

# VIGILANTE JUSTICE!

Militias and  
"Common  
Law Courts"  
Wage War  
Against the  
Government

Congress OF THE United States  
begun and held at the City of New York, on  
Wednesday the fourth of March, one thousand seven hundred and eighty nine

THE Committee of members of the said House, having reported on their adopting the Constitution, expressed advice in order to prevent amendment  
in cases of its power, that further declaratory and restrictive clauses should be added: And as in reading the said Constitution, it was manifest to the Government will best secure the benefit and end of its institution  
**RESOLVED** by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, two thirds of both Houses  
concurring that the following Articles be proposed to the Legislatures of the several States, as amendments to the Constitution of the United States, all or any of which articles, when ratified by three fourths of the  
said Legislatures, be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the said Constitution, viz<sup>t</sup>

- ARTICLES in addition to, and amendment of, the Constitution of the United States of America, proposed by Congress, and ratified by the Legislatures  
of the several States pursuant to the first Article of the original Constitution
- Article the first.** After the first enumeration required by the first Article of the Constitution, there shall be one Representative for every thirty thousand, until the number shall amount to one hundred, after  
which the proportion shall be so regulated by Congress, that there shall not be less than one hundred Representatives, nor less than one Representative for every fifty thousand persons,  
until the number of Representatives shall amount to two hundred, after which the proportion shall be so regulated by Congress, that there shall not be less than two hundred Representatives,  
nor more than one Representative for every fifty thousand persons
- Article the second.** No law, requiring the execution of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened
- Article the third.** Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to  
assemble, and to petition the Government for redress of grievances
- Article the fourth.** A small regulated militia, being necessary to the security of the States, shall not be infringed
- Article the fifth.** No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner; but in time of war, to be prescribed by law
- Article the sixth.** The right of the people to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which  
district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory  
process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defence
- Article the seventh.** In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in  
any Court of the United States, except according to the rules of the common law
- Article the eighth.** Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted
- Article the ninth.** The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people
- Article the tenth.** The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people

ATTEST

Frederick Augustus Pickens, Speaker of the House of Representatives

John Adams, Vice President of the United States, and President of the Senate

John Beckley, Clerk of the House of Representatives  
James A. Smith, Secretary of the Senate

A publication of the Anti-Defamation League



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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

I. An ADL survey of today's anti-government extremists finds that armed militias, although fewer in number, continue to pose a significant threat of violence and disorder. Rumors of secretive militias abound but, not surprisingly, supporting evidence is scant. What is clear is that many militias now dodge the watchful eyes of the police and the press by holding small, unadvertised meetings in private homes and by no longer publicly identifying themselves as militias.

II. Militias have expanded in five states, remained relatively stable in about 20 states and declined elsewhere. But at the same time, the "common law court" movement, which seeks to replace our legal system with one of vigilante justice, is flourishing; many militiamen and their supporters are becoming involved in its pseudo-legal activities.

## "Common Law Courts"

III. The "common law court" activists' tactic of choice is to defy the legitimate institutions of government, especially their judicial and law enforcement arms, by replacing them with a parallel structure of their own creation. These pseudo-jurists render unenforceable judgments regarding genuine legal disputes and issue phony legal documents including property liens and criminal indictments, in an effort to intimidate or defraud their enemies.

IV. "Common law court" adherents use outlandish versions of American history and bizarre conspiracy theories to justify their activities. Many groups promote anti-Semitic views, including the notorious fraud that Jewish banking families own the Federal Reserve.

## Militia Violence

V. While militias have stagnated over the last 18 months, some of their members have been involved in scores of criminal acts. They have acquired illegal ammunition and bomb-making materials, planned or committed criminal acts of violence against Federal buildings or officials, and engaged in bitter, even deadly, confrontations with police officers. Their decreased numbers can largely be credited to stepped-up vigilance by law enforcement officials.

VI. The proclivity toward violence of the hard-core anti-government extremists remains firmly in place. This was recently demonstrated by the terrorist acts of two small bands of racist, anti-government, would-be revolutionaries. Their brand of extremist violence should cause concern because many militias are reportedly adopting their tactic of "leaderless resistance."

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## ossovers”

VII. Ever-increasing cross-fertilization between various strands of the anti-government extremist movement has begun to blur the differences that previously existed between them. Many activists have joined both militia and “common law court” groups, breaking down the boundaries altogether. The Republic of Texas, a San Antonio-based group that considers itself to be the true Lone Star State, represents the most comprehensive form of this “crossover” trend.

VIII. The growing tendency of anti-government extremists to broaden their activities and affiliations will likely result in a stronger, more effective overall movement.

IX. Several publications appealing to broad swatches of the movement serve as a bridge between different anti-government extremist groups by familiarizing extremists with the views and tactics of their fellow activists. It is also common for literature issued by one segment of the movement to surface, or be used as recruiting tools, among members of another faction.

## minal Activity

X. Right-wing anti-government extremists often view law enforcement agents as the foot soldiers in a Federal plot to impose tyranny. They refuse to recognize their authority, and reject any laws they deem to be intrusive. Their defiant stance has led to heated — and occasionally deadly — encounters with authorities on the local, state and Federal level.

XI. The anti-government militancy of the so-called Montana “Freemen” has inspired like-minded activists in at least 23 states to file bogus liens, pass phony checks, set up “common law courts” and deny the very legitimacy of the U.S. Government. Other anti-government extremists, unconnected to the Freeman, have also committed similar acts of fraud against private citizens and government institutions.

## cism and Anti-Semitism

XII. Anti-Semites and racists have found a comfortable home in segments of the anti-government extremist movement. Much of the movement’s activity is directed by groups that promote anti-Semitism and racism in addition to their more visible agitation against the government. Propaganda materials passed around at meetings, conventions, gun shows and over the Internet assert that Jews or Jewish institutions are co-conspirators in the “New World Order,” while classic anti-Semitic literature is hawked at militia and “common law court”-oriented events.

XIII. Ideas associated with the pseudo-religious, racist and anti-Jewish Christian Identity doctrine permeate many “common law court” documents and propaganda materials. In addition, a number of the Montana Freeman hold Christian Identity beliefs.

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XIV. While many anti-government extremists reject the blatant hatred espoused by neo-Nazi groups or the Ku Klux Klan, the movement allows more subtle bigots to use Jews, Blacks and other minorities as scapegoats for the nation's problems, both real and imagined.

## Conspiracies

XV. Militia and "common law court" ideologues insist that gun control legislation — especially the Brady Law and restrictions on assault weapons — are major components of a secret and evil government conspiracy to disarm and control the American people. They see an evil Federal Government working in league with the United Nations to strip Americans of their constitutional rights and impose a tyrannical "New World Order."

## Preparedness Expos

XVI. Anti-government extremists attempt to recruit sympathizers at gatherings called "Preparedness Expos." These shows primarily feature materials and paraphernalia related to survivalism, but many seminars and speeches presented at the expos are devoted to extremist politics and conspiracy theories. Recent expos featured Christian Identity literature and anti-Semitic tracts by hatemonger Eustace Mullins.

## Internet

XVII. The Internet is a potent new addition to the anti-government extremists' arsenal. This worldwide computer network is a very useful tool for pumping out propaganda, facilitating rapid, confidential communication among members and sympathizers while creating a "virtual" community of like-minded believers scattered around the country. Militias, "common law court" groups and their supporters run dozens of sites on the World Wide Web. Some militia or militia-oriented sites eagerly embrace racism and anti-Semitism.

## Political Activity

XVIII. Some anti-government extremists have been trying to acquire a mainstream image and political influence. Their efforts have been rewarded by several elected officials, who have conferred undue legitimacy upon the movement by expressing sympathy for the extremists' anti-government message, or by participating in militia or Christian Identity-oriented forums.

# Introduction

A new ADL survey of today's anti-government extremists finds that armed militias, although fewer in number, continue to pose a significant threat of violence and disorder. Rumors of secretive, underground militias abound, but, not surprisingly, supporting evidence is scant. What is clear is that movement leaders are advising activists to lie low, learn to use weapons at a firearms course rather than at a militia gathering, and keep their anti-government thoughts to themselves. Many militias now dodge the watchful eyes of the police and the press by holding small, unadvertised meetings in private homes, and by no longer publicly identifying themselves as militias.

In the wake of the April 1995 Oklahoma City bombing it seemed possible that there would be a massive mushrooming of armed militias, but the evidence

available indicates that the groups have expanded in only five states, remained relatively stable in about 20 states, and declined elsewhere. At the same time, an ADL survey reveals that many militiamen and their supporters are joining the fast-growing "common law court" movement, which seeks to replace our country's legal system with one of vigilante justice. "Common law courts" function in defiance of the authority of real courts, and have staged phony trials and issued bogus legal documents in 35 states across the country.


The "common law courts," in contrast to the militias, have more publicly agitated against state and Federal governments. The tactic of

choice of these pseudo-jurists is to defy the legitimate institutions of government, especially their judicial and law enforcement arms, by replacing them with a parallel structure of their own creation. Operating in bogus courts, they render unenforceable judgments regarding disputes that the complainants have already lost or would likely have lost in a genuine courtroom. "Common law" activists also issue phony legal documents including property liens, criminal indictments and declarations of "sovereignty" in an effort to intimidate or defraud their enemies. These reams of nonsensical paperwork feature pseudo-legal formulations they claim are based on precepts from

the Bible, the Magna Carta, the Constitution and other sources.

Like their counterparts in the militias, "common law court" adherents use outlandish ver-

sions of American history and bizarre conspiracy theories to justify their activities. They claim, for example, that the Federal Government suspended the Constitution in 1933 and that all laws passed since then are invalid. They declare themselves "sovereign citizens," answerable only to God and immune from state or Federal jurisdiction. Some offer a racist twist to this formulation, arguing that there are two classes of citizens: "Sovereign" white citizens, whose rights are God-given, and "Fourteenth Amendment" citizens, non-whites whose citizenship is granted only by the Fourteenth Amendment. Other groups promote a variety of anti-Semitic views, including the notorious fraud that Jewish banking families



***Many militiamen and their supporters are joining the fast-growing "common law court" movement, which seeks to replace our country's legal system with one of vigilante justice.***

own the Federal Reserve. Some of the movement's propaganda reflects the influence of the anti-Semitic pseudo-religious Christian Identity church.

