

SPLC REPORT

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New book reveals plot to murder Morris Dees *Defendant in SPLC's upcoming Klan trial suspected*

During the late 1990s, a former biker working undercover for the FBI infiltrated one of America's most dangerous hate groups and discovered a plot to assassinate SPLC founder Morris Dees.

Among the suspected conspirators was a Klan leader now in the sights of an SPLC lawsuit — Ron Edwards, the founder of the Imperial Klans of America (IKA), a man described by the FBI informant as a potential weapons supplier.

The previously undisclosed plot is recounted in *Into the Devil's Den*, a new book published by Ballantine Books about the two-and-a-half years that FBI informant Dave Hall spent as a member of the Aryan Nations in Ohio.

Hall's actions likely thwarted an attack in April 1999 as Dees was preparing for trial against the Aryan Nations.

Dees and the SPLC are now preparing for a similar trial

against Edwards and the IKA on behalf of a teenage boy beaten by two of the group's members at a county fair in Brandenburg, Ky. The trial is scheduled for November.

"Obviously, my family and I are grateful to Dave Hall and the FBI for uncovering and stopping this plot," Dees said. "If not for Hall's incredible courage, I might not be here today."

Informant gained haters' trust

A tattooed bear of a man at 6-foot-4 and 350 pounds, Hall went undercover in 1996 and quickly rose through the ranks of the violent white supremacist organization.

By the time the SPLC sued the Aryan Nations and its founder, Richard Butler, in 1999, Hall had become one of the group's most trusted members.

Dees was well-known to the group as the crusading civil rights lawyer from Alabama

whose innovative suits had put some of the country's most notorious hate groups, including the White Aryan Resistance and the United Klans of America, out of business.

"White supremacist groups throughout the country hated Dees, and privately many expressed the view that the assassination of Dees would be the greatest achievement any white supremacist could accomplish," Hall writes in the book, released in April.

In the Aryan Nations suit, Dees and the SPLC represented a woman and her son who had been fired upon and assaulted by security guards at the group's Idaho compound.

The suit would, as many members feared, ultimately cripple the Aryan Nations. And it would fuel the assassination plot.

Hall sensed that something was afoot. Rants against Dees

and the SPLC were as much a part of this world as the hateful ideology they preached, but the peculiar behavior of some members and com-

When Hall's undercover work took him to Edwards' compound in Dawson Springs, Ky., after the Aryan Nations lawsuit was filed, his suspicions were only heightened.

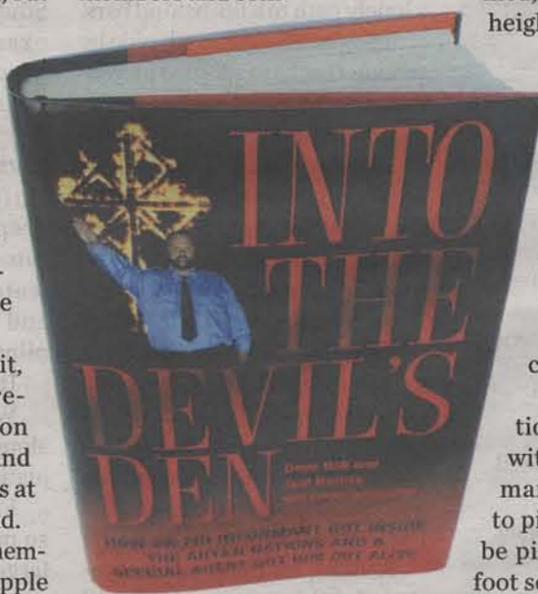
During a conversation, the Klan leader made his feelings known when the subject turned to Dees.

"I'll be glad when that son of a bitch is dead," Edwards is quoted as saying in the book.

The word "when" concerned Hall.

Prior to that conversation, Hall had taken a trip with Edwards and another man into the countryside to pick up what appeared to be pipe bombs — two three-foot sections of PVC pipe that were capped on both ends. He worried the plot was worse than he imagined, with extremists

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ments about snipers and bombs suggested more than the usual empty threats and boasts.

TEACHING TOLERANCE

Worker-rights struggle depicted in new film

In September, the SPLC's Teaching Tolerance program will unveil a new teaching kit, *Viva la Causa!*, that focuses on one of the seminal events in the march for human rights — the grape strike and boycott led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta in the 1960s.

Like all of the SPLC's Teaching Tolerance products, it will be distributed free to classrooms across the nation.

As part of the kit, a new documentary film will chronicle how Chavez, Huerta and their colleagues, inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., created a mass movement to improve the lives of some of the most exploited people in the country — farmworkers who labored for meager wages under appalling conditions in the fields of California. Chavez and Huerta guided a non-violent strike for fair wages that became a movement for social justice.

In an effort to bring attention to the movement and show his dedication to nonviolence, Chavez starved himself for 25 days in 1968. Thousands of farmworkers came to see him every day. Robert Kennedy, the junior senator from New York, arrived

to celebrate the end of the fast with Chavez and show his support for workers' rights. Huerta shared the stage with Kennedy the night he won California's presidential primary. Later that night, he was shot and killed in a California hotel.

Kennedy's support sent a message to the nation. People from all walks of life encountered — and some became — organizers at grocery stores, asking shoppers to join in a national boycott of California grapes so that those who harvested them might not live in dire poverty, subject to raw exploitation.

Families, rich and poor, joined in *la causa* and heeded its call. En masse, they stopped buying California grapes. And on a hot summer day in 1970, farmworkers won a hard-fought, historic victory. On July 29, 1970, California's growers recognized the workers' union and increased wages to \$1.80 an hour.

The film could not be timelier.

