areas, teachers worked together to help students gain deeper knowledge about the crisis in Darfur, the history of race in Africa and connections between events in Africa and genocide and discrimination in the United States and elsewhere. Students read literature as diverse as *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe and *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. They interacted with Chris Doucot, a Yale divinity student who has testified before Congress about the Darfur crisis. They discussed their responsibilities as global citizens to "stand up" against prejudice and its devastating outcomes. And then the students took action.



Schlarman High School students display banners as they take part in a "Stand Up for Darfur" walk.

They began with a letter-writing campaign, petitioning their senators, Richard Durbin and Barack Obama, and U.S. Rep. Tim Johnson to support U.S. intervention to stop the Darfur genocide. They then organized a "Stand Up for Darfur" 5K walk, inviting members of the community to join them in a "call to conscience" on be-

half of "at least 200,000 people [who] have been killed ... [and] more than 2.5 million [who] have been displaced from their communities ... in what is being called the first genocide of the 21st century." In art classrooms, students made bookmarks for walk participants using student poetry: "Who will remember the ones that sadly died? The

ones who cried?" In the end, students raised more than \$1,000 to provide aid to victims of the Darfur genocide.

The impact of the lesson extended well beyond the money raised, however. One student, named Braden, wrote in a reflective essay, "The world is going to have to work together. But with a little help, just maybe, we can help our fellow neighbor."

Schlarman's teachers, meanwhile, have made copies of their "Stand Up for Darfur" curriculum available to other educators throughout the state "to encourage them to follow the same educational and political course." They also expressed gratitude for the SPLC's support. "You made it possible for our small Catholic school to afford this special, meaningful project," said school official Janet Picillo.



Joe Bates is graduating from high school this spring after his mother, Carolyn, got help for him from the SPLC.

With SPLC's help, youth goes from non-reader to A student

SELMA, Ala. — Struggling with asthma and learning disabilities that were ignored by his school, Joe Bates was years below grade level as he ended middle school in 2004. Desperate for help, his mother, Carolyn Bates, appeared at SPLC's doorstep, seeking legal assistance. The Bates' case against the Selma City School Board was pending in federal court, but their attorney could no longer practice law. They had no one to litigate their lawsuit.

SPLC lawyers took their case, and today Joe is an A-student senior at Selma High School who has passed all sections of Alabama's graduation exam. He has been accepted at three colleges and plans to study structural engineering.

'An amazing success story'

"Joe's story is an amazing success story that highlights the importance of the SPLC's education work," said Courtney Bowie, an SPLC education lawyer who represented the Selma student. Joe was identified as a learning-disabled student when he was in the 3rd grade. His parents, Carolyn and Harry, were dumbfounded when he was suddenly found ineligible for special education as a 6th-grader. The school district claimed he was cured of his learning disability, but he was struggling with emotional problems, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, severe asthma and continued learning problems. After asking that he be retested and going through an administrative process several times, they filed suit in federal court, claiming that their child's rights under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act were being violated.

After working on the case for months, Bowie won a settlement in August 2005. The school system refused to acknowledge that Joe had special education needs but it agreed

to provide special accommodations designed to improve his academic performance, including tutoring in reading and math; biweekly progress reports to his parents; better coordination among teachers and tutors; and vocational training as necessary.

Because he was not in special education classes, his mother insisted that Joe be placed in honors classes. "Her logic was that the best teachers were in those classes," Bowie said. "To Selma High School's credit, they did it, and kept Joe up to speed."

"My child went from a non-reader to an advanced placement student making all As," Carolyn Bates said. "Joe's story shows that a child doesn't have to stay at the standard he's prescribed at in elementary school. If given appropriate services, he can advance to a higher standard."

Despite his hours of after-school tutoring, Joe manages to take part in extracurricular activities. He's an instructor in his ROTC class, taking part in drill team and color guard. For fun, he is part of a 12-member stepping group.

Mother now helps others

Because she learned so much about advocacy and education law while fighting for her son's rights, Carolyn Bates decided to open a community disabilities center to help other children with similar needs. The after-school program serves about 25 students, offering a computer lab, tutoring and other learning activities. "When they come to our center, they have all failing grades," she said. "When they leave, they are on the honor roll."

She credits the SPLC with turning around Joe's sense of possibility. "If not for SPLC's help, my child would not have reached his full potential, and he never would have been admitted to any college," she said.