The tactics of "common law courts" are played out to their fullest by members of the Republic of Texas (RoT), which claims that it, rather than the official state of Texas, constitutes the true Lone Star government. The Republic's activities are decided upon by a "President," "Secretary of State," "Secretary of Defense" and a "Chief Ambassador." The "Republic's" two "common law courts" hand down phony legal rulings and issue fraudulent legal documents. Leaders of the RoT say they want to take over the state's banking system and replace Texas's 254 county sheriffs with "officers" of their own. In the process, RoT members have filed thousands of bogus liens against public officials and private citizens, creating a nightmare of paperwork for the Texas legal system.


Fortunately, government officials and state legislators are now working to prevent these outbreaks of "paper terrorism" by enacting laws that address "common law court" activity.

As many as 11 states have considered such legislation. The Anti-Defamation League is doing its part: in 1996, the ADL Legal Affairs Department drafted and widely distributed a Model Statute for introduction into state legislatures intended to counteract the "common law courts'" destructive activities. ADL played a role in molding the bills now working their way through the Texas and New Jersey legislatures.

Militias may not have grown in size over the last 18 months, but many existing members, as well as other anti-government extremists, have been involved in hundreds of criminal acts.

Scores of militiamen have been arrested for crimes ranging from conspiracy to bomb Federal buildings, to hoarding or manufacturing illegal weapons, to assaulting a police officer. The current stagnation of the movement can largely be credited to increased vigilance by law enforcement officials.

While they have been cracking down on the illegal activities of anti-government extremists, Federal and state law enforcement officials have also demonstrated that they learned from the mistakes made at Waco and Ruby Ridge. In recent faceoffs with armed anti-government extremists, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and state police agencies have acted with patient resolve to prevent violent confrontations. The Federal Government and Congress have also demonstrated their willingness to correct any injustices that occurred in connection with the events at Waco and Ruby Ridge. Their efforts put the lie to one of the militias' chief rallying cries — that those two tragedies are evidence of the government's plans to impose a tyrannical "New World Order."



*Fortunately, government officials and state legislators are now working to prevent these outbreaks of "paper terrorism" by enacting laws that address "common law court" activity.*

Nevertheless, the anti-government extremism of the hard-core militias — fueled by a belief in outrageous conspiracy theories — remains firmly in place. Only recently the public witnessed the terror caused by two small bands of racist, anti-government, would-be revolutionar-



ies. These men, accused of – and in one instance, convicted of – committing scores of bank robberies and several bombings in Spokane, Washington, and across the Midwest, occupy the violent outer fringes of the movement. But their brand of extremist violence should cause concern because many militias are reportedly adopting their tactic of “leaderless resistance,” a strategy advising anti-government militants to avoid law enforcement detection by operating in tiny phantom cells.

As this report reveals, anti-government extremists continue to infect the American body politic. Disguised as “patriots” committed to the ideals of the Founding Fathers, these militiamen and “common law court” pseudo-jurists mock the democratic process and the citizens who abide by its rules. Their way leads not to an orderly change in government, but to anarchy and mob rule.

# "Crossovers"

The right-wing anti-government extremist movement is not monolithic; various factions traditionally express their opposition to government in different ways. Militia activists typically stockpile weapons and conduct paramilitary exercises in preparation for an eventual showdown with Federal officials. Members of "common law courts" oppose the government and its laws by operating a parallel legal system in which they conduct phony trials or issue bogus legal documents. The Montana Freemen and their associates across the country have printed and distributed thousands of fake money orders and checks in an effort to defraud government agencies and undermine the country's banking system.

But ever-increasing cross-fertilization between the groups has begun to blur these tactical differences and emphasize the opposition to government that is common to the ideology of every segment of the movement. In the past year, anti-government extremists devoted to one area of the movement have begun to familiarize themselves with the tactics of other factions. Many activists have broken down the boundaries altogether, by joining both militia and "common law court" groups. These dual-memberships are relatively widespread. It is estimated that in some parts of the country, as many as half of "common law court" members also belong to a militia. This trend, facilitated by today's technological advances in communication, is likely to persist.

The growing tendency among anti-government extremists to diversify their activities and affiliations should sound several alarm bells. A prime concern is that the many alliances being formed between activists are likely to energize and strengthen the movement and make it more dangerous. In addition, extremists are becoming more powerful because they are

broadening their arsenal of anti-government weapons. The current trend also threatens to expose more members of the movement to anti-Semitic and racist beliefs. Many militias have claimed to keep bigotry out of their ranks and may continue to do so. But their members are becoming increasingly active beyond the confines of the militia and are associating with other groups where anti-Semitism is more prevalent, like some "common law courts."

## Militias and "Common Law Courts" Converge

The "common law court"-inspired practice of filing bogus property liens has become popular among militiamen and other anti-government extremists. The practice has been labeled "paper terrorism" by legal authorities, who have witnessed the phony documents clogging the courts and draining government resources. It is favored by many extremists because they view it as a risk-free method of punishing their enemies — generally court officials, lawyers, politicians or police. County clerks are often unable to determine the veracity of a property lien, and the laws in most states provide no criminal penalties for filing bogus liens. The property owner, on the other hand, has to endure numerous legal and financial headaches.

In Ohio, several members of the Columbiana County Unorganized Militia have filed liens against public officials. One member, Randall Manley, issued liens against a dozen Columbiana County officials whom he held responsible for his earlier conviction on drug charges. County clerks have said they feel intimidated by the militia members who visit their offices to file such papers. They do not post their

names on their desks, to protect their identity and personal property, and when militiamen enter, the clerks discreetly telephone the sheriff's office. Similarly, Ilse Bailey, an assistant County Attorney in Kerr County, Texas, told the *American Statesmen* in April 1996 that local anti-government extremists have threatened county clerks who refuse to process their phony liens. Bailey estimated that 40 percent of her work time is wasted on bogus document filings.

Among the many anti-government extremists who have been active in both militia and "common law court" groups was Michael Hill, an Ohioan killed in a confrontation with police and celebrated in "Patriot" circles as a martyr for the cause (see "Criminal Activity"). In March 1995, Hill and several cohorts formed a "common law court" in Columbus, and Hill was appointed its "chief justice." He also conducted classes on "common law court" tactics on the side, and several of his "students" introduced him to the militia movement. Hill became the "chaplain" for the Monroe County chapter of the Ohio Unorganized Militia. His contacts in the movement also extended beyond his home state. He had reportedly attended a seminar led by Montana Freeman LeRoy Schweitzer, and three of the bogus checks issued by the Freemen were found in Hill's car at the time of his death.

"Our One Supreme Court in the Republic of Ohio," the "common law court" once run by Hill, has become popular with other anti-government extremists, including other militia members. Brenda Billingsley, the court's "marshal," is also the Franklin County representative of the Ohio Unorganized Militia. In July

1995, another member of the Ohio Unorganized Militia, Timothy Jackson, "transferred" a legitimate court case against him to

the "common law court." Jackson had been charged with failing to pay city income taxes for three years. "Our One Supreme Court" heard his case and "dismissed" it, after ruling that the city court had no jurisdiction over Jackson, because he is "a free character person, a sovereign of these United States of

America." He has since paid his taxes "under protest" and is trying to get the money back.

Oklahoma City bombing suspect Terry Nichols, who reportedly attended several militia meetings in Michigan, is also an adherent of "common law court" ideology. In 1993, Nichols was sued by Chase Manhattan Bank for attempting to pay credit card bills with phony "fractional reserve checks" issued by the Wisconsin-based Posse Comitatus spin-off, Family Farm Preservation. In court, Nichols refused to recognize the judge's jurisdiction over him, and offered pseudo-legal arguments and descriptions regularly used by "common law court" activists. "I'd like to say I'm here in proper person, specially appearing sui juris, not pro se. I'm a layman, natural person. I'm a common law citizen under threat, duress and challenge the jurisdiction of this court [sic]," Nichols announced.

John Kirk, one of the four Washington state anti-government extremists convicted in February 1997 on illegal weapons charges, has

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***Oklahoma City bombing suspect Terry Nichols, who reportedly attended several militia meetings in Michigan, is also an adherent of "common law court" ideology.***

also served as a magistrate in a "common law court" on Mercer Island. A phony legal document issued by the "court" in December 1994 and signed by Kirk imposed a \$170,000 fine against a local bank that had foreclosed on the mortgage of one of the "court's" members. The document declared that the plaintiff was a "de jure citizen" and not a "14th Amendment citizen," — a racist formulation used by some "common law court" activists to suggest that whites are endowed with God-given rights unavailable to African-Americans.

Herbert Crawford, an Arizona businessman, has been involved with the Montana Freeman and their associates, and is also active in the Arizona Township Association, a Tucson "common law court" group. Crawford attended a "common law" seminar delivered by California "lien queen" Elizabeth Broderick, and traveled in March 1996 to the Freeman compound to learn more. He left the ranch several days before an 81-day standoff began in March 1996 between the FBI and the Freeman. Crawford has used phony checks issued by Broderick and the Freeman to pay off credit card debts. In August 1996, Oregon authorities charged Crawford and four others with conspiring to operate a methamphetamine lab. He has attempted to derail related legal proceedings by issuing several "common law" documents.

## Lending Support

In the past year, as anti-government extremists wrangled with law enforcement agents, militia members crossed ideological and tactical lines to come to the aid of their fellow anti-government agitators. Most made it clear that their motives were pragmatic; they were angered by

what they perceived to be Federal aggression and wanted the "enemy" to be faced with a united front.

During the 81-day standoff between the Freeman and FBI agents, militia groups demonstrated varying degrees of support for the Montana extremists. On April 17, several weeks into the standoff, 20 militia activists from 11 states issued a "Declaration" defending the rights of the Freeman and bemoaning the "unlawful activity of Federal officers." The document warned FBI agents that an injury to any of the Freeman would "be considered an act of war against all the Citizens of all the States." The militiamen asserted that they were taking no position, however, on the racist, anti-Semitic and pseudo-legal beliefs of the Freeman.

Militiamen also churned out regular messages about the Freeman over fax networks and on the Internet. A series of bulletins sent in May by militia members in North Carolina updated readers on the status of negotiations between the Freeman and the FBI and offered up several bizarre theories about the FBI's plans. One speculated that the FBI had "been given the green light to conduct and use high-tech Terrorist . . . WARFARE against those inside [the Freeman compound]." In letters to recipients of the "Norwela" fax network, militiaman Jeff Randall of Alabama invited like-minded individuals to help him run a convoy of food and supplies up to the Freeman ranch.

Other militia hard-liners traveled to Montana in a show of support for the Freeman. Several members of the Ohio Unorganized Militia moved into a cabin located about an hour's drive from the Freeman compound and said they were closely monitoring developments. Farther away, Idaho-based "Freemen Patriots"

staged a rally for the Freemen in Lewistown, Montana, about 120 miles west of the Jordan ranch.