Today, as in the 1960s, employers routinely exploit migrant laborers and immigrants of color, underpaying them and leaving

them to toil in often unsafe and unsanitary work environments. The nation's debate over immigration has been polluted by racism, distortions and propaganda. The ranks of hate groups are swelling with an anti-immigrant tide, and hate crimes against Latinos are increasing.

"*Viva la Causa!* will help counter this burgeoning anti-Latino sentiment by sharing one of the nation's great movements for social justice with millions of schoolchildren across the U.S., reminding them that they, too, can choose respect over bigotry," said SPLC President Richard Cohen.

The film, offered in English and Spanish, will feature interviews with Chavez's family and Dolores Huerta, as well as farmworker families, students and others who served as "foot soldiers," breathing life into the movement. It will remind today's students that they are inheritors of *la causa*, and that they, too, possess the power to change the world.

The new film is the sixth produced by the SPLC's Teaching Tolerance project. SPLC plans to distribute 50,000 copies within two years of its release.



Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez discuss strategy to win justice for workers.

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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 have a stake in the future of our country's children

Save the children.

We've heard it so often and seen the pictures on television. We think we understand.

But we tend to forget that it's not just children in the Third World who need our help. Children right in our own communities are suffering, too. And although we might not think about it very often, all of us have a tremendous stake in their futures.

Vulnerable children are being ground down by bureaucratic forces in overburdened juvenile justice systems that start them on a lonely path to a life behind bars.

They're being shoved aside by schools that have adopted incredibly punitive and counter-productive zero-tolerance policies.

They're being locked up in harsh, prison-like facilities for misbehavior that in an earlier era would have warranted after-school detention.

Juvenile detention facilities are like minor-league farm teams in baseball — they just keep developing and feeding new talent into the big leagues, in this case adult prisons. Today, across our country, there are almost 100,000 children in custody.

Relying on mass incarceration of children is not only cruel and counterproductive, it's extremely costly to taxpayers.

It's nothing less than a national crisis.

The sad reality is that black children from poor households are far more likely than their white counterparts to enter this "school-to-prison pipeline." They are suspended or expelled from school at three times the rate of

white kids, and they are incarcerated at four times the rate.

When kids are suspended or jailed, they are less likely to graduate from high school. It's no wonder that fewer than half of all black males in our country get their high school diploma.

Nationally, the overall graduation rate is an abysmal 71 percent. In most Southern states, where there is more poverty and a larger population of African Americans, it is far worse. In South Carolina, for example, just 56 percent of all students graduate.

Teachers dropping out, too

Unfortunately, teachers are dropping out, too, at alarming rates. Many report being frustrated by chaotic classrooms and the lack of effective discipline policies.

It's time to break this cycle. We're working on this problem along two tracks — in the juvenile justice system and in schools.

First, we need to stop putting so many kids behind bars. The large institutional facilities that are supposed to provide rehabilitation are really just big prisons that do little or nothing to lead children toward a better future. That's why we sued the state of Mississippi to close its notorious "training school" for girls, where nonviolent teenagers were being shackled and routinely abused. The state has decided to close the facility rather than defend the indefensible.



Richard Cohen

We're also pushing states to replace incarceration with rehabilitative programs that are based in a child's community, where parents and others can provide support. This represents a sea change in juvenile justice, but the idea is beginning to take hold.

Ultimately, the best alternative to incarceration is keeping kids in school in the first place. That's where our front-end strategy comes in.

Many school systems are not providing the special services that children

with learning disabilities — the ones most likely to end up behind bars — desperately need. We're demanding that they do so, and litigating when necessary. This strategy has been quite successful, resulting in important settlements in Louisiana and Mississippi. We're expanding this work in the South and are working with other advocates to replicate this strategy around the country.

We're also pushing to replace the "zero-tolerance" policies that are now so popular with a smarter model that will improve discipline and overall academic achievement. Zero tolerance typically results in mandatory suspension or expulsion for misbehavior without regard to circumstances and without addressing the underlying causes. All relevant research shows that these policies do not result in safer, more orderly classrooms.

Part of the problem is that schools give up on kids too quickly. Many now simply call the police when children misbehave. This results in thousands of kids being funneled into the juvenile justice system for behavior that isn't even criminal. In Florida, which detains more kids per capita than any other state in the South, more than 20,000 students are "referred" to the juvenile justice system by schools each year. The majority of them committed non-violent offenses. They receive little or no rehabilitative services.

There's a better way. Through our School-to-Prison Reform Project, we're working to help implement a research-based approach that rewards good behavior and gives educators tools that can help them actually change student behavior rather than just punish it. These same tools will help reduce teacher attrition.

Our nation now spends \$65 billion each year to incarcerate 2.3 million people — more than any other country.

This is not the inevitable result of cracking down on crime. It's the result of a series of failed policies enacted over many years.

We need to find a better way. We can no longer afford to just throw up our hands in frustration and retreat to gated communities. Change must begin with the way we take care of our most precious resource — the next generation.

For, as the author James Baldwin reminded us, "These are all our children. We will profit by, or pay for, whatever they become."

MAILBOX

I am a college student, and I have been taking a sociology class where we discuss societal problems. In our discussions, the SPLC has been brought up several times.

As a class requirement, each student is researching an organization that they feel is important. I chose your center. I have spent the last several hours reading and discovering the amazing things your organization has done for people in our country. I am glad there are people like yourselves who take your chosen work seriously.

I cannot express how grateful I am that this kind of work is being done. Please continue to do what you are doing. You all are making a positive impact. I hope to one day do the same.

L. O.

Corvallis, Oregon

Your center is doing a great job, and I am going to make a

monthly donation to help you fight the ignorant racist skinheads and other hate groups who are nothing but cowards and bullies. ... I hope my small gift will help you in your fight.

