

SPLC REPORT

Southern Poverty Law Center
400 Washington Avenue • Montgomery, AL 36104
www.splcenter.org

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Law Center

Published by the **Southern Poverty Law Center**
Fighting Hate • Teaching Tolerance • Seeking Justice

Spring 2011
Volume 41, Number 1



FIGHTING HATE

U.S. hate groups top 1,000

Numbers reflect explosive growth of radical right

The number of hate groups operating in the United States topped 1,000 for the first time and the antigovernment "Patriot" movement expanded dramatically for the second straight year as the radical right showed continued explosive

growth in 2010, an SPLC investigation has found.

Several factors fueled the growth: resentment over the changing racial demographics of the country, frustration over the lagging economy, and the mainstreaming of conspiracy theories

and other demonizing propaganda aimed at minorities and the government.

A list and interactive, state-by-state map of active hate groups can be viewed at www.splcenter.org.

"Far-right extremists remain highly energized, even as

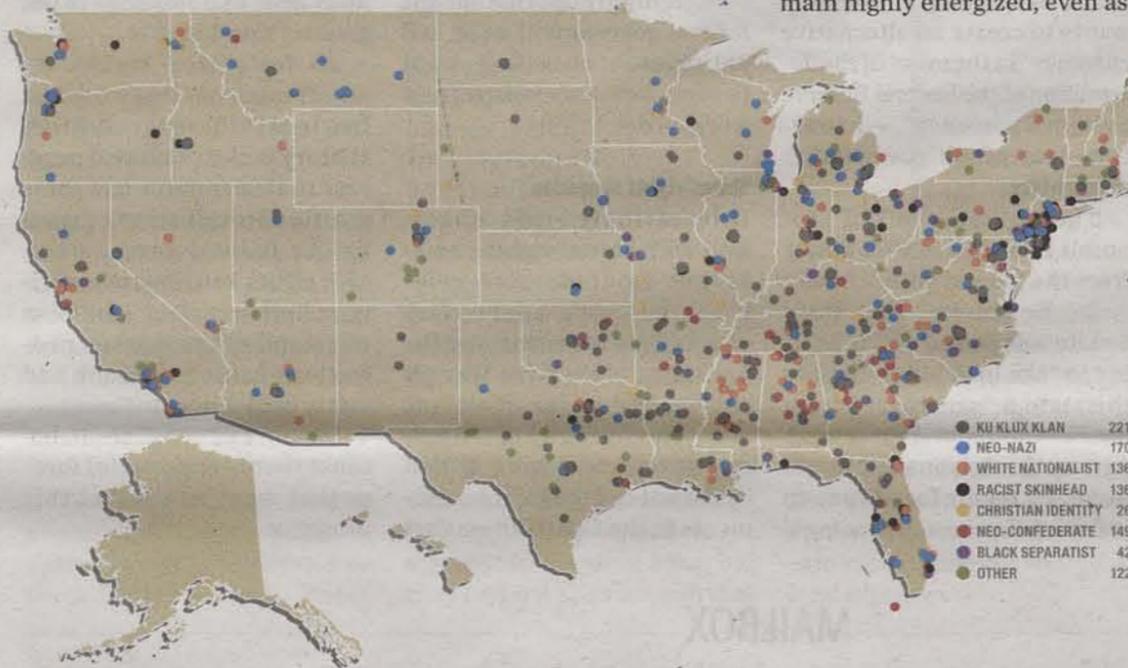
politicians across the country co-opt many of the radical ideas and issues that are important to them," said Mark Potok, director of the SPLC's Intelligence Project. "This success in having their voices heard in the political arena, where they have long occupied the fringe of conservative thought, might eventually take the wind out of their sails, but so far we're not seeing any sign of that. We are, however, seeing increasing violence from radical-right extremists."

'Patriots' jump 60 percent

The SPLC documented 1,002 hate groups operating in 2010 — a 7.5 percent increase from the 932 groups active a year earlier and a 66 percent rise since 2000. It is the first time the number of hate groups has topped 1,000 since the SPLC began counting them in the 1980s.

But the most dramatic growth in the radical right came in the

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SEEKING JUSTICE

Students' rights restored after SPLC action in Minnesota case

As hundreds of classmates cheered, Sarah Lindstrom and Desiree Shelton walked hand-in-hand as a same-sex couple during a procession at Champlin Park High School in Minnesota.

It was a simple act — walking as a couple in front of the classmates who had elected them to the "royalty court" — but one that may not have happened without the efforts of the Southern Poverty Law Center and its allies.

Traditionally, members of the royalty court walk as couples during a procession. But school officials made changes to the Jan. 31 event that would have prevented the couple from walking together. These changes occurred despite the school district maintaining a policy that instructs teachers to remain "neutral" on matters of sexual orientation. A federal lawsuit filed by the SPLC and other organizations led to a settlement agreement that allowed the young women to participate as a couple.

"It felt amazing," Shelton told a reporter after walking with Lindstrom at the event.

Students gave the couple a standing ovation. It was a joyous moment for a district that has been wracked by tragedy. The Anoka-Hennepin School District in Minneapolis' suburbs has seen a string of student suicides — some likely related to anti-gay bullying, according to community advocates.

"School officials did the right thing," said Sam Wolfe, an attorney with the SPLC's LGBT Rights Project. "We hope this is a beacon for better days in the Anoka-Hennepin School District. Courageous individuals like Desiree and Sarah really make that type of progress possible."