In the most extreme scenario, Stewart Waterhouse, an officer in the Kansas-based United States Constitutional Militia, ran a roadblock surrounding the Freemen compound and actually hid out with the Freemen for nearly a month. On several occasions, Federal agents observed him standing guard for the Freemen with a military assault rifle. Waterhouse is now being held on Federal charges related to these activities (see "Criminal Activity"). In a December 1996 letter to an Arkansas reporter covering his story, Waterhouse explained that:

The purpose of the militia is . . . to oppose tyranny in a runaway government. . . . Thus it was in our (militia) prerogative to demand and ensure a peaceful end to the "Freemen siege." . . . I did not support the Freemen liens, but I have no opinion as to whether the liens were lawful or legal. I also have no opinion whether the Freemen were guilty or innocent.


## Sharing Ideas

Several publications appealing to broad swathes of the movement, including *The Jubilee*, *Media Bypass*, and *The Free American*, serve as a bridge between different anti-government extremist groups by familiarizing extremists with the views and tactics of their fellow activists. Each publication features articles and advertisements on militia and "common law court"-related issues, and promotes numerous anti-government conspiracy theories. *The Jubilee* and *The Free American* also trumpet anti-Semitic views (see "Anti-Semitism").

It is also common for literature issued by one segment of the movement to surface, or even be distributed as recruiting tools, among members of another faction. Along the same lines, speakers considered gurus of the "common law court" movement have found a receptive audience among militia activists, and vice versa.

The Militia of Montana (M.O.M.), one of the country's largest suppliers of militia-related propaganda materials and survivalist equipment, also caters to "common law court" sympathizers. Its January 1996 catalog offers videotapes of "common law court" figure Eugene Schroder, longtime Posse Comitatus activist James Wickstrom, and a tape on the "common law"-related subject of the "Fully Informed Jury."

## MILITIA OF MONTANA



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HELP YOU**

The Militia of Montana catalog markets militia and "common law court" propaganda.

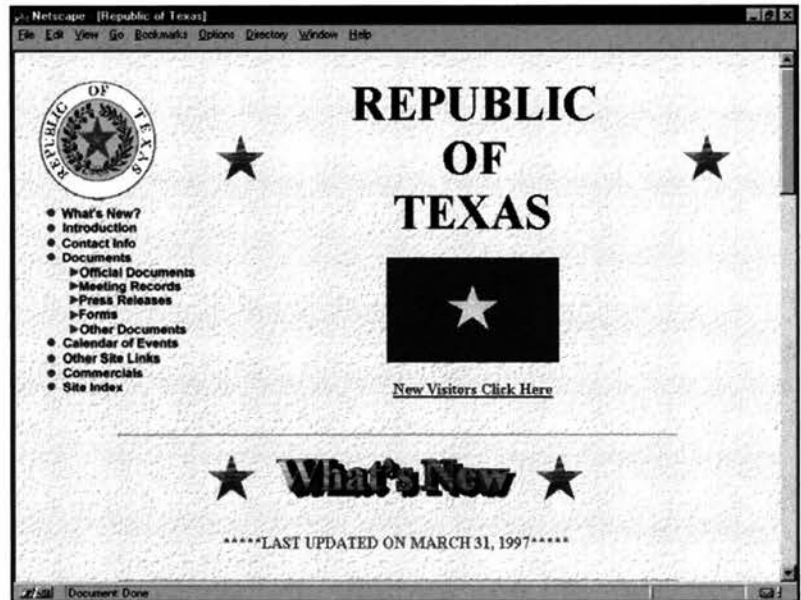
At a January 1996 militia meeting in San Diego, "common law court"-related literature was distributed, and videotapes of Montana Freeman LeRoy Schweitzer and Daniel Peterson and of Freeman associate Elizabeth Broderick were sold. A day earlier, these tapes were hawked at a San Diego "common law court" session.

In Washington State, anti-government activists have displayed sympathies for both militia and "common law court" rhetoric. In 1995, Snohomish County "common law court"-supporter Ben Sams helped bring Militia of Montana members to a meeting of the phony court. Many of those attending the January 1996 appearance of M.O.M.'s John Trochmann in Mount Vernon, Washington, turned out the following month for an informational session on "common law courts" delivered by Eugene Schroder in Snohomish County. Washington State Militia leader John Pitner attended Schroder's talk, and militia flyers were handed out to the crowd.

Eugene Schroder also addressed the October 1995 2nd National Command Seminar, a three-day meeting of 85 militia representatives from 11 states. The gathering was designed as a forum for militia leaders to coordinate training programs and to discuss joint political activities.

## Republic of Texas

The Republic of Texas, a San Antonio-based group that considers itself to be a true legal republic, represents the most extreme form of the cross-fertilization trend. Members of the RoT seem to employ nearly every tactic the



A page from the Republic of Texas Web site.

anti-government extremist movement has to offer.

The RoT has set up a "Provisional Government" which operates its own judicial system, with two "common law courts" that meet regularly, and has assembled small militia-type cells, which it calls its "defense forces." These forces are comprised primarily of former militia groups which have become absorbed into the RoT movement, including the Texas Constitutional Militia. Texas officials estimate that 12 such militias have joined the RoT's ranks.

While the RoT's anti-government activities may be performed on a grander scale than those of most in the "common law court" movement, they fit the same pattern. RoT members have filed hundreds of fraudulent liens and legal documents against Texas public officials, they have demanded that state banks relinquish their charters, and have filed a \$93 trillion claim against the Federal government. "Chief Ambassador" Richard McLaren has stated that

the RoT also plans to issue its own "treasury certificates."

McLaren has been particularly energetic in filing property liens. In May 1996, he was sent to jail after issuing scores of bogus liens against a Houston-based land title company and refusing to comply with a court order to stop. McLaren later agreed not to file additional documents against the company, but has repeatedly failed to appear in court in connection with the matter. In December, a warrant for McLaren's arrest was signed after he once again failed to show in court. Law enforcement agents stated in 1996 that they intended to serve the warrant, although McLaren warned that to do so would be "in violation of international law" and threatened to remove authorities from his property "with bodily force, if necessary."

McLaren's defiance prompted militia renegade Norm Olson, of the Northern Michigan Regional Militia, to send out E-mail messages

about the ongoing confrontation. "Militias across Texas are on high alert," he wrote. "This may prove to be the flashpoint of the whole Patriot struggle against the tyranny and oppression of the corrupt and de facto Federal Government." Olson also stated that he would continue to keep his militia friends up-to-date on the "crisis."

In June 1996, RoT member Michael Kearns was one of six men convicted in connection with a scheme selling bogus money orders under the auspices of an anti-government extremist group called U.S.A. First (see "Criminal Activity"). Kearns had publicized the phony certificates at local seminars and church gatherings, and used one of the money orders to buy a house that had been foreclosed by the government. Kearns later tried to pass a \$1 million bogus money order signed by Montana Freeman LeRoy Schweitzer and notarized by Schweitzer's cohort, Rodney Skurdal.

# Criminal Activity

For nearly three years, militia activists across the country have been preparing for a showdown with the U.S. Government by stockpiling weapons, conducting paramilitary training sessions and gathering survivalist paraphernalia. Some militia members have gone further, acquiring illegal ammunition and bomb-making materials, and even manufacturing explosives. Anti-government fervor, the movement's trademark, has inspired some militia members to plan or commit criminal acts of violence against Federal buildings or government officials and has provoked bitter, even deadly, confrontations with police officers.

In the last year alone, dozens of militia members were arrested or convicted for illegally acting upon their militant, conspiratorial beliefs. The crimes they committed often posed a threat to the lives of innocent Americans.

In October 1996, several members of the West Virginia-based Mountaineer Militia, including leader Ray Looker, were arrested in connection with an alleged plot to bomb an FBI fingerprint classification facility in Clarksburg, West Virginia. In November, they were indicted on charges of conspiracy to manufacture explosives, to transport the explosives across state lines, and to "target" the FBI center in the

event of a showdown between the militia and the government. Some of Looker's militia members believe that the Federal government is secretly building prison camps to house dissenters in the militia movement.

According to court records, Looker first chose the FBI building as a possible target at a June 1995 meeting of 26 county commanders from the Mountaineer and Pennsylvania Militias. James Rogers, a major in the Mountaineer Militia and a firefighter at the Clarksburg Fire Department, allegedly volunteered at the meeting to acquire the blueprints of the FBI center from the Fire Department's records. Federal agents say that Rogers later photographed the floor plans extensively and pieced them together to form a complete picture of the fingerprinting facility. Looker is charged with attempting to sell the pictures to an undercover agent posing as a broker for a Middle East terrorist organization.

Eight men and one woman in the Bellingham, Washington, area were charged in July 1996 with manufacture and possession of explosives, conspiracy, and transfer and possession of a machine gun. Four of the defendants were identified as members of the Bellingham-based Washington State Militia, including founder John Pitner. Another of the men, John Kirk,

has served as a "magistrate" in a "common law court" on Mercer Island, Washington. In January 1997, two of the defendants, Theodore Carter, a member of the Washington State Militia, and Richard Frank Burton, a Seattle-area anti-government activist, pleaded guilty to charges that they had conspired to build pipe bombs as part of a plot to assault or kill Federal officials. In February 1997, four additional

*Anti-government fervor, the movement's trademark, has inspired some militia members to plan or commit criminal acts of violence against Federal buildings or government officials and has provoked bitter, even deadly, confrontations with police officers.*



defendants, Kirk, Pitner and militia members Gary Kuehnol and Marlin Mack, were convicted on various illegal weapons and explosives charges. Sentencing is scheduled for May 16, 1997. The jury failed to reach a verdict on the Federal conspiracy charges after a week of deliberations, and a mistrial was declared. As of this writing, prosecutors have yet to decide whether to seek a new trial on the conspiracy charges.

An FBI informant who attended meetings with the defendants testified in court that they talked of preparing for a confrontation with the U.S. Government and United Nations forces. He further reported that the group practiced "instinctive shooting" using targets marked as Federal agents or U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno. Defense attorneys acknowledged in court that their clients had stockpiled weapons and traded advice on building pipe bombs.

Ten members of the Viper Militia, a Phoenix, Arizona, group, have pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy to provide weapons instruction and a variety of Federal weapons charges. They are set to be sentenced on March 18, 1997. Charles Knight and Christopher Floyd, two additional Viper members who have not pleaded guilty, face similar charges and are scheduled to be tried in Spring 1997.