D. W.

Sumter, South Carolina

I consider my contributions a moral and spiritual necessity. SPLC is my top leader in causes, and until it becomes absolutely impossible for me to continue donating, you will receive my small donation and know how much I wish it could be more.

If anyone ever asks me who I have as "heroes," it will be Morris Dees and all the people that assist him in the fight against hate crimes and the teaching of tolerance. God bless you all, and I thank you for allowing me to be part of your "peaceable war."

S. P.

Louisville, Kentucky

I just watched the "SPLC Trial Update: The Imperial Klan Case." I've been a supporter of the SPLC for roughly five years. I commend you on the DVD [video can be viewed at www.splcenter.org]. It's very effective, and despite being extremely disturbing, I find myself moved by your diligent efforts on behalf of the young boy. Thanks for making the world a better place.

G. R.

Astoria, New York

I felt the best way to honor Dr. King's life and work was to donate to an organization that continued his struggle. So I sent the SPLC a donation. Thanks for continuing to battle hate and the crimes it breeds. Morris Dees is our family's hero. Thank him for us.

P. M.

Chesterfield, Missouri

Thank all of you for the work that you do. It IS hard to stand up to racial jokes, off-color remarks about immigrants, etc. But I have vowed that I will NEVER stand quietly by again. And with all your newsletters, I now have facts when people talk about how much immigrants cost us or how many "illegals are in jail." My name is on the Wall of Tolerance. It is my legacy to leave my children — we must stand up to hate.

M. S.

Oshkosh, Wisconsin

I thank Teaching Tolerance for sending my charter school so many wonderful, FREE videos that we have been using to teach tolerance throughout our school. These are wonderful videos, and we have them in a central location (library) for all teachers to access. Your work is wonderful!

B. L.

Chicago, Illinois

FIGHTING HATE

Investigation exposes anti-Semitic megachurch

Popular televangelist Arnold Murray, who reaches millions with his long-running Bible study program "Shepherd's Chapel," has deep ties to the Christian Identity movement and preaches a subtle variation of its racist, anti-Semitic theology, an SPLC investigation has revealed.

The SPLC has obtained Christian Identity newsletters from 1978 that were signed by Murray. In addition, his 1958 minister's license was signed by Roy Gillaspie and Kenneth Goff, two prominent, early ideologues of Christian Identity.

The SPLC's findings are detailed in "Secret Identity," an ex-

posé in the Summer 2008 issue of the *Intelligence Report*.

Adherents of Christian Identity believe that Jews are descended from Satan and that non-whites are sub-human "beasts of the field," created without souls.

"Millions of people listen to Arnold Murray's sermons every year," said *Intelligence Report* editor Mark Potok. "What the vast majority don't realize is that his is a radical-right theology that is extremely similar to Christian

Identity, a belief system that identifies Jews as the biological children of Satan. Listeners should realize that Murray's philosophy is obviously anti-Semitic and that what he preaches is extremely far from the doctrine of any mainstream Christian denomination."

Christian Identity has been popular with Klansmen, neo-Nazis and other white supremacists for decades. Goff was the founder of the Colorado-based Soldiers of the Cross



Arnold Murray

FIGHTING HATE

SPLC's hate training provides safety net for law enforcement

In June 2007, Stephen Anderson, a 22-year veteran of the Utah Department of Corrections, was transporting racist skinhead Curtis Allgier from jail to a medical procedure in a nearby hospital. As Anderson was switching out Allgier's handcuffs, the skinhead grabbed the officer's gun and fatally shot the 60-year-old father of five in the head and chest.

Allgier was not unknown to Utah law enforcement; in fact, he had been named "Public Enemy Number One" by the Salt Lake City Metro Gang Unit only eight months before Anderson's death. What was most telling about Allgier, though, was that he literally had his racist beliefs displayed across his heavily tattooed face. Swastikas and the words "skinhead" and "hatebreed" were easy tip-offs to his views.

Tattoos reveal beliefs

But a couple of Allgier's tattoos were more obscure. "5150," emblazoned under his right eye, refers to the part of California law allowing involuntary commitment to a mental hospital of a person presenting a danger to himself or others. The image of a "valknut," or three intersecting triangles, that took up most of Allgier's left jaw, is an Old Norse symbol honoring a slain warrior who is willing to give his life in battle for the god Odin.

The morning Anderson was killed, news of his death spread quickly through the Salt Lake City convention center, where the National Sheriffs' Association was holding its annual conference. Representatives of the SPLC's Intelligence Project

were staffing an information booth there, and once they heard Allgier's description, they recognized the meanings of the tattoos and then later, his name.



Curtis Allgier

Allgier's case is a pointed reminder that swastikas and drawings of Adolf Hitler can help law enforcement officials ascertain the mindset of people they might encounter during their jobs, but the more esoteric symbols like the valknut might be easily dismissed, or even missed altogether. Yet that type of symbol can be a crucial indicator of a propensity for violence — something that might spell the difference between life and death to the officer dealing with the wearer.

It's those indicators — signs and symbols of the radical right, histories, backgrounds and threat potential of extremist groups and their leaders and followers — that form the crux of the training that the SPLC's Intelligence Project provides to law enforcement across the country.

"Officers need all the information and awareness about these groups they can get, so they can protect both themselves and the community," said the Intelligence Project's chief

investigator, Joe Roy, a former homicide detective who is one of the primary trainers for the department. "It's a matter of officer safety as well as community safety."

The Intelligence Project provides about 40 training sessions each year throughout the United States. These sessions, which range from two to six hours, have been provided to thousands of officers.

Because all of the Intelligence Project trainers are certified instructors with both the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center and California Peace Officers Standards and Training, officers who attend the trainings often receive credits they can use to fulfill their agencies' annual requirements. The sessions are provided at no charge.