Addressing a tragedy

SPLC staffers traveled to Minnesota last fall and met with community members about the student suicides — tragedies that were underscored in September when several other student suicides made headlines across the country. The SPLC also hosted

a screening of its Teaching Tolerance documentary, *Bullied*. More than 2,000 people gathered for the event at Minneapolis' Central Lutheran Church.

At that time, community members said they were deeply concerned that school officials were not realistically addressing anti-gay bigotry and harassment in Anoka-Hennepin. Community members worried

the district's "neutrality" policy was preventing teachers from taking a strong stance against anti-gay bullying.

When it appeared school officials would prevent Shelton and Lindstrom from participating as a couple during the school's "Snow Days" event, the SPLC returned to Minnesota.

"School officials appeared to be at odds with their own

neutrality policy by preventing the couple from walking," Wolfe said. "Quite simply, this policy is neutral in theory, one-sided in fact and dangerous in practice."

When school officials did not respond to a request to allow the students to participate as a couple, the SPLC, the National Center for Lesbian Rights and the law firm Faegre & Benson filed a federal civil rights lawsuit to enforce the students' rights under the First and 14th Amendments of the U.S. Constitution, the Minnesota Constitution and the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

Less than 24 hours after filing the lawsuit, a settlement agreement had been reached.

Throughout the situation, students at Champlin Park High School supported their classmates. The student body not only elected two openly gay classmates to the royalty court, but when it looked like their classmates would be denied the right to participate as a couple, they banded together, carried posters and took a stand for their classmates.



Lesbian students Desiree Shelton (left) and Sarah Lindstrom participated as a couple in a high school royalty court procession after the SPLC and its allies took action on their behalf.

SPLC REPORT

Published by
the Southern Poverty Law Center
SPRING 2011

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 SPLC works toward the day when the ideals of equal justice and equal opportunity will be a reality. The SPLC also sponsors the Civil Rights Memorial, which honors the memory of individuals who died during the Civil Rights Movement.

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A MESSAGE FROM SPLC PRESIDENT RICHARD COHEN

Fringe ideas assault nation's core values

The rise of the radical right, as detailed on page 1, carries the implicit threat of violence aimed at minorities and the federal government. The nightmare scenario is, of course, another domestic terrorist attack like the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing by the racist, antigovernment zealot Timothy McVeigh.

There's another serious threat, as well, one that's more subtle but perhaps more damaging in the long run: the steady creep of ideas from the radical fringe into the political mainstream.

Attacking the Constitution

The political agenda of the radical right — think John Birch Society on steroids — represents a frontal assault on our core values as a nation and on the U.S. Constitution itself.

Ideas from the radical right are now moving swiftly from the realm of fantasy into the halls of state legislatures around the country. That's worrisome, because as our whole political system is pushed further to the right by the howlers on hate radio, the propagandists at Fox News and the Tea Party-style populists, these ideas increasingly seem palatable to politicians who pander to society's most extreme elements.

Birthright citizenship, for example, is under attack by anti-immigrant zealots who want to roll back the 14th Amendment so that the children of undocumented immigrants are denied U.S. citizenship. This proposal would create havoc and undermine a bedrock principle of our democracy.

But that's only the beginning.

In South Dakota and Nebraska, some lawmakers are actually pushing proposals that could effectively legalize the murder of physicians who perform abortions. In Virginia, a lawmaker wants to create an alternative currency "in the event of the destruction of the Federal Reserve System's currency" — a long-time fear of antigovernment extremists.

There's also a raft of proposals that seek to strip power from the federal government.

In Kentucky, the state Senate was poised at this writing to take up a bill to declare the state a "sanctuary" from the Environmental Protection Agency. An Arizona bill would make it a felony for anyone to enforce federal commerce laws.

Lawmakers in Montana are considering a law to allow the state to nullify federal protections for endangered species. A Georgia proposal would override federal monetary regulations and require banks to accept payment in gold or silver.

The common theme in these so-called "states' rights" bills is the rejection of federal authority. It's no coincidence that they're appearing amid a powerful resurgence of the antigovernment "Patriot" movement, composed of militias and other conspiracy-mongering groups that see the federal government as an evil entity intent on selling us out to some sort of socialistic "new world order."

States' rights obsession

Interestingly, this obsession with states' rights comes as neo-Confederates celebrate the 150th anniversary of Southern secession and the beginning of the Civil War. Of course, the major questions about the authority of the federal government were settled by the war and the great amendments to the Constitution that

followed it, including the 14th Amendment with its guarantees of equal protection, due process and citizenship. But some today are determined to turn back the clock.

Bircher territory

It's likely that most of these proposals, if passed, would be struck down by the courts. But they're symptomatic of a serious illness in the body politic, a virus that attacks the very idea of progressive governance aimed at protecting the interests of all citizens. As radical-right ideas get tossed around more and more, they serve to help shift the center of politics even further past Reaganism into Birch territory, moving us away from real solutions to our country's problems.

As for states' rights, we must remember that we do not live in 50 different countries. History is clear that real progress in this country has come mostly through strong action by the federal government: civil rights, retirement security, pollution control, minimum wage and other worker protections, consumer health and safety guidelines, and more.

We can't be complacent, because there are powerful forces that want to unravel this progress.



Richard Cohen

MAILBOX

As a multi-year member, I am very pleased to see that you consider the Family Research Council a hate group. Americans need to come to fear those around us who hide behind looking "normal" while promoting violence. I hope this makes some people think.