Ray Lampley, the leader of the now-defunct Oklahoma Constitutional Militia, and two associates were convicted in April 1996 of conspiring to bomb such targets as the Houston office of the Anti-Defamation League, the Southern Poverty Law Center, gay bars and abortion clinics. Lampley was sentenced in July to 11 1/2 years in prison. Many militia activists believe that ADL and the SPLC are working in league with the United Nations and the Federal government to impose the "New World Order."

In addition to his militia ties, Lampley has been associated with the anti-Semitic Christian Identity movement. He visited the Identity settlement Elohim City twice — once after the Oklahoma City bombing. Robert Millar, the leader of Elohim City, has reportedly claimed that Lampley "was supportive of us."

Three members of the 112th Georgia Militia, including the group's leader, Robert Starr, were convicted in November 1996 of conspiracy to possess explosive devices, conspiracy to use a weapon in a violent crime and possession of illegal weapons. They had intended to use the explosives — which Federal agents found buried on Starr's property — in a war against the Federal Government. The bombs were to be used on roads, bridges, power lines and against U.S. officials.

## Confrontations with Law Enforcement

Militia members often view law enforcement agents as the foot soldiers in a Federal plot to impose tyranny. In addition, many anti-government extremists, militiamen included, refuse to recognize the authority of legislators and law enforcement officials, and reject laws which they deem to be intrusive, such as vehicle registration and taxation. Their defiant stance has led to bitter — and occasionally deadly — encounters with authorities on the local, state and Federal levels.

Most recently, in Central Florida in November 1996, David Andrew Chapman, believed by police to be a member of the Florida State Militia 7th Regiment, was arrested following a confrontation with police. According to the

local sheriff's office, the officers had been called to Chapman's home on a report of a domestic dispute. When they attempted to arrest him, Chapman allegedly pointed a gun at one of the officers and refused to surrender it. Police ultimately managed to subdue him, but only after an additional struggle. He faces several charges, including two counts of aggravated assault, three counts of resisting an officer with violence and two counts of possession of armor-piercing "cop killer" bullets.

In June 1995, Michael Hill, a "chaplain" in Monroe County's Ohio Unorganized Militia, was stopped in his car by local police officers for driving with homemade, illegal license plates reading MILITIA CHAPLAIN 3-13. According to the sheriff at the scene, Hill pulled out a .45 caliber pistol as he exited his car and held it poised in both hands. In response, the police sergeant shot and killed Hill. A grand jury investigation found no wrongdoing on the part of the officer, but Hill's plight has nevertheless become a rallying cry for some in the militia movement. The sergeant was forced to move his family to a new home after receiving numerous threatening phone calls from self-described militia members.

Also in Ohio, a routine traffic stop turned violent when Larry Martz, a member of the Ohio Unorganized Militia and a witness to Michael Hill's confrontation with police, attacked and wrestled with a State Highway Patrol trooper. Martz was found to be carrying a .45 caliber pistol in his waistband; assault rifles, machetes and 5,000 rounds of ammunition were found in his truck. In May 1996, he was sentenced to two years in prison on charges of assaulting an officer and concealing weapons. While still on trial, Martz filed a "common law" document

against the judge in his case, in the hopes of getting him dismissed.

Larry Russell, a clerk in Ohio's "Our One Supreme Court," was indicted in August 1996 on felony charges of escape and assaulting a police officer. Six months earlier, Columbus authorities attended a meeting of Russell's "common law court" in an effort to serve him with an arrest warrant for driving without a license. Russell allegedly struck the policeman trying to serve the warrant, and then fled the gathering. He was finally apprehended by police in Alaska, as he tried to cross the border into Canada.

A case study in the small-scale anti-government extremist activity that is becoming increasingly common is the 1996 arrest, trial and conviction of Medina County, Ohio, "common law court" activist Donald Mueller. Mueller, the leader of a weekly "common law court" study group and a self-described "sovereign citizen," was stopped by police in January 1996 for driving with a broken headlight. He refused to present a driver's license or to be fingerprinted or photographed by police, and would not recognize the charges against him. Following his arrest, Mueller filed an \$8 million Federal suit against the court officials involved with his prosecution.

During a two-day trial, Mueller acted as his own attorney, frequently made reference to God, the Bible and the Constitution, and said he did not recognize the authority of the presiding judge. Mueller was convicted of obstructing official business for trying to delay police after they had initially pulled his car over.

Louis DeBroux, the self-described founder of a Georgia-based "common law" advocacy group called Citizens Legal Assistance and Strategy Program (CLASP), pleaded guilty in January 1996 to plotting the murder of a Superior Court judge. DeBroux had planned to lure the judge into a business meeting and force him at gun-

point into a coffin-sized box filled with nitrogen gas.

Prosecutors charged that DeBroux's plan stemmed from a long-standing vendetta over a traffic violation conviction a decade earlier.


DeBroux had also plotted to inject a wave of fear among state judges by telephoning them with threatening messages.

Fifteen participants in a Troy, Missouri, "common law court" were convicted in December 1996 for filing a \$10.8 million bogus lien against a Lincoln County judge. They had issued the lien during a session of their phony "common law court" in an attempt to sway the judge's decision in a speeding case against the daughter of one of the activists. Adhering to a now-familiar pattern among anti-government extremists, the defendants declined to be represented by an attorney at their trial, and frequently quoted passages from the Bible. In January, 11 of the defendants were sentenced to two years in prison and fined \$5,000. Dennis Logan and Clifford Keith Hobbs, leaders of the group, were sentenced to seven years in prison and fined \$5,000.

## Republic of Texas

Perhaps the largest group of individuals engaged in an ongoing battle with government officials is the San Antonio-based Republic of Texas (RoT). Members of the Republic of Texas assert that Texas was illegally annexed by the

United States in 1845 and that legally it is an independent republic. Since its formation in December 1995, the RoT's leaders have refused



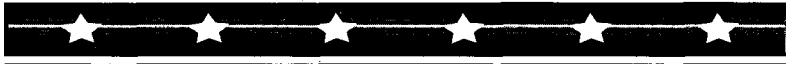
*... the RoT's leaders have refused to recognize the elected government of the state of Texas and have formed their own governmental structure, closely paralleling that of the United States Federal government.*

to recognize the elected government of the state of Texas and have formed their own governmental structure, closely paralleling that of the United States Federal government. Its leadership body includes a President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Commerce and Trade, and Chief Ambassador.

In January 1996, members of the RoT stood before the Texas Capitol and called on Governor George W. Bush to step down from his post and recognize the "Provisional Government" of the Republic of Texas. To justify its claims of national sovereignty, the group produced a box of "common law" documents and "served" the papers on the Governor. Several months later, RoT's "chief consul" mailed a letter to each of Texas's 254 county sheriffs, warning that if they did not swear allegiance to the Republic of Texas, they would risk being replaced.

In June 1996, the Republic of Texas sent a document to the United Nations declaring Texas an independent nation. In an accompanying cover letter addressed to the General Assembly of the United Nations, RoT President Archie Lowe wrote:

We hereby demand that your member state, the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, and its political subdivision the State of Texas, operating as an agent de facto on the soil of Texas, immediately cease and desist their attempts to continue to exercise foreign relations acts and law on and over the land and territories of Texas.



*The liens issued by the group have damaged the credit ratings of innocent people, and the RoT indictments, while legally powerless, have often included intimidating and threatening language.*

The Republic currently operates two "common law courts," in Lubbock and Arlington, at which members of the organization have "indicted" judges and other officers whose legal rulings they dislike. They have also used these "courts" to issue bogus property liens against their personal enemies, and in an attempt to seize all land belonging to the state of Texas. For example, a fraudulent "Writ of Execution and Seizure" issued by the group orders all state property to be transferred to the hands of the RoT.

The mounds of phony legal documents filed by the RoT have clogged the Texas court system

and wasted its time and resources. The liens issued by the group have damaged the credit ratings of innocent people, and the RoT indictments, while legally powerless, have often included intimidating and threatening language.

To stanch the flow of fraudulent paper, Texas Attorney General Dan Morales filed a civil suit against the organization in June 1996, barring the RoT from issuing bogus liens against state and county officers. Later that month, a temporary restraining order was signed, preventing the group from filing bogus legal documents. While people are free to believe that Texas is not a state, Morales said, "they are not free to break the law and they are not free to hurt innocent people."

Also on the RoT's agenda is the takeover of Texas's banking system. In October 1996, the RoT sent notices to 175 banks around the state ordering all Texas state bank accounts to be dissolved and the funds transferred to the Republic. RoT leaders have also begun selling fake bank charters to

members; they tell followers that the RoT-held banks will be used to liquidate the personal debt of every citizen in the Republic.

On October 28, 1996, the RoT was found in contempt of court on charges stemming from its attempts to seize the assets in state bank accounts. A State District Court judge told members they had eight days to rescind the orders they had sent. After that time, each member would be fined \$10,000 daily and would face the possibility of criminal charges.

RoT leaders refused to recognize the judge's decree. But they have not completely ignored

it either. RoT Ambassador Richard McLaren issued a threatening response to Judge Hart's ruling, targeting the Attorney General, who had initiated the legal proceedings: "That will probably be the last single mistake that Mr. Morales will make in his life. . . . He's very well aware that we have a Texas defense force system."

As of this writing, the clock is ticking, with daily fines being levied on members of the group who continue to defy court orders.

Several state buildings housing the Attorney General's staff received bomb threats from the Republic of Texas in early January 1997. Later that month, McLaren threatened to file "international liens" on the properties of Texas officials, prompting Governor Bush to call for immediate legislative counteraction. Describing the situation as an "emergency matter," and urging the Texas legislature to pass a bill prohibiting "common law court" activity, the proclamation waived the usual time limits associated with new legislation, making it possible for the Texas Legislature to promptly consider such a bill.

In another legal battle, two municipal court judges, Sylvia Garcia and Hector Hernandez, won a combined \$1.24 million judgment against RoT member Paul McCormack in January 1997. McCormack, a self-described "justice" of one of the RoT's "common law courts," was accused of harassing the courts with phony legal documents, and libeling the two judges.

Earlier, in October 1996, while Garcia was running in a close race for the County Attorney's office, McCormack took out a legal advertisement in the *Houston Chronicle* asserting that

his bogus "superior court" had issued default judgments against Garcia and Hernandez.

Garcia lost the election by a small margin and blamed McCormack's action for tainting her in the eyes of some voters. McCormack's apparent animosity toward Garcia was reportedly tied to several arrest warrants she had issued when he failed to appear in court to defend a traffic ticket.