INTELLIGENCE BRIEFS

Aryan Alliance members charged in mosque attack

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Three members of the neo-Nazi group Aryan Alliance were indicted by a federal grand jury in connection with the pre-dawn firebombing of a Tennessee mosque.

Eric Ian Baker, Jonathan Edward Stone and Michael Corey Golden were charged with conspiracy to violate civil rights, destroying a house of worship, possession of a destructive device and use of fire to commit a felony.

Federal officials allege that on February 9, Baker, 32, spray-painted swastikas on the walls of the Islamic Center along with the messages, "We run the world" and "White Power." According to the indictment, Golden, 23, and Stone, 19, then broke a window with a brick and hurled two Molotov cocktails through the opening.

No one was injured in the blaze.

At least two of the three men are followers of Christian Identity (see story, this page). If convicted, the men face up to 10 years in prison and a maximum fine of \$250,000.

SPLC uncovers racist cult compound

WESTCLIFFE, Colo. — A top aide to imprisoned racist polygamist leader Warren S. Jeffs has purchased \$2 million worth of property along the remote eastern flank of the rugged Sangre de Cristo Mountains about 175 miles southwest of Denver, the SPLC revealed in May.

Men, women and children members of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, or FLDS, are occupying at least three of the properties. Their presence

is causing anxiety among neighbors and public officials unsure how to react to the presence of a white supremacist sect known to coerce underage girls into plural marriages.

"Quite frankly, we don't know what to do," said Custer County Sheriff Fred Jobe. "We are definitely aware that they are here ... but until they break some laws, there isn't much that we can do."

The FLDS attracted worldwide attention in April when Texas authorities raided a church ranch and removed 462 children.

The SPLC placed the FLDS on its hate group list in 2005 for its racist beliefs, including the notion that black people have been cursed by the devil and are an inferior race.

Former Klan leader wins municipal election

LAKE WALES, Fla. — Black voters are claiming they were "snookered" into voting for John Paul Rogers, the former Florida grand dragon, or state leader, of the United Klans of America (UKA), who was sworn in as Lake Wales city commissioner May 6.

"We were caught asleep at the switch on this thing," black civic leader Clinton Horne told *The Ledger*, a regional daily paper.

Rogers, 66, told Florida law enforcement investigators in 2005 that he joined the Klan in 1963 or 1964, rising to become the state leader of the UKA, a post he occupied until 1988. That year, the SPLC bankrupted the group by winning a \$7 million judgment for the family of Michael Donald, a 19-year-old black man who was murdered by Klansmen in 1981. The UKA disbanded as a result.

THEY SAID IT

"If I see someone with brown skin and has an accent ... I think they're illegal."

— Utah Minuteman spokesman **ELI CAWLEY**, quoted in a Jan. 21 newspaper account, arguing that the overall Latino community should be targeted for immigration enforcement efforts.

"Steve Cohen and the JEWS HATE Jesus ... Christians must unite [so] ONLY one black Christian faces this opponent of Christ."

— **GEORGE BROOKS**, a black Murfreesboro, Tenn., pastor, in a widely circulated flier attacking Memphis Congressman Cohen that was made public Feb. 11.

"When these Katrina so-called refugees were scattered about the country, it was just a glorified episode of putting out the garbage."

— Host **NEAL BOORTZ**, on the Jan. 30 edition of Cox Radio Syndication's "The Neal Boortz Show," attacking victims of Hurricane Katrina and residents of New Orleans, a black-majority city he described as a "welfare city ... a city of parasites and leeches."

"America has been the best country on earth for black folks. ... We hear the grievances. Where is the gratitude?"

— MSNBC commentator **PATRICK BUCHANAN**, in his Jan. 21 Martin Luther King Jr. Day syndicated column, discussing complaints about slavery and segregation.

SPLC exposes church 'Bandana Project' spotlights sexual exploitation of farmworker women

Continued from page 3

Training Institute, a school that trained Christian Identity leaders. A 1969 *Soldiers of the Cross* newsletter penned by Goff describes black civil rights protesters as seeking "to submerge our culture and religious heritage under a flood of cannibalism, voodooism and beastly jungle sex orgies."

Murray is still connected to *Soldiers of the Cross*. According to Arkansas public records, a corporation by that name is doing business as Shepherd's Chapel in Arkansas, and Murray is registered as the corporation's agent. Murray's home, his church property and several parcels of land in Gravette, Ark., are all listed as the property of *Soldiers of the Cross*.

Evil people called 'Kenites'

While Murray in his televised sermons does not explicitly endorse racism or anti-Semitism, he preaches often about a race of evil people, descended from Cain, borne out of "the Serpent Seed" of Eve's sexual union with Satan in the Garden of Eden. He calls these evil people the "Kenites" and identifies them as people "who slipped in among the Jewish people in Jerusalem and claim to be God's chosen people, when in fact they are of Lucifer."

He also mentions that "in 1967 ... Jerusalem fell to the

Kenites during the six-day war," an apparent reference to Israel's victory in the Six-Day War. (In most Judeo-Christian traditions, the Kenites are a nomadic clan of Midianites and a tribe into which Moses married.) And he calls the Talmud, a central text of the Jewish faith, "the filthiest piece of literature ever written."

The Serpent Seed is a belief ripped straight from the pages of "seedline" or "two-seed" Christian Identity theology, which holds that Eve was impregnated by Satan and gave birth to his son, Cain, described as the first Jew. By promoting the "Serpent Seed" doctrine on 225 broadcast stations, Murray has gone further than any other Christian Identity preacher in pushing Christian Identity teachings into the mainstream. His weekly program can be seen in nearly every major and mid-size U.S. city.