SEEKING JUSTICE

Campaign closes notorious Mississippi girls' prison

The governor of Mississippi has decided to close the state's notorious Columbia Training School rather than battle the Southern Poverty Law Center in court over accusations that nonviolent teenage girls confined in the prison have been physically and sexually abused.

The decision to close the prison, announced in February, is a significant victory for the SPLC's Mississippi Youth Justice Project, which is working with state lawmakers to ensure that troubled youths get the help they need to become productive, law-abiding citizens.

"We are heartened that Mississippi is realizing that harsh punishment for juveniles who commit minor offenses is not only ineffective but counterproductive," said Bear Atwood, director of the project. "We are committed to working with the state to build on this progress and create a juvenile justice system that protects the state's most vulnerable children."

SPLC lawsuit exposed brutality

The SPLC lawsuit, filed in July 2007, exposed brutal conditions at the prison, including the painful shackling of girls for weeks at a time. It also sought to force the state to provide mental health and rehabilitative services to the girls, many of whom suffer from emotional problems or mental illness.

In announcing the decision to close Columbia, the state's Department of Human Services (DHS) said Gov. Haley Barbour and the DHS recognized the need to provide the best possible care and supervision of juveniles placed in state custody and the need to use taxpayer funds efficiently. The DHS also said the state wants to decrease incarceration of juveniles and provide quality services for at-risk youth.

The DHS said it will transfer the 37 girls at Columbia to Oakley Training School, the state's prison for boys. Separate accommodations will be created for the girls. The legislature will be asked to permanently close Columbia.

Atwood said that while transferring the girls to Oakley may be a stopgap measure, most of the girls should be

moved into community-based treatment programs designed to meet the specific needs of each girl. Oakley is under a federal court order to improve conditions.

Most don't belong in prison

"Most of the girls at Columbia do not belong in prison at all," Atwood said. "Most are there for very minor, nonviolent offenses. Many are there simply because of so-called 'status offenses' like truancy or running away. Ripping them from their families and locking them up only encourages further delinquency."

The SPLC lawsuit described horrendous abuse at Columbia:

- In an apparent response to unsubstantiated allegations that they planned to escape, five of

tion. No attempt was made to stabilize their moods, and staff members failed to perform periodic checks to ensure their safety. One girl was placed in a cell alone for 14 hours, during which time she carved the words "HATE ME" into her arm so deep that it caused permanent scarring. One sliced her wrists with glass, and the other sliced her wrists on the edge of her concrete bunk.

Most of the girls at Columbia could be treated far more effectively — at half the cost — in community-based programs that focus on rehabilitation and mental health treatment. Last year, according to the state, Columbia cost the state \$5.8 million per year to house an average of 47 girls. It has 109 staffers.



SPLC President Richard Cohen joins youths supporting juvenile justice reform at a January rally at the Mississippi Capitol.

the plaintiffs were shackled for 12 hours a day for periods ranging from eight days to approximately a month. They were required to eat, attend school, use the bathroom, participate in recreational activities and visit with their families while wearing shackles around their ankles. This shackling, which violated Columbia policies, caused excruciating pain and injuries, but their complaints were not heeded.

- One girl was sexually assaulted by a male employee of the facility who kissed and fondled her against her will while she was confined in a segregated area. She reported the assault but was never informed of the results of an investigation and never received counseling to help her deal with the trauma.

- Three girls cut themselves while on suicide watch. None of them received any psychological help during their isolation.

The SPLC is pushing for reform legislation to create a better and more cost-effective juvenile justice system. MYJP also helped organize the Fourth Annual Youth Rally in Support of Education and Juvenile Justice Reform where 150 children marched on the state capitol in Jackson on Jan. 21. SPLC President Richard Cohen joined the event, sponsored by the Mississippi Coalition for the Prevention of Schoolhouse to Jailhouse, a coalition of community organizations that includes MYJP.

"The children swept up in the juvenile justice system deserve an opportunity to stay in their communities with their families where they can get the help they need," Atwood said. "It's an opportunity that can turn a life around. That's why we will continue our work with the courts, the legislature and other groups to grant that opportunity to these children."

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Partner extends support by naming SPLC in will

Daniel B. Rapoport has defined his life through a commitment to the arts and social justice.

His concern that school children in his home state of Michigan might not be exposed to the arts spurred an effort with schools that has allowed more than 30,000 students, teachers and chaperones to attend free concerts, master classes and workshops over the course of 15 years.