In recent months, a split occurred in the upper leadership ranks of the RoT, leading to the departure of several individuals. They have formed a so-called new "Provisional Government of the Republic of Texas."

## Freemen Activity

While the outrageous exploits of the RoT have been confined to that state, the anti-government militancy of the so-called Montana "Freemen" has inspired like-minded activists in at least 23 states to file bogus liens, pass phony checks and deny the legitimacy of the U.S. Government.

Fourteen of the Freemen involved in the 81-day standoff with Federal officials at a Montana ranch have been charged with orchestrating a conspiracy to defraud Federal, state and local governments. An indictment against members of the group alleges that the Freemen attempted to purchase merchandise and pay off debts on hundreds of occasions using authentic-looking, but phony, checks. When creditors questioned the authenticity of the checks, the Freemen tried to intimidate them with threatening letters and telephone calls. As part of their operation, the Freemen also led sessions teaching people how to pass the phony checks

at various institutions. The Federal indictment against them includes multiple counts of conspiracy, bank fraud, mail fraud, wire fraud, false claims, threats to public officials and weapons offenses.

In court hearings following their June 13, 1996, surrender to the FBI, members of the Montana Freeman group brazenly displayed their contempt for the U.S. legal system. They rejected the authority of the presiding judge, refused to answer questions posed to them by their own court-appointed lawyers and repeatedly interrupted court proceedings with lengthy diatribes, including one about "the international Zionist movement."

Elizabeth Broderick, an energetic protégé of the Montana Freeman, was convicted in October 1996 of 26 felony counts, including mail fraud, counterfeiting, obstruction of justice and conspiracy. She was sentenced in March 1997 to nearly 17 years in prison, and was ordered to pay a \$26,000 fine and serve three years of supervised release. The self-proclaimed "lien queen" attended a seminar given by Freeman leader LeRoy Schweitzer in October 1995, and then began to pass on the Freeman's pseudo-legal tactics and phony checks at classes of her own, conducted in Southern California. Federal prosecutors estimate that Broderick distributed 1,200 checks totaling \$120 million. Her phony currency has surfaced in 16 states.

In Colorado, a crackdown on Freeman-related activity has yielded numerous indictments in recent months. In September 1996, the FBI arrested Merrilee Kinzee Borden and charged her with filing millions of dollars in liens against several local officials, including police officers and a judge. That same month, 12 Coloradans, some associates of the Montana

Freemen, were indicted on state charges of forgery, theft and filing false liens. Most of the defendants were charged with attempting to pay off debts with bogus checks made out for double the amount owed and requesting a cash refund for the difference. The checks, almost \$4 million in total, were signed by Freeman leaders LeRoy Schweitzer, Rodney Skurdal and Dale Jacobi.

Fort Collins members of the Denver-based We The People, an anti-government group associated with the Montana Freeman, have been convicted by Federal prosecutors in connection with a scam netting more than \$2 million. Leaders of the group, including former Iowa policeman Scott Hildebrand, duped people into believing they would make millions if they joined a class action suit against the Federal government by simply paying a \$300 "filing fee." Courts in Michigan and Colorado have each sentenced Hildebrand to 10 years in prison. He is currently facing Federal charges in Iowa.

In February 1997, Freeman associates Marilyn and Ronald Kerkvliet of Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, were convicted on Federal charges of mail fraud and distributing phony checks. The checks had been obtained by Freeman LeRoy Schweitzer. Sentencing is expected in spring 1997.

Following a search by Federal agents of the Kerkvliets' home in March 1996, Marilyn Kerkvliet allegedly consulted with Schweitzer by telephone and asked for instructions on filing property liens against the agents. Schweitzer told her that she should have arrested the officials, because "we run the country" and "we own the United States."

# Additional Anti-Government Fraud

Other anti-government extremists, unconnected to the Freemen, have committed similar acts of fraud against private citizens and government institutions.

Fifteen people from five states have been convicted in Texas Federal courts for their participation in a criminal scheme that challenged the legitimacy of the United States banking system. Under the auspices of U.S.A. First, a Waxahatchie, Texas-based group that denies the legality of U.S. currency, the individuals printed and/or sold bogus money orders to thousands of Americans. During one six-month period in late 1993 and early 1994, U.S.A. First's authentic-looking certificates were used by customers and members of the group to pay off \$61 million in debts, including \$2 million in payments to the Internal Revenue Service.

One of the individuals convicted of printing and selling the phony money orders was Jerry Henson, a leader of the Oklahoma-based "common law court" organization, United Sovereigns of America. United Sovereigns supplies "common law court" activists around the country with bogus court documents and peddles a number of conspiracy-oriented tracts, including the anti-Semitic *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Henson received a sentence of eight years in prison.

In April 1996, three "common law court" activists in Orlando, Florida, were sentenced to prison terms ranging from 11 to 17 years. The three men, who had earlier offered instructions on avoiding payment of Federal taxes through the auspices of an organization called



*Three "common law court" activists . . . were convicted of filing bogus liens and indictments against local bankers, police and court officials. The phony criminal complaints they filed threatened Orlando judges and jurors with death by hanging.*

the American National Freemen, were convicted of filing bogus liens and indictments against local bankers, police and court officials. The phony criminal complaints they filed threatened Orlando judges and jurors with death by hanging.

In Ventura County, California, anti-government extremist Toby Chanel also employed extra-legal tactics. In 1994, several traffic citations against Chanel for driving with a suspended license in an unregistered vehicle culminated in her arrest and conviction.

Since then, Chanel has been attempting to exact revenge. She filed phony "Notices of Dishonor" and multimillion-dollar property liens against police and court officials, often mailing notices of the liens to the officials' spouses. Chanel's efforts have reportedly earned her an entourage of disciples, who protectively surround her at court appearances.

## Anti-Government Support System

Though ideology and tactics vary widely within the movement, members are united in their

belief that government is the enemy, and they are quick to rally to the defense of fellow activists whom they feel are being besieged by government officers. These expressions of support have often included attempts to intimidate or confront public officials.

In February 1996, militia members became peripherally involved in a standoff between Federal agents and Lynn Truman Crawford, a man wanted in St. Louis, Missouri, for refusing to pay more than \$70,000 in child support. After locating Crawford at his mother's home in Coushatta, Louisiana, FBI agents attempted to serve him with a Federal warrant. Crawford refused to accept the warrant, claiming that the United States Government had no authority over him, and threatening officials with a gun for trying to enter his home.

Crawford's anti-government views earned him the support of nearby militia activists. Members of militias from Alabama, Louisiana and Texas traveled to Coushatta and claimed they were closely monitoring the activities of the armed Federal and state agents standing outside Crawford's door. Others called the FBI and the local sheriff's office to voice their opposition to Crawford's treatment. When the six-day standoff ended with Crawford peacefully surrendering to authorities, a jubilant fax message printed on Texas Constitutional Militia stationery and signed by "executive officer" Johnny Johnson, congratulated those who had been involved in the standoff.

"Folks we did it," it read. "Thanks for all your help. This man would surely have been dead if it wouldn't have been for all your militia people coming to his aid."

Shortly after the arrest of Oklahoma militia leader Ray Lampley, Stewart Waterhouse, an

officer in the Kansas-based 7th Division United States Constitutional Militia, mailed a threatening letter to the superintendent of the Oklahoma jail that was housing Lampley and his two associates. Waterhouse characterized Lampley and his alleged co-conspirators as "prisoners of war" and stated that he had "authoriz[ed]" local militia units to take action against the superintendent if necessary. Waterhouse was charged with two felony counts of sending a threatening letter. He was released shortly after his arrest, however, on legal technicalities.

Waterhouse also became involved in the 81-day standoff between FBI agents and the Montana Freeman. Following Federal notification to the Freeman that warrants had been issued for their arrest and that Federal roadblocks had been placed around their compound, Waterhouse traveled to the Montana area, claiming he would help defend the anti-government group against the FBI. Fancying himself an important militia spokesman, he also told a television reporter that "Militia units are heading toward Montana. They aren't there to negotiate. They are an army."

Days later, Waterhouse ran a roadblock surrounding the Freeman compound. He hid out on the property for nearly a month; Federal agents observed him providing guard duty around the ranch while carrying a military assault rifle.

Waterhouse finally surrendered to Federal authorities in April, and was charged with helping the Freeman avoid apprehension, resisting arrest, and running a Federal roadblock. He is being held without bail, and should face trial in 1997.



# The Violent Fringe

On the outermost fringe of the anti-government extremist movement, beyond the purview of organized militias or "common law courts," several independent extremists have waged a turbulent war against the Federal government. Accused of committing scores of violent crimes, including bombings and robberies, they have operated covertly in tiny, loosely-organized cells, to achieve their ultimate goal: the overthrow of the United States Government. Most are also fervent believers in the tenets of the anti-Semitic, racist "Christian Identity" movement. The success of these anti-government terrorists should cause concern as an increasing number of today's militias similarly move their activities underground.

Three men were charged in Spokane, Washington, on October 9, 1996, with setting off bombs at a newspaper office on April 1 and at a Planned Parenthood clinic on July 12, in both cases minutes before robbing a nearby bank. In March 1997, a fourth man was arrested in connection with the July 12 heist. During the April robbery, the men allegedly set off a bomb at the bank. A typewritten note left behind by the bombers in April, and a second note, mailed to U.S. Bank after a reward was posted for information leading to the robbers' arrests, made reference to "Yahweh," the name Christian Identity followers use for God. The two

letters also bore the symbol of the Phineas Priesthood, a large "P" with a cross running through it.

The Phineas Priesthood is a violent credo of vengeance advocated by Identity leader Richard Kelly Hoskins in his book, *Vigilantes of Christendom: The Story of the Phineas Priesthood*. Hoskins's lengthy manifesto perverts passages of the Bible, including the story of the zealot Phineas, to justify racist and anti-Semitic acts

of violence. The Priesthood has been used as a calling card by the perpetrators of several such crimes across the country, but there is no indication that these criminals are working as an organized group.

Three of the men charged in Spokane, Charles Barbee, Robert Berry and Verne Jay Merrell, may

have all met through America's Promise Ministries, a Sandpoint, Idaho, Christian Identity "church." Barbee and Berry reportedly met at an APM gathering, while Merrell has been a featured speaker at the group's events.

Their anti-government hatred is well documented. In a search of the suspects' stolen van at the time of their arrests, Federal agents found letters addressed to the White House and the "USury Bank" that were similar in style and tone to those left at the scene of the bombing. In 1995, Barbee told the Spokane *Spokes-*



An ATF agent surveys the scene after the July 1996 bombing of a Planned Parenthood clinic.