"This is certainly Identity theology, inasmuch as he presents a two-seedline argument, identifies the [present] inhabitants of Israel with the descendants of Cain, and calls the mating of the Serpent with Eve the primal sin," says Michael Barkun, a leading scholar of Christian Identity and a political science professor at Syracuse University.

Or, as Murray puts it on his website: "What about teaching Serpent Seed? I make no apology for teaching the word of God."

SEEKING JUSTICE

Residents of more than 50 cities across the country took a stand against the sexual harassment and abuse of farmworker women on April 3 as part of the "Bandana Project," a partnership between the Southern Poverty Law Center and community groups, universities and other organizations.

The SPLC and partners in those cities invited members of the farmworker community and others to decorate bandanas as a symbolic gesture to raise awareness of the sexual exploitation of these vulnerable women. More than 1,000 white bandanas were decorated across the country and in Mexico. They were displayed in museums, community centers and schools.

The project adopted the bandana as a symbol of solidarity to end the abuse because many farmworker women use bandanas on the job to cover their faces and bodies in an attempt to ward off unwanted sexual attention that often leads to rape.

The exhibits were launched on the national day of action for Sexual Assault Awareness Month. This year's theme was sexual assault in the workplace. At least 70 displays were held during the month of April. The project garnered media attention across the country.

Until now, the problem has received little public attention but is well known to farmworker women, many of whom remain silent about sexual exploitation on the job. William R. Tamayo, regional attorney for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in San Francisco, wrote in a 2000 report that "the sexual harassment of farmworker women is a widespread problem." In an earlier survey of farmworker women

and their families and afraid of losing their jobs," said Mónica Ramírez, project director for Esperanza: The Immigrant Women's Legal Initiative of the SPLC. "Through this project, we try to bring a sense of hope, confidence and the will to be brave. It is our wish that these women will see our encouragement as a sign that they no longer have to suffer in silence."

Ramírez said she was pleased with the response to the project, which required the ordering for more bandanas to meet the demand from the groups participating in the campaign.

"Advocates have told me that they want to continue decorating bandanas with farmworker community leaders throughout the year because they believe that this project has challenged the oppressive taboos that keep people from talking about this problem," she said. "They say the Bandana Project has helped community members feel that they can more comfortably discuss the issue."

The SPLC also took the message to Congress. Mary Bauer, director of the SPLC's Immigrant Justice Project, raised the issue when she appeared before Congress twice in April.



Colorful hand-painted hankchiefs convey messages about the sexual exploitation of farmworker women.

in California, 90 percent of the women questioned said that sexual harassment was a major problem on the job.

"Often in these precarious situations, farmworker women are ashamed for themselves

TEACHING TOLERANCE

Actor promotes SPLC films through stories and song

Nick LaTour stood at the front of the school cafeteria as students filled the room.

With a walking stick in hand, he strolled toward a microphone, but his deep, booming voice was already filling the room as he sang.

"I've been travelin' down this road a long time," he sang. "Sometimes walkin'. Sometime's ridin'. Always carryin' a heavy load. Yes, I've been travelin' down this road a long time."

This time, LaTour's travels brought him to the school bearing his father's name: E.D. Nixon Elementary School in Montgomery, Ala., where a street named for the famed civil rights leader crosses the front of the school.

LaTour, 79, visits schools across the country to teach children about his father's accomplishments and the movement and to perform a song or two. LaTour, whose given name is E.D. Nixon Jr.,

is a renowned entertainer who has appeared in sitcoms such as "Seinfeld," "Married with Children" and "The Jamie Foxx Show." He has appeared in several movies and on Broadway.

He also narrates the Teaching Tolerance films *Mighty Times: The Legacy of Rosa Parks* and *Mighty Times: The Children's March*. He said his work at schools has become entwined with these award-winning films

that chronicle key events in the civil rights movement.

"Everywhere I go in schools, they'll show *Mighty Times*," he said before he spoke to the students as part of Black History Month. "Most of my school appearances now are tied in with the *Mighty Times*."

During his presentation, LaTour described life in the segregated South. He explained what that meant for shoppers along Montgomery's Dexter Avenue, which is steeped in civil rights history.

Blacks couldn't try on clothes

"Everything was on Dexter Avenue, and black people couldn't go there and try on clothes," he told the group of 4th, 5th and 6th graders, who appeared to be predominately, if not entirely, black.

He described segregated buses and the tests that blacks had to take

to register to vote. And he told them about his father's visits to Chicago and New York where he saw blacks and whites together.

"He didn't want to move to Chicago or New York," LaTour said. "He wanted to make changes here in Montgomery."

And it was his father's desire to bring change to Montgomery that defined the elder Nixon's life. Among other things, Nixon played a key role in organizing 750 people to march on the Montgomery County Courthouse in an attempt to register people to vote. He also helped bail Rosa Parks out of jail after she refused to give up her bus seat to a white man, sparking the Montgomery bus boycott.

His actions were not only met by resistance in the white community but also by blacks who accepted segregation as just part of life in the South, LaTour said.

"My dad said, 'No, no. Things have got to change,'" he said.

LaTour quizzed the students on civil rights history, giving prizes to students who answered correctly. A boy who correctly

answered that Nixon was born in Montgomery won a copy of the *Mighty Times* video.

Although his presentations serve as a living history lesson, they are also an opportunity to keep his father's memory alive, said LaTour, who has even given his presentation over the telephone when he couldn't appear before a class in person.

During this presentation, he also stressed the importance of ambition and setting goals.

"My father was never satisfied with being poor. He made up his mind, although he only had a 3rd grade education, that he was going to make the best that he could out of his life. And that's what he did," said LaTour, who founded the E.D. Nixon Foundation that helps schools pay for after-school programs and other needs.