At 91, his dedication to the arts and fighting social injustice has not waned. An SPLC supporter since 1985, Rapoport is one of its Partners for the Future. Partners are special donors who include the SPLC in their wills or estate plans, thereby extending their support for the SPLC's work beyond their lifetimes. His late wife, Shirley, was also a Partner for the Future.

"We have to do what we can to eliminate (social injustice)," he said. "It's endless what you do" at the SPLC.

When Rapoport and his wife, Anne, attended a speech by SPLC co-founder Morris Dees 10 years ago, it was an inspirational moment the couple still cherishes.

"It was our Woodstock moment," she said. "It was just amazing for both of us to finally hear Morris Dees speak."

The former ceramic engineer lives in Muskegon, Mich., where

he has been active in helping his community.

"He believes that if he has a chance to make a difference or ease someone's pain it's his responsibility" to take action, said his wife, Anne.

When he discovered his heart medications would prevent him from donating blood, he learned how to take a person's blood pressure. Now he volunteers two hours every Friday to give free blood pressure readings. He also serves as a board member for Muskegon Save Our Shoreline, a group dedicated to protecting Muskegon Lake and Lake Michigan. An avid photographer, he has donated signed prints of his work for charity auctions.

In 1989, Daniel and his late wife, Shirley, provided the funding to complete a large mural started at a local library by the Work Projects Administration in the 1930s.

He also serves as co-chair of the Social Action Committee at Temple B'Nai Israel and is a member of Citizens for Global Peace and Justice with his wife.

His wife, Anne, also a Partner for the Future, credits her husband's social conscience to the atrocities of World War II.

"Living through World War II helped shore up his resolve to ensure something like that never happens again," she said.



Daniel B. Rapoport

CONTRIBUTED

Scroll of Remembrance

The Southern Poverty Law Center pays tribute to the memory of deceased supporters who included the Center in their wills or other planned gifts. The Center gratefully acknowledges their bequests, received from February 1, 2007, through February 29, 2008.

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After planning for the financial security of your family and loved ones, we hope you will consider joining Partners for the Future by making a planned gift to the Center.

For information about the many planned giving opportunities available at the Center — with no obligation — please contact our planned giving department by calling toll-free 1-888-414-7752 or by mailing the form below. You can also visit us online at

www.SPLCenter.org/donate or e-mail us at plannedgiving@splcenter.org.

If you have already included the Center in your will or estate plan, please contact us so we can update our records. We want to officially welcome you as a Partner for the Future!

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Civil Rights Memorial

SEEKING JUSTICE

Morris Dees discusses lawsuit against Klan

Continued from page 1

and kicked with steel-toed boots. One of his attackers is 6-foot-5 and 330 pounds. Gruver weighed 150. He never had a chance. They cracked his ribs, broke his arm and busted his jaw.

Hensley and Watkins are serving three-year prison terms for the beating. The SPLC filed a lawsuit against the IKA in July 2007, naming Ron Edwards, the IKA's founder, and several highest-ranking members as defendants. Edwards and several others have been deposed, and the SPLC's legal team is preparing for trial.

How is the Imperial Klans of America different from the KKK groups the SPLC has sued in the past?

As odd as it sounds, historically most Klans would allow only "Christians" to be members. This had little appeal to violence-prone young skinheads. The IKA changed its membership rules in late 2005 to allow Odinists, National Socialists, skinheads, Nazis, Defenders, Confederates and other white racialists into full IKA membership. This, in conjunction with its heavy-metal, hate music Nordic Fest, attracted hundreds of skinhead members. Now the IKA is one of the nation's largest Klan groups, with 16 chapters in eight states. And, because of its skinhead components, it is one of the most dangerous.

What groups does the IKA target for violence?

When I deposed the IKA imperial wizard, I asked him if "the IKA hates Muds, spics, kikes

and niggers," as stated in its official secret handbook. "Yes," he said, "and I also hate you." It is obvious that he also hates the Southern Poverty Law Center because his large bald head sported a large freshly inked tattoo that read: "F--K THE S.P.L.C." Imagine the hate in this man's heart to put something this disgusting on his body.

Does the IKA's joint activities with neo-Nazi skinheads pose a serious threat to minorities?