*man-Review* that he was training with several others to fight the Federal Government.

"We have to be ready to conduct guerilla warfare," he said. "If there's another Ruby Ridge or another Waco, we're not going to tolerate it. . . . If the Federal government sends in their armies . . . we will respond and put as many Federal agents to death as possible."

Merrell first agitated against the government in the 1980s as a member of the violent, anti-Semitic Arizona Patriots. Like many of today's "common law courts," the Arizona Patriots sought to stymie the Arizona legal system by clogging its courts with fraudulent lawsuits. In 1984, heavily armed members of the organization plotted to assassinate then-Governor Bruce Babbitt, while others issued a collective "indictment" against Arizona's elected officials, threatening to conduct a "grand jury inquest" if the officials failed to resign. The "indictment" was signed by Merrell.

Six men harboring racist, anti-Semitic and fiercely anti-government beliefs have been accused — and in several cases, convicted — of planning and carrying out a series of bank robberies and bombings in seven Midwestern states. According to authorities, the gang, calling itself "The Aryan Republican Army" ("ARA"), robbed 22 banks in 1994 and 1995 in order to finance white supremacist causes and overthrow the United States Government. The group's tactics were reminiscent of those of The Order, a self-styled revolutionary neo-Nazi terrorist gang that committed a series of similar violent crimes in the 1980s.

According to prosecutors, the ARA launched a string of bank robberies in 1994, using distinctive methods that suggested the work of a single gang. The group, also known as the Midwestern Bank Bandits, drew particular attention for deliberately taunting Federal law enforcement. During a number of their heists, the robbers dressed in FBI or ATF gear. They also bought used cars using the names of retired FBI officers.

The full extent of their hatred for the government — as well as for Blacks, Jews and other minorities — was revealed only after the arrests of the gang's leaders, Peter Langan and Richard Guthrie. Following the arrest, the FBI found a video in which Langan rants at length about the gang's plans to "take over the U.S.A." and encourages like-minded extremists to kill Federal law enforcement agents. The video promotes the bible of the Phineas Priesthood, *Vigilantes of Christendom*.

Langan and Guthrie were arrested after a shootout with law enforcement in January



Peter Langan, of the Aryan Republican Army, receives the spoils from a "mission."

1996. Over the next year, four other men were implicated in the gang's activities. The arrests of Kevin McCarthy, Michael Brescia, Scott Stedeford and Mark Thomas led to the revelation of extensive links between the ARA and other anti-Semitic groups, as well as to further evidence of the gang's anti-government agenda. In a pre-trial hearing, McCarthy, a former neo-Nazi skinhead, reportedly said that the gang wanted "to open the door to the overthrow of the United States government." According to authorities, Thomas, an Aryan Nations leader and Christian Identity activist, introduced McCarthy and Stedeford to the gang's leaders and conspired in the planning of the robberies. Evidence also shows that Thomas was involved in bringing both McCarthy and Brescia to Elohim City, a Christian Identity community in Oklahoma.


After pleading guilty to a number of the bank robberies, Richard Guthrie committed suicide in his prison cell. On February 8, 1997, Stedeford was sentenced to 10 years in prison for his role in a 1995 bank robbery in West Des Moines, Iowa. Two days later, in Ohio, Langan

was convicted of five bank robbery and bomb-related charges in connection with a 1994 heist at the Columbus National Bank. He is also expected to stand trial for robberies he is accused of committing in other states. In a move that surprised some, Thomas pleaded guilty on February 18 to plotting seven ARA robberies and to using the stolen money to fund extremist activities. Prosecution of the remaining gang members is also underway: McCarthy has agreed to plead guilty to charges connected with the robberies; the case against Brescia is pending.

The growing threat of domestic terrorism — illustrated by these two anti-government groups — is now being confronted by the FBI. The agency recently announced plans to hire and train 250 new agents exclusively dedicated to investigating and counteracting domestic terrorism. The FBI will also be opening a new Domestic Counterterrorism Center in Washington, DC, to coordinate its investigative activities with local, state and Federal law enforcement agencies.

# Conspiracy Theories: The Bedrock of Militia Belief

Militia and "common law court" ideologues insist that gun control legislation — especially the Brady Law and restrictions on assault weapons — are major components of a secret and evil government conspiracy to disarm and control the American people. They are also obsessed with the government's handling of two events — the 1993 Branch Davidian confrontation in Waco, Texas, and the 1992 Randy



*Militia and "common law court" ideologues insist that gun control legislation — especially the Brady Law and restrictions on assault weapons — are major components of a secret and evil government conspiracy to disarm and control the American people.*

Weaver siege in Ruby Ridge, Idaho — and interpret both as signs of impending tyranny. The militias' conspiracy-haunted views are regularly voiced in their publications. They see an evil Federal government working in league with the United Nations to strip Americans of their constitutional rights. Their allegations are often absurd, outrageous and even dangerous to the health of American democratic society. These conspiracy-ridden activists are, in the

words of the late Columbia University Professor Richard Hofstadter, practitioners of "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," the title of his essay on the subject. In it, Hofstadter wrote that the distinguishing characteristic of the "paranoid style" was:

A vast and sinister conspiracy, a gigantic and yet subtle machinery of influence set in motion to undermine and destroy a way of life. . . . The distinguishing thing about the paranoid style is not that its exponents see conspiracies or plots here and there in history, but that they regard a 'vast' or 'gigantic' conspiracy as the motive force in historical events. . . .

In order to get a clear picture of the "paranoid style" of activists in the militia and "common law court" movements, some of their conspiracy fantasies should be examined:

- Conspiracies alleging the illegality of the Federal system of government are particularly attractive to the militias and "common law court" activists. Russell Dean Landers, one of the Montana Freemen, has insisted that the Freemen were targeted because they told the world about the "illegal" U.S. Government. Landers has asserted that he has papers proving that the Federal Government was set up illegally by European bankers and other conspirators in 1881. He has said that he will file motions claiming that the FBI had no right to make arrests in the Freemen's compound called Justus Township. Landers and his cohorts have refused to cooperate with any part of the Federal legal system including judges, prosecutors or public defenders.

- According to several reports, Oklahoma City bombing suspect Timothy McVeigh believed that the U.S. Army had inserted a “bio-chip” into his hip in order to monitor his activities. Many in the militias similarly believe that the government plans to put a large scale “big brother” spy system in place to control all of its citizens.
- Militia figure Mark Koernke, also known as “Mark from Michigan,” told an audience at the “Great Ohio Preparedness and Self-Reliance Expo of '96” that the Federal Government blew up the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City as part of a plan to cast the militia movement in a bad light. He offered no proof for this allegation but it is still generally regarded as gospel by many militia activists. John Trochmann, co-founder of the Militia of Montana, told the Florida Panhandle Patriots that a general of the U.S. Army, whom he would not name, informed him that the Oklahoma City bombing was “an inside job.”
- Militias believe that the United Nations is at the core of a “New World Order” operation, whose goal is the subjugation of U.S. citizens. John Trochmann asserted that Retired Chief of Staff General Colin Powell would be Bob Dole’s Vice Presidential candidate. Powell, Trochmann said, would aid the U.N. in its plot to become the ruling body of the world. In a lecture to the Florida Panhandle Patriots, Trochmann displayed photos of tanks, helicopters and armored troop carriers with “U.N.” insignia, and implied that they were being secretly stored all over the U.S.
- Weather control by the U.S. Government is another favorite theme. Anti-government conspiracy monger Robert Fletcher (for-

merly of the Militia of Montana) has said that “it was no coincidence” that 85 tornadoes “took place simultaneously” in the Midwest on one day during 1994. One source of the conspiracy theories animating militia members has been *The Spotlight*, publication of Liberty Lobby, the leading anti-Semitic propaganda organization in America today. A September 1994 eight-page supplement of the paper widely distributed among militiamen intoned: “Is America on the verge of war? Is a ‘national emergency’ about to be declared and America placed under martial law? Is America on the brink of occupation by military troops under United Nations control?” *The Spotlight*, in its August 15, 1994, issue, carried the following story about weather manipulation:

Extreme Weather Patterns May Not be Acts of God. Is Someone — or a group of someones — fooling around with the weather? Why would anyone do this? The answer is simple . . . to create starvation conditions for selected segments of the world’s people on demand, and to eliminate many if not most of the world’s food producers, mainly U.S. farmers and ranchers. . . . Now, through a controlled program of weather modification on an international scale, [the “internationalists” may have the ultimate weapon. . . .

- Many militias are opposed to Federal regulation of firearms, tax collection and land use, and believe they are evidence of a “hidden hand.” Among the agencies regarded with the most suspicion is FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The Norwela Common Militia of Louisiana puts out a publication solely about the dan-

gers of FEMA which they see as the "secret government" of the United States and its "most powerful entity." The Norwela Militia warns "it was not even created under Constitutional law by the Congress. It was a product of a Presidential Executive Order. It is not the U.S. Military nor the Central Intelligence Agency. These organizations are subject to the control of Congress." The Norwela Militia has also written:

- The government's "war on drugs" with its use of Federal law enforcement, electronic monitors and increased police search and seizure options, is considered suspect. Many militias contend that the country's drug problem has been exaggerated by the Federal Government as part of its war against American citizens.
- Black helicopters figure prominently in militia literature as the sinister vanguard of

*A recent national study on mistrust of government conducted by James Davison Hunter at the University of Virginia, found that one-quarter of Americans believe that the U.S. Government is run by a conspiracy, and "one in ten strongly subscribes to this view."*

military forces for the New World Order. In 1994, Jim Keith wrote a book entitled: *Black Helicopters Over America: Strike Force for the New World Order*, and dedicated it "to those who resist the New World Order." It alleges that black U.N. helicopters are part of the conspiracy to take over the United States. And, his theory continues, they are part of a larger scheme which includes concentration camps and combat units to be used against American citizens.

The scenarios established to trigger FEMA into action are generally found in the society of today: economic collapse, civil unrest, drug problems, terrorist attacks, distrust of the government by a majority of the people. . . . With all of these premises existing, it could only be a matter of time until one of these triggers the entire emergency necessary to bring FEMA into action. And then it may be too late, because under the FEMA plan, there is no contingency by which Constitutional power is restored. [underlined in the original]

While each of these conspiracies seems ludicrous, a recent national study on mistrust of government conducted by James Davison Hunter at the University of Virginia, found that one-quarter of Americans believe that the U.S. Government is run by a conspiracy, and "one in ten strongly subscribes to this view." More disturbingly, 64 percent of those polled believe that the "governing elite" is insensitive to the concerns of its citizens. These numbers suggest a suspicious electorate open to the wildest and most deceitful conjecture.