As he wrapped up his presentation, Principal Regina Thompson reminded the students of the debt they have to pioneers such as LaTour's father.

"You have a lot of people that have paved the way for you," she said. "We want to continue to make (E.D. Nixon) proud."



Nick LaTour's stories educate and entertain elementary children in schools across the country.

SEEKING JUSTICE

SPLC suit wins class action status

A federal court in Columbia, Tenn., has granted class action status to a lawsuit the SPLC helped bring against an Arkansas forestry company accused of cheating foreign guestworkers out of wages.

The March 28 ruling means the case against Superior Forestry Service can be litigated on behalf of about 3,000 guestworkers believed to be among the employees victimized by the company. Without the class certification, the lawsuit would benefit only the workers named as plaintiffs in the case.

The lawsuit alleges the company took advantage of the workers and systematically cheated them out of wages. The workers, who were from Mexico and

Central America, legally entered the country on H-2B guestworker visas to plant tree seedlings for the company.

'Justice for thousands'

"This ruling allows us to get justice for the thousands of workers who came to this country simply looking for the opportunity to better themselves but were taken advantage of by this company," said Mary Bauer, director of the SPLC's Immigrant Justice Project. "It's also a warning to other companies who think they can take advantage of guestworkers because of their vulnerability."

U.S. District Judge William J. Haynes Jr. also ruled that the statute of limitations in the case will

be six years, not the three years sought by Superior, which would have limited the number of guestworkers able to join the lawsuit.

"These abuses show the Department of Labor is not protecting workers from bad employers," said Marni Willenson, an attorney at Farmworker Justice in Washington, D.C., who also represents workers in the case. "We are glad the court certified a case that illustrates the broad problems in guest-worker programs."

Also serving as legal counsel in the case are the Virginia Justice Center for Farm and Immigrant Workers as well as the law firms of Hughes, Socol, Piers, Resnick and Dum, and Bell, Tennent and Frogge.



Students participating in a Teaching Tolerance-funded grant color in each U.S. state as its primary returns are counted.

TEACHING TOLERANCE

Grant engages students in civic involvement

KIRKWOOD, Mo. — When Missouri voters went to the polls for the Super Tuesday presidential primary this past February, students at Keysor Elementary School also cast their ballots for president as part of a Teaching Tolerance grant.

The mock election was part of a school-wide civics project to teach students about the political process — from researching candidates to casting a ballot. A 5th-grade student civil rights team created by the Teaching Tolerance grant played a key role in the project. The team has promoted tolerance and better student relations at Keysor, located about 17 miles southwest of St. Louis, but it has also focused on civics.

Important to be informed about elections

"I knew it was important for our students to understand the importance of the election as well as the enormous responsibility, not just to vote, but to be informed," said Florence Borman, the Keysor teacher who applied for the grant. "Informed not only regarding the process, but informed about the candidates as well."

Students who were members of the Keysor civil rights team researched the candidates and wrote biographies that were made available to the rest of the school. The biographies focused on issues such as the economy, education, health care and the war in Iraq. Five students portrayed the candidates and made commercials that were broadcast during the school's daily video announcements.

The campaigning preceded the 5th-graders' own caucus, an event that required the students to research and understand a political process that even some television news anchors had difficulty explaining to viewers.

The students also got to see how the primary system works

by holding a mock election on Super Tuesday with the civil rights team supervising the voting. The election followed a political rally in the gym where students portrayed the candidates and gave speeches to the student body. The principal also encouraged the students to have a discussion with their parents about their choice for president.

During the mock election, the students were asked exit poll questions. Although many knew how their parents planned to vote, they often voted for a different candidate. When asked what affected their decision, many said hearing the "candidates" speak at the rally helped them to decide.

"I really didn't know much about voting before we did our primary," said Andrew, a Keysor student. "But I learned how to vote and research candidates."

The project also provided an opportunity to discuss civil rights issues related to voting, such as voter ID requirements. During a classroom discussion, students recognized that it may help reduce voter fraud, but acknowledged that entire groups of people — the elderly, poor, disabled and homeless — may be prevented from voting because they might have a more difficult time getting an ID.

"Keysor Decision '08 has been a growth experience for kids and grownups alike," Borman said.

Since the Teaching Tolerance grant was awarded to Keysor for the civil rights team, it has fostered a variety of ongoing projects that have taught students about tolerance, their own biases and how they can provide the leadership needed to make every Keysor student feel respected and accepted at the school.

Borman has since transferred to a local middle school where she is continuing to use the Teaching Tolerance program.



Congress hears from SPLC client

Georgia high school student Marie Justeen Mancha, a U.S. citizen, testifies before the House Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law about a botched immigration raid at her home in the fall of 2006. Mancha and her mother, also a citizen, are plaintiffs in a SPLC lawsuit against the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The lawsuit charges that ICE agents illegally detained, searched and harassed Latinos solely because of their appearance — a violation of their Fourth and Fifth Amendment rights — during an extensive campaign to drive them out of the area.

SEEKING JUSTICE

SPLC launches campaign to reduce Mississippi's school dropout rate

JACKSON, Miss. — Parents in Walthall County, Miss., were concerned about their community's schools and wanted to do something.

Ineffective discipline policies across the state were pushing both students and teachers out of schools, giving Mississippi one of the lowest graduation rates in the nation. Walthall County was no different.

But starting a grassroots movement to turn it around was a daunting task. That's where the Southern Poverty Law Center came in.

The SPLC's Mississippi Youth Justice Project helped foster a community movement to improve Walthall County's schools by hosting a meeting that offered

information about community organizing and effective discipline policies.