Thank you for all your good work.

N.F.
Seattle, Washington

Thank you for speaking out and exposing the hate groups we have in this country under benign names! Gays and lesbians are emotionally and psychologically affected by the rhetoric of these groups. I appreciate your efforts!

W.P.
Spokane, Washington

I'm so sad about the plight of undocumented female farm workers. (See story in Winter 2010 issue of the *SPLC Report*.) I see them laboring in the fields whenever traveling to get groceries in Ventura.

Thank you so much for your work and investigation into this inhumane treatment of farmworkers. It needs to end. I will gladly pay twice for my

food to end this situation. My donation to you will come in 2011. Thanks.

E.N.
Ojai, California

I've been a contributor for a long time now and just read through a list of your 2010 accomplishments. I sat back and asked myself that old question, "Well, did you get your money's worth last year?" The answer is a resounding, "Yes!! And then some!!"

Because SPLC exists, I can, through my membership and donations, and by sharing information I get from the *Intelligence Report* and *Teaching Tolerance*, play a part, however small, in the most important civil rights work of our times.

Are there still heroes in the USA? You bet. Just look in a mirror. Thanks for everything you do.

L.M.
Cincinnati, Ohio

When I realized the young men of Walnut Grove Youth Correctional Center have not been forgotten (See story in Winter 2010 issue of the *SPLC Report*.), it brought tears to my eyes. I have a son

there, and our lives have been turned upside down. He is getting locked down sometimes 23/24 hour a day. When he speaks of the conditions such as fighting and mistreatments, all I can do is cry. A mother's worst nightmare is to hear her child calling out for help, and there's nothing she can do. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

V.F.
Holly Springs, Mississippi

I just watched Mark Potok on MSNBC Countdown, and the appearance and recent events [shootings in Tucson] reminded me how much I admire the work you are doing and the potential risks that might be incurred as you protect our country against hate groups and other threats. Thanks for your great work, and I'm happy to offer even a token of support.

P.R.
Cookeville, Tennessee

I donate \$10 a month to SPLC. Thank you, thank you, thank you for using the money so well. When I turned on the news Saturday evening, I was very happy to see Mr. Potok on

Countdown taking about the shootings in Tucson. The U.S. public needs to know about the campaigns and individuals who threaten our peace, justice and safety. Again, thank you.

K.B.
Rochester, New York

I just finished the video *Bullied* in my "Participation in Government" class. This was one of the most powerful films I have ever shown in class. You could have heard a pin drop in my room the entire time it was in progress. Even as the credits played, it was more than apparent that my students were taking the extra time to process the message of the presentation. Tomorrow, they will discuss various strategies that could be employed by our district to ensure that all students feel safe in our school.

I was completely impressed with the content and impact *The Children's March* had on my students. When I did not think that it could be possible for the SPLC to create an even better documentary, you did! Thank you so very much!

J.M.
Otego, New York

FIGHTING HATE

SPLC report warns against xenophobic immigration laws

Across the country, harsh anti-immigrant laws have left communities burdened with millions of dollars in legal expenses, inflamed racial tensions and devastated businesses, according to an SPLC report warning communities about the consequences of such laws.

The report — *When Mr. Kobach Comes to Town: Nativist Laws & the Communities They Damage* — examines the impact of these laws, which have been promoted by national nativist organizations that want to severely limit immigration. Despite their popularity among these groups — and the millions of dollars spent by local governments to defend these laws in court — almost every judicial decision so far has gone against them.

Communities struggle with legal costs

One community, faced with skyrocketing legal costs, had to raise property taxes. Another was forced to cut personnel and special events and even outsource its library. Only one had even a small part of its ordinance upheld in the courts.

The four towns and one state examined in the report also saw a crisis in race relations as conflicts between Latino immi-

grants and mostly white natives escalated. Latinos reported being threatened, shot at, subjected to racial taunts and more. Angry protests and counter-protests have rocked one town after another. Pro-immigrant activists have been threatened with notes that promise to “shed blood” to “take back” communities. In some communities, business districts have largely collapsed.

These laws have been promoted and defended by former law professor and recently elected Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach. Kobach also played a leading role in drafting Arizona’s controversial anti-immigrant statute, S.B. 1070.

“Kris Kobach is the Pied Piper of the anti-immigration movement,” said Mark Potok, director of the SPLC’s Intelligence Project, which produced the new report. “Towns and states that are frustrated by illegal immigration have responded to his siren song, but they find out soon enough that

he will lead your community over a financial and social cliff. Almost every place that has adopted his laws has faced huge legal bills and an outbreak of ugly racial tensions.”

For the better part of the past six years, Kobach has been chief legal counsel to the Immigration Reform Law Institute, the legal arm of the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR). The SPLC lists FAIR as a hate group because of its promotion

of white nationalism and its longstanding ties to prominent white supremacists.

In addition to the Arizona statute, Kobach helped write and defend nativist ordinances in Hazleton, Pa.; Valley Park, Mo.; Farmers Branch, Texas; and Fremont, Neb.

The town of Hazleton has run up \$2.8 million in legal costs to defend its ordinance. Farmers Branch is reported to owe \$3.7 million in legal fees. And Fremont raised its property taxes in anticipation of \$750,000 in legal expenses.



SPLC's new 26-page report warns of the cost to communities that implement anti-immigrant laws.