The following section will examine anti-Semitic and racist beliefs among the militia and "common law court" groups.

# Anti-Semitism and Racism

Today's right-wing extremists depend on conspiracy theories to fuel enthusiasm among their supporters. Without the belief that an evil "New World Order" is upon us, militias would lose their *raison d'être*. The "common law courts," too, would be in permanent recess if not for their outrageous belief that our government suspended the Constitution long ago. History has shown that such obsessive conspiracy-mongering often ultimately fingers Jews or other minorities as scapegoats for the nation's ills.

It is hardly surprising, then, that anti-Semites and racists have found a comfortable home in segments of the anti-government extremist movement. Indeed, much of the movement's activity is directed by groups that promote anti-Semitism and racism along with their more visible agitation against the government. Propaganda materials that are passed around at meetings, conventions, gun shows and over the Internet often promote the view that Jews or Jewish institutions are co-conspirators in the New World Order. With disturbing frequency, classic tracts of anti-Semitism are hawked at militia-oriented events or are available from the catalogs of anti-government extremist organizations.

Some bigots in the movement are wise to the public relations problems presented by their beliefs. Rather than present these views openly, they camouflage them, dressing them up as history or religion. Occasionally, standard code words such as "international bankers," or "Zionists" are used to refer to the alleged Jewish role in the conspiracy.

Much of the ideology of today's anti-government extremists traces its roots to the anti-Semitic Posse Comitatus which had its heyday

in the 1980s. Like many militias and "common law courts," the Posse rejects Federal and state government agencies in favor of what it views as "legitimate" authority, usually the county sheriff.

The Posse adheres to the beliefs of the Christian Identity "church," an anti-Semitic pseudo-religion that preaches that whites of Northern European extraction are the true children of Israel and that Jews are the descendants of Satan. Several former Posse members are active in today's "common law courts," including Leonard Ginter, an Arkansas Posse



*Propaganda materials that are passed around at meetings, conventions, gun shows and over the Internet often promote the view that Jews or Jewish institutions are co-conspirators in the New World Order. With disturbing frequency, classic tracts of anti-Semitism are hawked at militia-oriented events or are available from the catalogs of anti-government extremist organizations.*

member who spent five years in prison for harboring Federal fugitive Gordon Kahl, a Posse activist. Ginter currently serves as a "justice" in an Arkansas "common law court."



Identity-oriented ideas permeate many "common law court" documents and propaganda. One "Common Law Affidavit" originating in Kentucky, for example, refers to "the White race of People of the Posterity a/k/a Israel [sic]." The Christian Identity name for God — Yahweh — is often used in "common law court" oaths and frequently appears in their pseudo-legal documents.

As ADL detailed in *The Freeman Network: An Assault on the Rule of Law*, a number of the Montana Freeman hold Christian Identity beliefs. One of their manifestos proclaimed "It is the colored people, and the jews [sic], who are the descendants of Cain . . . when We move into a new land, We are to kill all of the inhabitants of the other races. . . . We are not to allow women nor foreigners (colored people, jews, and/or citizens of the United States) to rule over us [sic]." The Freeman spread this creed of hatred — along with lessons in "common law court"-type activity — to hundreds of people who attended their seminars in Montana.

John Trochmann, a leader of the Militia of Montana (M.O.M.), has long tried to play down his ties to Christian Identity as well as his experience with the Aryan Nations, a neo-Nazi group. In his frequent speeches around the country, he insists that he has been wrongly accused of anti-Semitism and racism. Yet his organization persists in promoting the work of some of the country's most rabid anti-Semites.

In the July 1996 issue of *Taking Aim*, M.O.M.'s monthly newsletter, six pages were devoted to

All theft regulations outside, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. - The Second Amendment

THE MILITIAMAN'S NEWSLETTER

## TAKING AIM

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### OPERATION: PHOENIX COMES HOME TO AMERICA

The year was 1964. The location: Vietnam. Four Navy Seals (Killer Team) infiltrate a North Vietnamese village. Mission: "Assassinate the village chief because he's politically connected, and, 'oh,' by the way, take out that fifty-one caliber gun."

The Seals infiltrate the village. The designated assassin enters the chief's hooch and spots an individual where the "Hunter Team" told him the chief would be sleeping. He pulls his commando knife. Somebody stirs in the next bed. He has been taught how to silently kill somebody instantly. He puts his hand over the person's mouth, puts the knife under the second rib, goes through the heart, gives it a flick, it snaps the spinal cord. He hears the explosion taking out the gun. Somebody else stirs, so he pulls his sidearm and puts it against her head and shoots her. She's dead. As he leaves, he looks back and sees that he has just assassinated the chief's two young daughters.

The year was 1981. The location: El Salvador. U.S. Military and CIA trained assassins captured 24 women and children. They were assassinated, one by one, in cold blood with machetes. The mutilated corpses were left behind as a warning to dissenters.

The year is 1996. The location: Arkansas. A four (possibly

five) member hit team boldly enters the home of Bill Mueller. Mission: "Liquidate family, and, 'oh,' by the way make it look like a robbery -- steal his guns and coins."

The hit team enters the home. Neutralizes Bill, and his wife Nancy, either with taxers, or by simply yelling "FBI," or, "ATF." There is no struggle. No shots fired. No overturned furniture, and no ransacking of the house. The team quickly handcuffs Bill and Nancy and takes control of their eight-year-old daughter Sarah. The team kidnaps them, drives through windy, mountainous terrain to the Illinois Bayou River. The team places black, plastic garbage bags over each of their heads, wraps duct tape around their necks, securing the bags and then throws them into the river. Mission accomplished. No siege, no witnesses and an ex-military gun dealer/patriot is dealt with. (Editor's note: See page three detailing the account of the Bill Mueller Family assassination of January 1996.)

In the first incident mentioned the operation was titled, OPLAN 34. This was the old Leaping Lena infiltration program for LRRP (long-range reconnaissance patrol) operations in Laos. It was the fore-runner to Operation: Phoenix.

The Phoenix Program, created in 1967 by former CIA Director William Colby, combined existing counterinsurgency programs in a concerted effort to "neutralize" the Vietcong infrastructure. This operation was conducted against the North Vietnamese population with the intent to strike fear, dissension and just plain terror in the hearts of the North Vietnamese civilians. In short, take away the popular support the civilians were giving the North Vietnamese Army.

The second incident, occurring in El Salvador was a reorganization of the Phoenix Program which included other country's security forces, such as Israel's Mossad. Parts of the program were exposed through the Iran/Contra scandal wherein Phoenix participation was extremely heavy. One of the founders of the "Phoenix Battalion" was Bob Brown, editor of Soldier of Fortune magazine. Another key player was Felix Rodriguez, a former Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (mercenary forces under the control of the CIA in South Vietnam) advisor who developed the Pink Plan. This Plan designed the CIA's new theory on low-intensity warfare. It was endorsed and approved by Ronald Reagan's National Security Advisor Robert MacFarlane.

**The Militia of Montana's monthly newsletter.**

a rambling conspiracy tract by Christian Identity propagandist George Eaton. Editors of the newsletter described Eaton as "a very honorable man a close friend ours [sic] here at M.O.M." *Taking Aim* continues to market works by other noted anti-Semites including James Wickstrom, a convicted counterfeiter and leader of the anti-Semitic Posse Comitatus, and John Weaver, a Christian Identity "Pastor." Returning the favor, Wickstrom promotes and sells M.O.M. videos as well as tapes by Eugene Schroder, a leading "common law court" promoter.

John Trochmann himself has continued to maintain his close ties to the anti-Semitic Liberty Lobby. He was interviewed by *Spotlight*, the group's propaganda organ, and he attended a 1995 convention celebrating Liberty Lobby's 40th anniversary. In a 1995 interview,




David Trochmann of M.O.M told the *Nashville Tennessean* that he agrees with aspects of Christian Identity doctrine and that he believes that the number of Jews killed during the Holocaust has been exaggerated considerably.

The 1996 arrest and conviction of Oklahoman Ray Lampley brought to the surface the most disturbing manifestation of anti-Semitism in the militia movement. Lampley, leader of the now-defunct Oklahoma Constitutional Militia, conspired to bomb the Houston office of the Anti-Defamation League as well as other targets. Lampley expressed intensely anti-Semitic and anti-government views and said that it is the duty of militia activists to rescue American citizens from Federal rule.

Anti-Semitic and racist material is routinely distributed at "Preparedness Expos," in cities across the country (see "Preparedness Expos"). These gatherings purport to be trade-shows for survivalists and gun enthusiasts but, in fact, they serve as opportunities for anti-government extremists — including racists and anti-Semites — to spread their propaganda among sympathizers and potential recruits. Over the last two years, "Expo" participants have sold or distributed a wide range of anti-Semitic works including Christian Identity literature.

United Sovereign Citizens, a leading propaganda and organizing group for the "common law court" movement whose leaders include Identity follower Darrell Frech, peddles the notorious *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Earl Jones of New Mexico, who has spoken at numerous Identity-oriented events, told a United Sovereigns audience in February 1996 that Americans are living "under Talmudic Law."



***United Sovereign Citizens peddles the notorious Protocols of the Elders of Zion.***

The *Free American*, an extremist magazine popular among militia supporters and "common law court" activists, has also promoted *The Protocols*, which it described as "the blueprint used for the New World Order." In addition, the Identity publication, *The Jubilee*, mixes its anti-Semitism with pro-militia and "common law court" propaganda for an audience of both racists and anti-government extremists.

Some "common law court" adherents believe that there are two classes of citizens — "sovereign" white citizens, whose rights are God-given, and "Fourteenth Amendment" citizens, nonwhites who are subject to the laws of the illegitimate Federal Government. This racist nonsense is repeated in countless pseudo-legal documents distributed throughout the country. Johnny Liberty (real name — John David Von Hove), author of *Sovereign American's Handbook*, a bible for many "common law court" activists, affirmed his belief in the theory in a 1996 newspaper interview.

Hardcore anti-Semites in the "common law court" movement often blend their bigoted views into their pseudo-legal ramblings. For example, an Arizona-based "common law court" agitator has contrived a bogus legal action against "Talmudic Jews from A to Z in state and Federal Govts." He accuses the Jews of, among other things, persecuting the Arizona Governor because he voted against a hate crime bill.