The meeting was part of a statewide effort by the SPLC aimed at improving Mississippi public schools and turning around the state's alarming student and teacher dropout rates. The campaign kicked off in April with the release of a briefing book, *Effective Discipline for Student Success: Reducing Student and Teacher Dropout Rates in Mississippi*.

The book promotes a research-based approach to discipline that also improves academic performance and school safety. Its principles can be applied to schools everywhere. The book is being distributed to

all of Mississippi's 152 school superintendents as well as legislators, state and local school board members and every principal.

MYJP is hosting community meetings, such as the one in Walthall County, across Mississippi to bring together parents, educators and legislators to forge solutions.

"Our public schools should be citadels of learning, but they are instead becoming dropout factories," said MYJP Director Bear Atwood. "If we don't reverse this trend soon, it will take a devastating toll."

The Walthall County meeting is already producing results. It led parents and others to form "The CASE for Walthall County." CASE

Continued on page 8

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Partner extends support by naming SPLC in will

Whether she was promoting nutritious meals for schoolchildren or protecting the rights of the farmworkers producing the food, lawyer Suzanne Vaupel dedicated her life to helping those without a voice.

A strong believer in the right of everyone to be treated with dignity and respect, the Sacramento attorney championed a host of agricultural causes aimed at improving people's lives. That work would take her to Congress and across the globe.

"She was a tireless caregiver and passionate advocate," said Tom Mullins, her husband of 21 years.

Vaupel died of cancer on Jan. 22, 2003. She was 55.

A supporter of the Southern Poverty Law Center since 1987, she included the SPLC in her will to ensure the



Suzanne Vaupel

CONTRIBUTED

Vaupel worked as an advocate for nutrition and breakfast programs in schools, an effort that led to her congressional testimony on the subject in 1972. She served as staff counsel for the California Agricultural Labor Relations Board, which protects the rights of farmworkers. Vaupel later founded a law practice and focused on international trade and organic agriculture issues.

She also served as vice president of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, a group that promotes the understanding and acceptance of organic foods and sustainable agriculture. Her duties took her across the world.

"It was a perfect melding of her interests," Mullins said.

Vaupel's dedication to her causes sometimes meant returning to the classroom to acquire new skills.

She didn't let it deter her.

As a school nutrition advocate, she realized that she might be more effective with a law degree. That realization led to her becoming a lawyer.

As she became more involved in agricultural issues, Vaupel discovered she needed to learn more about agricultural economics. That led to her earning a master's degree in the subject.

"She was really a citizen of the world," Mullins said. "And it just went against her grain that people would be treated differently because of their ethnicity or their background."

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 May 1, 2007, through May 31, 2008.

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Civil Rights Memorial

Book reveals plot to murder Dees

Continued from page 1

potentially targeting both Dees and the SPLC headquarters in Montgomery, Ala.

One night while Hall stayed at Edwards' compound, the Klan leader and another man burst into the guard shack where he was sleeping.

"I could see they were both very drunk, and Ron was holding a pump shotgun in one hand and a Bible in the other. I wondered if I might be having another nightmare. ... Here I had an extremely intoxicated lunatic with a loaded shotgun hinting that I was an informant," he writes.

The Klan leader asked Hall what he thought about Judas' betrayal of Jesus. He gave a response that satisfied Edwards, defusing the situation.

Hall's quick thinking probably saved his life several times and helped him win the trust of several dangerous white supremacists, including Ohio Aryan Nations leader Harold Ray Redfeairn, a man who shot a police officer multiple times in 1979.

Hall's trusted position with Redfeairn eventually took him to the Aryan Nations' Idaho compound where he met Richard Butler, the group's founder, and other key figures.

As Hall's mission wore on, he suffered panic attacks and needed

Xanax and alcohol to steady his nerves. Yet he felt a duty to fulfill the commitment he made to the FBI. He diligently relayed each piece of information he uncovered to FBI agent Tym Burkey, who co-wrote the book with Hall and writer Katherine Ramsland.

Eventually, Hall produced enough information for authorities to arrest the would-be assassin the day before he planned to board a bus headed south. He was arrested on the morning of April 14, 1999. The plan was for the Dees' murder to roughly coincide with the April anniversaries of the Oklahoma City bombing, the fiery end of the siege of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco and Hitler's birthday.

Would-be shooter sent to prison

The would-be shooter, who was convicted and sent to prison on various firearms charges, admitted to Burkey that he planned to kill Dees but refused to discuss a possible bombing plot. Though Hall theorizes that Edwards may have been a weapons supplier to the plot, Edwards was not charged.

In September 2000, after a weeklong trial, Dees and his legal team won a \$6.3 million verdict against Butler and the Aryan Nations. The judgment forced the sale of Butler's 20-acre compound, which was eventually donated to a local college.

As for Edwards, he remains defiant and dangerous. He is the "Imperial Wizard" of the IKA, the country's second largest Klan group with 16 chapters in eight states. In a Klan history on the IKA website, Edwards is portrayed as the leader of the Klan's "6th era," following in the footsteps of David Duke and others.

Each year, at Edwards' Kentucky compound, the IKA hosts Nordic Fest, a music festival that brings together Klansmen, skinheads and members of other violent hate groups.

In February, when Dees went to Kentucky to take Edwards' deposition for the upcoming November trial, the Klan leader sported a freshly inked tattoo on the side of his shaved head that said, "F--K S.P.L.C."

The plot described in the new book wasn't the only one to target Dees. More than 30 people have been sent to prison for plotting to kill Dees or attack the SPLC.

Shortly after the SPLC sued Edwards and the IKA last year, the center received numerous threats, resulting in heightened security at the Montgomery office. One letter threatened, "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."