Hate groups reflect extremist growth

Continued from page 1

antigovernment “Patriot” movement. These conspiracy-minded organizations, which see the federal government as their primary enemy, gained more than 300 new groups — a jump of more than 60 percent. Their numbers increased to 824 groups in 2010 from 512 a year earlier.

The only higher prior count of Patriot groups came in 1996 when the SPLC found 858 groups. The movement’s recent resurgence can be at least partly attributed to the furious rhetoric from the right aimed at the nation’s first black president — a man who has come to represent, to at least some Americans, the ongoing changes in the racial makeup of the country.

“Nativist extremist” groups — organizations that go beyond mere advocacy of restrictive immigration policy to actually confront or harass suspected immigrants or their employers — saw their numbers increase to 319 in 2010, up 3 percent from 309 the year before.

Taken together, these three strands of the radical right — the hatemongers, the nativist extremists and the antigovernment zealots — increased from

1,753 groups in 2009 to 2,145 in 2010, a 22 percent rise. That followed a 2008-2009 increase of 40 percent.

Growing terror threats

Meanwhile, there are growing signs that the extremist movement is producing significant acts of terrorism.

In an 11-day period this January, a neo-Nazi was arrested headed for the Arizona border with a dozen homemade grenades; a terrorist bomb attack on a Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade in Spokane, Wash., was averted after police dismantled a sophisticated anti-personnel weapon; and a man who officials said had a long history of antigovernment activities was arrested in a car filled with explosives outside a packed mosque in Dearborn, Mich.

That’s in addition to the shooting of U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords in Arizona, an attack that left six dead in January. Giffords’ assailant appeared to be severely mentally ill, but he also seemed to have absorbed certain ideas from the radical right, including the notion that the federal government is evil.

Other kinds of radical activity also are on the rise. Since the murders last May of two West Memphis, Ark., police officers by two men from the so-called “sovereign citizens” movement, police from around the country have contacted the SPLC to report what one detective in Kentucky described as a “dramatic increase” in sovereign activity.

Sovereign citizens, who, like militias, are part of the larger Patriot movement, believe that the federal government has no right to tax or regulate them and, as a result, often come into conflict with police and tax authorities.

Ideas infiltrate mainstream

Extremist ideas have increasingly infiltrated the political mainstream. Already this year, state legislators have offered up a raft of proposals originating from the radical right.

There also are new attempts by nativist forces to roll back birthright citizenship, which grants automatic citizenship to all children born in the U.S. Such laws have been introduced this year in Congress, and a coalition of state legislators is promising to do the same in their states.

INTELLIGENCE BRIEFS

Vigilante group leader sentenced to death in Arizona murders

TUCSON, Ariz. — Concluding a three-week trial that exposed the most unsavory side of Arizona’s militant border vigilante movement, a jury found Shawna Forde guilty of murder for the May 2009 killings of a Latino man and his 9-year-old daughter in the border town of Arivaca, Ariz. On Feb. 22, it sentenced her to death, a decision binding on the judge hearing the case.

Forde, head of the Minuteman American Defense, and two accomplices planned the May home invasion because they thought they would find drugs and cash to fund their group’s operation. The three broke into the victims’ trailer, where one shot Paul Flores, his wife and their daughter Brisenia. The wife survived.

The two accomplices are to be tried separately this spring.

FBI investigating MLK Day bomb

SPOKANE, Wash. — The FBI continues to investigate as an act of domestic terrorism a potentially deadly bomb found along the planned route of a large downtown march here on the Jan. 17 Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday. Experts in Virginia are analyzing the device, which contained metal pellets covered in a possibly poisonous chemical, news reports said. An FBI spokesman described the bomb as “capable of killing or injuring multiple people.”

The bomb, partly concealed by two T-shirts and stored in a Swiss Army brand backpack, was found on a bench by sanitation workers less than an hour before the planned start of the march. The march went on but was rerouted.

The inland Northwest area surrounding Spokane and encompassing nearby northern Idaho was once home to followers of Richard Butler, a white supremacist and Aryan Nations leader who spent more than two decades trying to establish a white homeland. Butler died in 2004 after losing his 20-acre Aryan Nations compound in an SPLC lawsuit. He lost many of his followers, too.

Police arrest man in apparent mosque bombing attempt

DEARBORN, Mich. — A 63-year-old southern California man who reportedly has a long history of antigovernment activities was arrested Jan. 24 in a car laden with explosives outside of one of the nation’s largest mosques. More than 500 members of the mosque were

attending a funeral service at the time.

Police said Roger Stockham was arrested in the parking lot of the Islamic Center of America, where he had apparently driven from California in a vehicle filled with M-80s and other illegal explosives. He was arraigned on charges of making a terrorist threat and possessing explosives with unlawful intent.

The apparent anti-Islam terror plot comes after a year of increasing hatred directed at Muslims in America. That was most obvious in August, when a national controversy erupted over a planned Islamic center in Manhattan.

Dearborn is home to one of the country’s largest Muslim communities.

Congressman invites neo-Confederate to testify

WASHINGTON — On Feb. 9, U.S. Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas) hosted his first hearing as chairman of the House subcommittee that oversees the Federal Reserve, the nation’s central bank. Paul, an opponent of the Fed, in the past has called for its abolition.

One of the witnesses invited to testify was Thomas DiLorenzo, a longtime activist in the neo-Confederate hate group, League of the South (LOS). The LOS advocates for a second Southern secession and a society dominated by “Anglo-Celts.”