Yes, especially Latino immigrants. When the police arrested the two men who beat Jordan, one of them called the youth "an illegal SPIC," even as he lay bleeding on the ground. The IKA hosts an annual Nordic Fest each Memorial Day at its compound near Dawson Springs, Ky. They attacked Jordan

because he is small and slightly dark-skinned. He is a U.S. citizen, as are his parents. Crimes against Latinos have risen as much as 40 percent in some states, driven by the heated debate about immigration. Hate groups are leading many of these assaults.

What part does hate music play in IKA's effort to attract violence-prone skinheads to its movement?

It is very appealing to these skinheads. The lyrics of these songs express deeply held beliefs that capture their imagination and openly call for violence against minorities. One song, "No Mercy," was listened to by the two IKA members less than two months before they assaulted Jordan. It goes like this: "What about the Jews? No mercy! What about the spics? No mercy! What about the niggers? No mercy! What about the faggots? No mercy!" Edwards' son, Steven, manages one of those bands, the Totenkopf Saints. Watkins, one of Jordan's assailants, was a member of the band.

Its emblem is the skull head of the Nazi SS, and its members worship Adolf Hitler.

Where does the IKA base its operations, and what part does the Internet play in its effort to reach young people?

The IKA headquarters is a 15-acre compound. Its main recruitment tool is its website, where upcoming music events and rallies are promoted. The IKA has a forum for members to exchange views and an e-mail-based information network called, appropriately, the Komment Korner. Edwards claims an e-mail list of over 10,000 names that he uses regularly to exchange information and condemn those the IKA targets.

What do you expect this case to accomplish?

Our first goal is to obtain justice for young Jordan Gruver. He has been scarred for life by this trauma. We also would like to obtain a crushing verdict that would put the Imperial Klans of America out of business. Already the suit has caused some skinhead factions who had affiliated with the IKA to disaffiliate. I do not think they want to be drawn into IKA's legal fight. The much larger object of this litigation is to shine the light of public opinion on politicians and media pundits who promote bias against Latinos and show the danger of such hate getting out of hand. There are now 888 hate groups in our country, a 48 percent rise since 2000 that has been fueled by this anti-immigrant sentiment.



Jordan Gruver (left) helps SPLC chief trial counsel Morris Dees plan his lawsuit.



Andrew Watkins, who stands 6-foot-5 and weighs 330 pounds, was literally twice as big as Jordan Gruver when he attacked him at a county fair.



Neo-Nazis salute Hitler at Nordic Fest, held on the IKA's compound.

New board members bring expertise to SPLC

Marsha Levick and Vanzetta Penn McPherson, lawyers with long histories of public service, recently joined the Southern Poverty Law Center's board of directors.

Levick co-founded the national Juvenile Law Center (JLC) in 1975 and served as its first executive director until 1982. In her 30-year legal career, she has been a strong advocate for the rights of juveniles and women and is a nationally recognized leader in juvenile law. In 1995, Levick became the JLC's legal director and now manages its litigation and appellate docket.

From 1982 to 1988, Levick worked for the National Organization of Women Legal Defense and Education Fund, serving first as legal director and then as executive director.

McPherson was appointed U.S. Magistrate Judge for the Middle District of Alabama in 1992; she retired from the bench in 2006. Prior



Vanzetta Penn McPherson



Marsha Levick

to the appointment, she practiced law in Montgomery, Ala., for 15 years, focusing on family law in the state courts and constitutional litigation in the federal courts.

McPherson was the keynote speaker at the Civil Rights Memorial re-dedication ceremony honoring Johnnie Mae

Chappell and other forgotten civil rights martyrs in 2000, and she participated in the Civil Rights Memorial Center's dedication ceremony in 2005.

Other SPLC board members are Joseph J. Levin Jr., SPLC founder and general counsel; Julian Bond, chairman of the NAACP; long-time civil rights activist Patricia Clark; Lloyd "Vic" Hackley, former president of the North Carolina Community College System; Howard Mandell, a former civil rights lawyer now in rabbinical studies; James McElroy, a lawyer in private practice in San Diego; and David Wang, a long-time SPLC supporter who is a retired executive vice president of International Paper.



FBI gives SPLC award

Debra Mack, special agent in charge for the Mobile, Ala., region, presents SPLC President Richard Cohen the FBI Director's Community Leadership Award. The award, given January 16 at the Civil Rights Memorial Center, is the FBI's highest civilian honor. The award recognizes the SPLC's role in the FBI's pursuit of civil rights-era killers who were never brought to justice.