Book provides look at dangerous Klan leader

The new book *Into the Devil's Den* depicts Klan leader Ron Edwards as a paranoid and dangerous man living in relative seclusion with a stockpile of weapons at his compound in the Kentucky backcountry.

FBI informant Dave Hall's undercover work took him to Edwards' 28-acre IKA compound near Dawson Springs, Ky., in the late 1990s. It gave him a rare insider's view of Edwards and his world. In the shadows of Confederate and KKK flags flying above the compound, Hall got to see the office where the Klan leader works and had an opportunity to chat with him.

"He invited us into the two-bedroom trailer and went into a built-on addition that he used for an office," Hall writes. "The usual KKK posters adorned the walls, and on one side of the room, a rack held various KKK pamphlets. There were a few filing cabinets, and in one corner stood a gun rack loaded with two shotguns, two AK-47 assault rifles, one SKS assault rifle, and a .30-06 hunting rifle."

Edwards already had discovered the power of the Internet to bring together white supremacist groups. He described his Internet work to Hall and his companion and surfed from one white supremacist site to another.

He also used the Internet to keep an eye on the SPLC.

"I've been monitoring the SPLC website, and that a--hole Morris Sleaze is full of sh--," Edwards is quoted as saying in the book. "I'll be glad when that bastard is dead."

Edwards was captivated by the possibility of Y2K creating chaos. The Klan leader was apparently burying ammunition and stockpiling equipment for a disaster he believed would spark a race war. Hall described arriving at the compound to see Edwards and another man carrying an ammunition case marked "U.S. Army" and loading it into a car trunk.

"Take this out and bury it with the rest of them," Edwards is quoted as saying.

He added: "There goes 5,000 rounds of AK-47 ammo."

When the Klan leader emerged from his office with

several camouflage jumpsuits marked with thin red lines, Hall couldn't help but ask about them.

"They're infrared blocking suits so they can't see you at night," Edwards says.

Later, Edwards also fretted that the federal government would use Y2K

as an excuse to confiscate weapons from citizens. He advised Hall's companion to either hide or bury his weapons.

The Klan leader believed he was under federal surveillance. When Hall, Edwards and another man traveled to a restaurant they noticed a black and white Chevrolet Blazer behind them.

"It's probably the feds. They follow me all the time," he said.



Dees meets donors

Constance and Steve Rogers, SPLC donors from Point Washington, Fla., flank SPLC founder Morris Dees on a visit to Montgomery. With them is their grandson, Dylan, who is 8 years old and a 4th grader.

Campaign for Miss. children

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stands for Concerned Association for Students' Education.

CASE now has members on a school board committee that composes the student discipline handbooks for the county's schools. Its members are also urging other school officials to support policies that don't push students out of school and into the juvenile justice system.

"The most important thing is that this work is driven from a grassroots level, and the community owns it," said Cassandra Welchlin, MYJP's director of public affairs. "It's up to us to help provide them with the skills and the tools to bring this much-needed reform."

Mississippi's high school graduation rate is just 62 percent. That translates to 14,000 students a year who drop out.

Research has shown that school discipline practices are a major factor in pushing vulnerable children out of school and, often, into the juvenile justice system, a path known as the "school-to-prison pipeline."

Dissatisfaction with school discipline also is cited as the reason many new teachers in Mississippi leave the profession. Currently, the state loses one-third of its new teachers every three years.

The SPLC's goal is to have a program called Positive Behavioral Interventions and

Supports (PBIS) implemented in every Mississippi public school. PBIS, which rewards students for good behavior taught and modeled throughout the school, reduces suspensions, expulsions and dropout rates. Used to some extent by more than 7,000 schools across the country, PBIS has also improved safety and academic achievement.

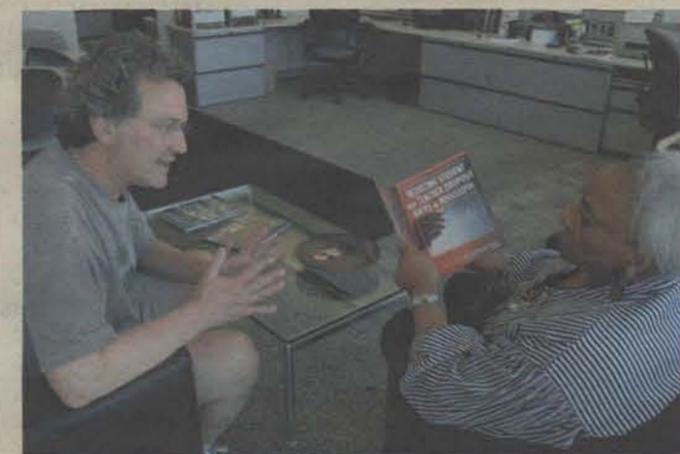
"A good learning environment begins with well-behaved students, and research shows that this method helps to create an environment that is conducive to learning," said Mississippi Superintendent of Education Hank M. Bounds. "A number of schools in Mississippi have already implemented PBIS."

Currently, the Mississippi Department of Education encourages school districts to seek training for PBIS, but the proven success of this program spurred MYJP and its partners to launch a statewide campaign to encourage policymakers to bring the program into all of the state's schools.

"We must turn around this dropout crisis," Atwood said. "That is why we have joined with community partners in a campaign dedicated to raising awareness across Mississippi and building support for a program that can literally transform our schools and the state. Our children and our state deserve no less."



Ron Edwards' tattoo demonstrates his feelings toward the SPLC.



Drop-out prevention strategy explained

SPLC President Richard Cohen discusses with donor Ethel Delaney Lee the SPLC strategy to keep students from dropping out of school. Lee, a retired educator from Washington, D.C., visited the SPLC in April.

To view a five-minute video about this case, visit www.splcenter.org