DiLorenzo is an economics professor at Baltimore’s Loyola College, but his life work appears to be rewriting the history of the Civil War and Lincoln’s role in it. He argues that Lincoln was a paragon of wickedness whose secret intent was to destroy states’ rights and build a massive federal government.

White nationalist group cancels conference

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — A white nationalist organization called off a conference planned for here in early February, saying it was unable to find a site for its event after its original host location, the Sheraton Charlotte Airport Hotel, canceled its reservation, citing the group’s “extremely controversial views.”

The conference planned by *American Renaissance* magazine said it was considering legal action against the city, claiming an elected official was behind efforts to deny it a venue for the meeting.

American Renaissance is a Virginia-based magazine of “racial-realist thought” listed as a hate group by the SPLC.

SEEKING JUSTICE

Use of pepper spray on schoolchildren targeted

J.W. was walking down a hallway at Woodlawn High School in Birmingham, Ala., when he saw two students scuffling.

As other students gathered, the school's police officers arrived and doused the two students with pepper spray — a chemical weapon marketed as “the most intense, incapacitating agent available today,” the type an officer might use on a violent, out-of-control criminal.

The officers yelled at the rest of the students to leave. Then, without warning, one of them began spraying the onlookers. Students screamed and ran away.

J.W.'s eyes and nose began to burn. He began coughing uncontrollably as the chemical entered his throat. The officer didn't bother to determine if any students were injured or required help. None received medical attention.

Police enforce basic discipline

The use of chemical weapons on schoolchildren might seem shocking to most. But it's all too routine in Birmingham, where school resource officers — police officers employed by the city and invited into the schools by the Birmingham Board of Education — have been allowed to enforce basic school discipline with canisters of pepper spray.

The school's student body is 96 percent African American.

Teachers and principals have even handed over minor and mundane discipline matters to these officers. The results have

been devastating. Rather than being sent to the principal's office for typical teenage misbehavior, some students have found themselves gasping for air as their eyes burned and welled with tears from a blast of pepper spray. Adults in these schools have even taunted students and celebrated the pepper-spraying of teens.

SPLC sues to stop use of pepper spray

The SPLC filed suit in December to stop the use of pepper spray. The federal lawsuit accuses the school system and police of violating the students' constitutional rights.

“What kind of school system allows the entry of armed police officers who pepper-spray its students? One with a serious illness. One that needs to re-examine its ultimate purpose for existence — educating and protecting its students,” said Ebony Glenn Howard, the SPLC attorney leading the case.

The lawsuit — filed after the city school board refused to address the issue when it was raised by the SPLC — details how pepper spray is used against children who pose no threat to themselves or others. Some children were merely in the wrong place at the wrong time. Others were accused of engaging in normal but non-dangerous adolescent misbehavior.

Some students were even sprayed while they were subdued. For example, a female high

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SEEKING JUSTICE

Forestry workers cheated of wages collecting pay in SPLC settlement

Hundreds of guestworkers who were cheated out of the wages they earned planting trees for an Arkansas-based forestry company are receiving their part of a \$2.3 million settlement agreement the SPLC obtained on their behalf.

Standards Act and the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act to ensure workers are not cheated out of future wages.

Superior's guestworkers were recruited from Mexico and Guatemala through the H-2B

pany labor recruiter showed up at a meeting in Mexico between plaintiff lawyers and workers interested in the lawsuit — violating a court order and intimidating workers who might join the lawsuit. That incident led the court to punish Superior by barring it from presenting evidence to dispute the workers' claims for damages.

“I feel very happy that the lawsuit ended and will benefit everyone,” said Jose Rosiles, a plaintiff in the case. “I thank all the attorneys that helped us. I wish I could personally thank those that I never met. I hope that all their effort will help all the people that in the future will go and work in the U.S.A.”

Unlike U.S. citizens, guestworkers do not enjoy the most fundamental protection of a competitive labor market — the ability to change jobs if they are mistreated. Instead, they are bound to the employers who “import” them. If guestworkers complain about abuses, they face deportation, blacklisting or other retaliation.

Federal law and U.S. Department of Labor regulations provide some basic protections to H-2 guestworkers, but they exist mainly on paper. Government enforcement of their rights is almost non-existent. Private attorneys typically won't take up their cause.

The SPLC's 2007 report *Close to Slavery* documented rampant exploitation of guestworkers.



Brothers Jose Hernandez Espina (left) and Oscar Hernandez Espina recently received their share of back wages under a settlement agreement. Despite intimidation by their employer, the two provided valuable assistance to SPLC lawyers who sued Superior Forestry Service Inc.

Approximately 2,200 workers are eligible to get money from the settlement with Superior Forestry Service Inc. The agreement, reached last year, is one of the largest ever under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act.

“We are very pleased these workers are finally being compensated for their hard work,” said Jim Knoepp, an attorney with the SPLC's Immigrant Justice Project.

The company also agreed to abide by the Fair Labor

guestworker visa program to plant pine seedlings throughout the southeastern United States. From 2000 to 2006, they regularly worked more than 40 hours a week, but they said their paychecks from the company simply didn't reflect what they were owed. The SPLC and other immigrant advocates filed the class action lawsuit in 2006.

Superior was held in contempt of court three times during the litigation. The company was most recently held in contempt in July 2009 after a com-

TEACHING TOLERANCE

Using social media to teach tolerance, promote social justice

How explosive is the growth in social networking among teenagers?

A recent Pew Research Center report showed that 73 percent of teens between the ages of 12 and 17 use social networking. That is up from 55 percent just four years ago, and high school girls are the biggest users.

Yet many schools still choose to dismiss the importance of social media. That's why *Teaching Tolerance* magazine devoted three articles in its latest issue to the impact of social media on teaching social justice.

SPLC recognizes the impact

“Social media like Facebook and Twitter touch on so many issues that are important to educators — privacy, diversity, building empathy, social learning and equal opportunity,” said *Teaching Tolerance* Director Maureen Costello.

“Schools must show kids how to use social media in healthy ways to maintain a stake in this conversation.”

Parents and teachers alike are often inclined to shut



Spring 2011 issue of *Teaching Tolerance*

down social media, especially in school settings. Their concerns — particularly about the dangers of cyberbullying — cannot be taken lightly. But

closing the social media door is likely to open many windows.

“People connect — that's what we do,” says Pam Rutledge, director of the Media Psychology Resource Center. “That's a biological function, not an aberration. The desire to grow up and do these adult things overrides caution. It's not pathological. It's normal teen behavior.”

And like it or not, using social media is now an essential skill that is important for getting into college, finding a job and collaborating with others in an “always connected” world. Rather than think of social media as an after-school diversion, teachers need to find ways to interact with students using the media they rely on daily.

Some savvy educators have made social media an integral part of their classrooms.

“We show teachers using social media for everything

from writing a class assignment to learning a foreign language,” Costello says. “Social media can add to student engagement on just about any topic.”

Teachers use innovative methods

Access to social media — and technology in general — is uneven, at best, among the nation's school districts. Some have state-of-the-art computers and information technology teachers. Others struggle with hand-me-down hardware and whatever free downloads they can muster.

But this “digital divide,” *Teaching Tolerance* reports, is no longer as vast as it once was. Many teachers working with low-income students get around the hardware deficits by finding innovative ways to use hand-held devices like smart phones.

“Ten years ago, it was thought [disadvantaged kids]

were digitally unengaged,” said S. Craig Watkins, associate professor at the University of Texas at Austin and author of *The Young and the Digital*. “Now we know the opposite is true: They're even more engaged than their advantaged peers.”

And that engagement is an encouraging sign. But educators point out that smart phones are no substitute for well-trained teachers using modern equipment in schools.

“For kids to be given a fair shake in a modern economy, they are going to have to be computer literate,” said Aaron Fowles, a Memphis teacher with a lot of experience salvaging computers for his students. “Kids who aren't [computer literate] will be at a terrible disadvantage, especially America's poor children. And for many of them, school is the only place they'll have the chance to learn it.”

Unwavering commitment to justice SPLC's 1972 landmark lawsuit opened door for black troopers

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the SPLC, founded by Alabama lawyers Morris Dees and Joe Levin to ensure that the promises of the civil rights movement became a reality for all.

Our work is not done. The challenges we face in the 21st century are difficult and complex. But the anniversary — to be celebrated at our offices in Montgomery on April 30 — gives us the opportunity to review our landmark achievements and lay the groundwork for the years ahead.

Record of accomplishments

In the decades since its beginning, the SPLC has shut down some of the nation's most dangerous hate groups by winning crushing, multimillion-dollar jury verdicts on behalf of their victims. It has dismantled institutional racism in the South; reformed barbaric prison practices; shattered barriers to equality for women, children and the disabled; and protected low-wage workers from abuse.



Morris Dees, Richard Cohen and a dedicated staff work for justice.

SPLC 40 Celebrating a Record of Success Affirming our Commitment to Justice Charting a Course for the Future

The SPLC also has reached out to the next generation with Teaching Tolerance, a program that provides educators with free classroom resources that teach students to respect others and nurture inclusive school environments.

Throughout this year, the *SPLC Report* will highlight the most important victories,

milestones and accomplishments from each decade of the SPLC's history, beginning with the 1970s. Each of these events is not only a reminder of the SPLC's dynamic history but evidence of our unwavering commitment to promote and protect our nation's most cherished ideals by standing up for those who have no other champions.

The Decade of the '70s



PENNY WEAVER

1971 Morris Dees and Joe Levin launch the SPLC as a nonprofit organization. Civil rights activist Julian Bond is named as the first president; thousands of committed individuals respond with financial support.

1972 The SPLC wins a federal lawsuit challenging Alabama's at-large system of electing state legislators, on the basis that it dilutes African-American voting power. The U.S. Supreme Court affirms the decision, and in 1974, 17 African Americans are elected to the state Legislature.

1972 The SPLC launches a 23-year court battle that forces the Alabama Department of Public Safety — the all-white state trooper force that had been used to enforce segregation — to hire and promote black troopers. (See story *this page*.)

1973 The U.S. Supreme Court upholds the SPLC's victory in the first successful sex discrimination case against the federal government, *Frontiero v. Richardson*. The Court rules the Department of Defense cannot grant certain benefits to dependents of servicemen but not to those of servicewomen.

1975 After SPLC attorneys uncover evidence not produced during their trial, three African-American men awaiting execution in North Carolina — known as

the Tarboro Three — are freed almost two years after being wrongfully convicted of raping a white woman.

1975 SPLC co-founder Morris Dees spearheads a successful defense for Joanne Little, a black inmate accused of murdering a white guard in a North Carolina jail. Little claimed self defense, saying the guard, who was found in her cell without his pants, had tried to rape her.

1976 A federal court rules Alabama prisons are "wholly unfit for human habitation" and orders precedent-setting reforms in the SPLC lawsuit *Pugh v. Locke*. SPLC attorneys work for more than a decade to end the unconstitutional conditions.

1977 Following an SPLC lawsuit, U.S. officials withdraw regulations that allowed the forced sterilization of poor, black women in the South. The case, *Relf v. Weinberger*, was filed after two mentally disabled sisters, ages 12 and 14, were surgically sterilized when their illiterate mother agreed to what she thought would be birth control shots.

1977 The U.S. Supreme Court opens the door for women to be hired for law enforcement jobs traditionally held by men after ruling in favor of the SPLC in *Dothard v. Rawlinson*. The SPLC represented two women who were refused positions as a correctional officer and state trooper because they fell short of weight and height requirements that had no relationship to job performance.

Alabama's all-white state trooper force long symbolized the entrenched system of oppression in the South.

When Gov. George C. Wallace promised "segregation forever" in 1963, the state troopers stood with him.

When civil rights activists attempted to cross Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge on a march to Montgomery to promote voting rights in 1965, club-wielding troopers beat them back.

And despite the victories of the civil rights movement, the Alabama State Troopers remained an all-white force in the early 1970s.

Blacks could be hired as janitors for the Alabama Department of Public Safety, but they were not allowed to be a state trooper.

It took a landmark federal lawsuit by the Southern Poverty Law Center to pierce this bastion of white supremacy. The litigation launched in 1972, the year after the SPLC's founding, lasted more than two decades in the courts but brought lasting change to the heart of Dixie.

Black man now leads troopers

Now, for the first time, Alabama has a black man heading the once-feared state police force. Hugh McCall, a department veteran who was named its director in January, rose through the ranks after being in the first cadet class that included blacks.

"This was an affirmative action success story," said SPLC President Richard Cohen, who argued the case before the U.S. Supreme Court. "It was also an

for a state trooper position. As a remedy for the obvious discrimination, a federal judge ordered the agency to hire one black trooper for every white trooper hired until blacks made up 25 percent of the trooper force.

State officials resisted the ruling in every way possible.

First, they imposed a virtual ban on hiring to preserve the all-white force. Then they tried to force newly hired blacks off the force by making it difficult for them to complete their training and by subjecting them to unfair disciplinary practices. To keep black officers at the bottom rung of the trooper force, officials refused to implement fair promotions.

SPLC continued to fight

SPLC attorneys continued to fight on behalf of the black troopers, taking the state to court time and again. In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld an order that one black trooper be promoted for every white trooper — as long as qualified applicants were available — until the state developed a fair promotion plan. It was the first time the Supreme Court approved a race-conscious promotion plan.

After the SPLC's victory in the Supreme Court, state officials decided to end their resistance and work with the SPLC to make the trooper force a model for the nation. The case finally ended in 1995. Sixteen years later, blacks comprise more than 24 percent of the Alabama Department of Public Safety's total arresting officers. The state's black population is



BETTMANN/CORBIS

Alabama state troopers beat civil rights marchers at the Edmund Pettus Bridge in March 1965.

employment discrimination case where everyone won. This case opened opportunities for white as well as black troopers because it created a promotion system based on merit rather than favoritism."

Judge orders integration

The case was filed on behalf of Phillip Paradise, a black man who was not allowed to apply

26.3 percent, according to 2009 U.S. Census estimates.

"I guess, for a lack of better words, you were on a level playing field," McCall said of the reforms brought by the case. "Once everybody was on the same level playing field for promotional opportunities and testing, then it allowed you a better opportunity to be promoted."

Continued on page 8

What's in a name?

When the SPLC was founded in 1971, it was a small civil rights law firm handling public interest cases that primarily benefited minorities and the poor — a specialty that, at the time, was known as "poverty law." Because most of its cases were in the South, founders Morris Dees and Joe Levin called their firm the Southern Poverty Law

Center. Over time, the SPLC expanded to what it is today: a dynamic organization that not only litigates civil rights cases on behalf of the powerless but one that also investigates hate groups, produces tolerance educational materials and engages in other activities to promote social and racial justice. Serious consideration was given to

changing the SPLC's name to better reflect its current mission, but in the end, the SPLC leaders decided that it was best to stick to the moniker that people recognize.



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Tribute Gifts continued on page 8

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MBJ1103SRTRB

SPLC supporter lived life of peaceful advocacy

Helga Herz led a life devoted to peace and equality. She so strongly believed in the SPLC's mission — to seek justice and, above all, promote tolerance — that she included the organization in her will. When she passed away at 97 in February 2010, Herz left a legacy that embodies her personal philosophy of advocacy and activism.

Herz had a sincere, unyielding faith that one person can change the world. Her mother's personal sacrifice in 1965 reinforced that conviction. When she was 82, Alice Herz, also a lifelong peace activist, felt the anti-Vietnam War demonstrations were having no influence. She decided extreme action was the only hope of shaking public opinion and changing the course of events.

In a public plaza in Detroit, Alice immolated herself, following the example of Buddhist monks who also burned themselves alive in protest of wartime activities in Vietnam. Alice was the first activist in the United States to conduct immolation — she died within 10 days — but later that year two others immolated themselves in protest of the war. In her final letter to her daughter, Alice wrote, "Do not cry, and do not despair." She wrote that she acted out of hope, and hope alone.

"My mother took this action fully convinced of a mission," Herz later wrote. Her mother had always lived a politically aware life, recognizing the violent

implications of Hitler's rise to power in their native Germany. Her keenness allowed her and her daughter to escape persecution for their Jewish ancestry by immigrating first to France and then to the United States.

Herz later saw her mother's consciousness in the SPLC's efforts to stop social injustice — work that often places the organization at the vanguard of civil rights litigation in the U.S.

Herz and her mother eventually settled in Detroit. Helga took a job in the city's library system, which she fondly recalled as "an indispensable service to the development of the country and promotion of education." They were members of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and participated in other pacifist organizations.

After retiring from the public library in 1978, Herz headed the library at the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies at Wayne State University, where her work is now being compiled as the Helga Herz Peace Archives. She received the Spirit of Detroit Award and other accolades for her tireless volunteer work.

"Helga was adamant that the SPLC be a part of her will," said her niece, Diane Herz. "Your mission is so different from other organizations and directly centered on her concerns for equality."

Today, Diane Herz is also a supporting member of the SPLC, carrying on her family's commitment.



Helga Herz

MARY GRACE LONG

Scroll of Remembrance

The Southern Poverty Law Center pays tribute to the memory of deceased supporters who included the SPLC in their wills or other planned gifts. The SPLC gratefully acknowledges their bequests, received from January 1, 2010, through January 31, 2011.

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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 SPLC.

For information about the many planned giving opportunities available at the SPLC — 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 SPLC 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

SPLC welcomes new board members

The SPLC has added to its board of directors two talented individuals with valuable expertise to help guide the organization. Andrew Fredman, a managing partner at a private investment firm, attended his first meeting in April 2010. Ellen Sudow, a lawyer with a wide range of experience in the public, private and nonprofit sectors, joined the board in October.

Stepping down from active board membership was Pat Clark, who had served since 1991. She remains associated with the board as an emeritus member.

Fredman has had a keen interest in the SPLC's work for

more than 20 years, having made his first contribution to its work while a college student. Other interests include advising a college preparatory school and serving on the Dean's Advisory Council at Tulane University.

Sudow has taught at Antioch Law School and practiced employment, communications, family and consumer law. She also worked for a congressional committee as well as for the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Sudow has



Andrew Fredman



Ellen Sudow

founded, chaired and served on numerous nonprofit boards, with a focus on disadvantaged and LGBT youths.

"We're incredibly fortunate to have Andrew and Ellen join our board," said SPLC President Richard Cohen.

Use of pepper spray on children targeted

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school student, who was 5-foot-2 and 120 pounds, was sprayed in November 2009 as she was held by a school employee who stood almost 6 feet tall and weighed about 200 pounds. She was also sprayed a year earlier as a faculty member held her. Another girl was sprayed as she was being held down by five grown men in August 2009.

The use of chemical weapons against students is an example of the harsh school discipline practices that the SPLC is challenging in states across the Deep South. It's one of the many factors pushing children out of school — leaving them unprepared for the future and more likely to enter

the criminal justice system. Last year, hundreds of students were arrested in the Birmingham schools. Virtually all of those arrests were for petty offenses.

Serious health effects

Individuals exposed to pepper spray are at risk for serious health effects, ranging from temporary loss of vision or blurred vision to blistering of the eyes and skin. They can also experience life-threatening effects, such as inflammation and swelling of the throat, that restrict the size of the airway and limit the amount of oxygen entering the lungs.

This is a special concern for African-American students.

Government statistics show that African-American children have a five times higher death rate due to asthma-related complications.

LaTonya Stearnes, the mother of three Birmingham schoolchildren, recounted the use of pepper spray — sometimes referred to by the brand name Mace — on two of her daughters.

"I sent them there to get an education and I expected the school would protect them," she said. "Then my older daughter was maced. She wasn't a danger to herself or anybody else. It was completely unjustified. And, when my younger daughter saw her sister get maced and ran to help her, she, too, was exposed to the Mace. This needs to be stopped."

Lawsuit opened door for troopers

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Fresh out of high school in 1980, McCall was in Alabama's first trooper cadet class that included blacks.

"I don't know if I was looking at the court decision at that time more than a job opportunity," he said.

But McCall took the opportunity and climbed through the ranks. He eventually became chief of the Alabama Bureau of Investigation, where he directed high-profile criminal investigations. This past January, Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley appointed McCall as the state's public safety director. Today, McCall oversees 1,500 employees and a \$180 million budget.

the basis of their ability was the goal of the SPLC lawsuit.

Appointment highlights transformation

"Hugh McCall rose to the top of the force on his own talents and experience," said SPLC founder Morris Dees. "His appointment highlights the incredible transformation that has taken place in the department. He's a symbol of the progress being made in Alabama."

That progress is felt throughout Alabama as state troopers patrol the roadways.

"We provide the same protection for everyone without discrimination," McCall told the

Agency opens doors, provides opportunity

He also recognizes the remarkable change the department has experienced. An agency that was once used to enforce a regime of racism has since opened its doors to all candidates.

"Unfortunately, it took the court order ... for African Americans to be hired with the Department of Public Safety," he said. "The department has maintained, I would say, good practices of promoting the most qualified candidates."

Giving everyone the opportunity to rise through the ranks on



Today, Alabama state troopers are led by their first African-American director, Hugh McCall.

Montgomery Advertiser shortly after being named public safety director. "Alabama has adapted to changing times, and I'm proud to say that I've done my part since becoming a trooper."

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