More frequently, however, the anti-Semitism and racism found in the “common law court” movement is more subtle. For example, *Why a Bankrupt America?*, a document widely quoted in the movement that was distributed at a recent “court” meeting in Oregon, camouflages its anti-Semitism as economics. Purporting to discuss the country’s economic problems, the booklet pins the blame on the Federal Reserve Bank and promotes the myth that several Jewish banking families (along with the Rockefellers) are its beneficiaries:

Is this what you work your fingers to the bone for — to pay usury to a private group of bankers who make up the Fed? Some of its stockholders are identified as: Rothschilds of London and Berlin; Lazard Brothers of Paris; Israel Moses Reif of Italy; Kuhn, Loeb and Warburg of Germany; and the Lehman Brothers, Goldman, Sachs, and the Rockefeller families of New York. The shareholders are not you nor I, not America, not the U.S. Government. They are a consortium of private international banking families and their stockholders!

The booklet recommends for further reading the blatantly anti-Semitic *Secrets of the Federal Reserve* by Eustace Mullins.

Paradoxically, some of the material promoted by “common law courts” has been found in the African-American community as well. At a New York rally held by the Nation of Islam’s Louis Farrakhan in October 1996, booksellers promoted “common law court” materials — including a “handbook” by Johnny Liberty — along with such classic anti-Semitic works as

Martin Luther’s *The Jews and Their Lies*, and *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

Bo Gritz leads survival and weapons training sessions popular among militia supporters and is forming a “Constitutional Covenant Community” in Idaho. In the October 1996 issue of his Center For Action Monthly Newsletter, Gritz alludes to the accusation — historically exploited by anti-Semites — that Jews “demanded the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.” He then suggests that “Jews are still reaping the bitter harvest of bad blood even today.” Gritz continues to promote his book, *Called to Serve*, in which he asserts that Jewish families control the Federal Reserve system.

Eustace Mullins, a longtime anti-Jewish propagandist, is a frequent speaker on the militia and anti-government circuit. His obsession with the Federal Reserve system — and his belief that it is a private institution owned by eight Jewish families — make him popular with the conspiracy crowd. Mullins’s support for militias is intertwined with his anti-Semitism: in a recent essay, he said that militias are “the only organized threat to the Zionists’ absolute control of the U.S.”

The National Association for the Advancement of White People (NAAWP) — a racist and anti-Semitic organization founded by David Duke —



*Eustace Mullins, a longtime anti-Jewish propagandist, is a frequent speaker on the militia and anti-government circuit.*

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is itself attempting to organize militias. A leader of one of these groups, Dan Daniels of Florida, views the goals of the militia in racial terms:

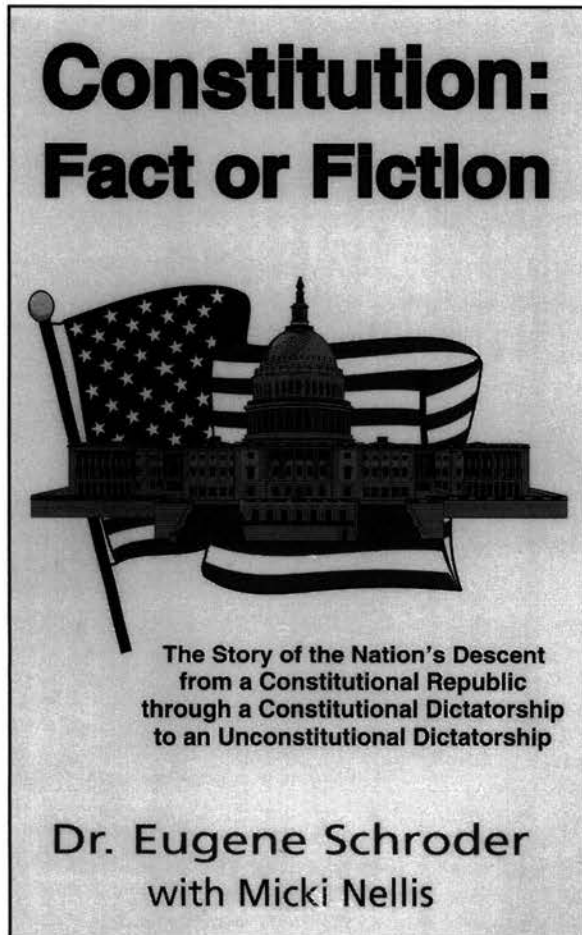
We are becoming the voice of White Resistance. . . . We invite you to join or start an NAAWP Militia. . . . Take a hand in determining the destiny of your race!

Many, perhaps most, anti-government extremists reject the blatant racism of groups like the NAAWP. Yet the movement itself persists in allowing other — usually more subtle — bigots to use Jews, Blacks and other minorities as scapegoats for the nation's problems, both real and imagined.

# Political Involvement

While many anti-government extremists have been moving their activities underground, others have been trying to acquire a mainstream image and political influence. Their efforts have been rewarded by several elected officials who have conferred undue legitimacy upon the movement by expressing sympathy for the extremists' anti-government message, or by participating in militia or Christian Identity-oriented forums. Fortunately, all such politicians, as of this writing, have been minor officials.

One of the movement's most vocal political supporters is Colorado State Senator Charles Duke, a states' rights activist whose non-binding resolution promoting state "sovereignty"



Eugene Schroder's book is one of the "common law court" movement's bibles.

has been duplicated and adopted by more than two dozen states. The resolution, which passed the Colorado legislature in June 1994, notes that the 10th Amendment turns over to the states all powers not mentioned in the Constitution, and demands that the Federal Government stop issuing mandates to the states.

Duke has addressed a number of militia audiences with his states' rights platform and has received speaking honoraria from militia organizers Rick Tyler and J.J. Johnson. Duke has also taken his message to "common law court"-oriented forums, and has appeared on several occasions with one of the movement's gurus, Eugene Schroder. Duke has tried to hide his militia connections from the mainstream media. Speaking in November 1995 at a national meeting of militia leaders, Duke waited until the press left and then announced:

When I am asked by the media, "Tell me about your contacts with the militia," I say, "I don't even know anybody in the militia." So you're going to hear me . . . deny that you exist or that you're a problem or any of those other things.

Duke unwittingly allowed these remarks to be captured on tape.

Nearly two months into the Freemen standoff in Montana, the FBI asked Duke to mediate meetings between the Freemen and Federal agents. Duke at first expressed sympathy for the Freemen, calling the Federal charges against them "suspicious" and saying that the group had been "terribly wronged," but later, after talks between the two sides broke down, Duke had second thoughts. He praised the FBI's handling of the standoff and suggested

the Freemen were frauds. Nevertheless, in September 1996, Duke criticized the indictment in Colorado of a dozen people charged with passing phony checks issued by the Montana Freemen. Duke argued that the Colorado Bar Association had violated the Constitution, and said, "I'm not willing to say [the checks] are bogus. A lot of people believe what they are doing is quite legitimate." He also questioned the legality of the Federal Reserve.

Speaking in Nevada during the summer of 1996, Duke delivered an indictment of the Federal Government, stating that authorities are pointing to the Oklahoma City bombing to justify the use of "Gestapo tactics" on American citizens.

Also in Colorado, State Senator Mary Anne Tebedo has occasionally expressed her admiration for anti-government activists. Tebedo's daughter, Linda, has filed phony legal documents to declare herself a "sovereign citizen," and refuses to drive with a valid license or plates. Her mother has defended these beliefs and said that those who act upon them are merely trying to reform government. "One thing I know is that these people are not kooks," she said. "They have educated themselves on the issues and studied the laws."

Former California State Senator Don Rogers, a hard-line supporter of states' rights, has stood side-by-side with anti-Semites and anti-government activists at several extremist events. Rogers retired in 1996 in accordance with the state's term-limit law. While still in office, Rogers spoke at the 1992 and 1994 *Jubilee*-sponsored "Jubilation Celebration." Other speakers at the 1994 conference included former Klansman Louis Beam and Christian Identity "pastor" Pete Peters. Rogers refused to acknowl-

edge that the *Jubilee* and its readership promote racist and anti-Semitic views, saying that "They are a group of patriotic Americans who are working to preserve and restore individual rights and freedoms."

In 1992, Rogers tried to avoid paying Federal taxes by signing a "common law" document that claimed he was exempt from taxes because he held a "white man's citizenship." Echoing the arguments of some in the "common law court" movement, an affidavit signed by Rogers declared that because he was born "of parents who were white," he was not a citizen under the 14th Amendment, and only 14th Amendment citizens are required by the Constitution to pay Federal taxes. Confronted with the document four years later, Rogers said:

"I got some bad advice and since then I changed my mind . . . at the time[.]. . . I looked at this and thought it had some merit. But since then I have decided that it does not." Rogers has also stated, "I am not a racist, I never have been and don't support any racist groups at all."

In July 1996, Rogers railed against government in an address at the "Freedom Lover's Rally" in Sunnyvale, California. Literature tables circling the room offered attendees an array of anti-Semitic, conspiracy-oriented and anti-government literature, including a Holocaust-denial tract called *Keystone of the New World Order: The Holocaust Dogma of Judaism*.

In 1996, Georgia businessman Charles Collins ran as an independent Presidential candidate on a largely anti-government platform. Collins reached out to militia and "common law court" groups by addressing their meetings, and counted 18 militias in his support base. His campaign literature fed upon the fears of anti-

government extremists, calling for U.S. withdrawal from the United Nations, elimination of the Federal Reserve and abolition of the Emergency War Powers Act. During the standoff in Montana between FBI agents and the Freemen, Collins lambasted the government agents and defended the activities of the Freemen. "The only difference between what the Freemen have done and the actions of the Federal Reserve is Congress has granted the Federal Reserve a corporate license to steal," he said. Collins also alleged that the FBI planned to set fire to the Freemen ranch "and start another . . . Waco."

Several militia members have made unsuccessful bids for public office. West Virginia Mountaineer Militia leader Ray Looker campaigned in 1994 for the state House of Delegates and ran for the office of Harrison County magistrate in 1996. In October 1996, Looker was indicted on charges of conspiracy to bomb Federal facilities (see "Criminal Activity"). Bob Lord, founder of the Pennsylvania-based Keystone Militia, ran in 1996 on the ticket of the fledgling Constitutional Party as its candidate for auditor general. That same year, John Moore, of the 1st Missouri Volunteers Militia, ran as a Republican in the primary for the state's 3rd District Congressional seat.

# The Internet

In the past few years, anti-government extremists have added a potent new weapon to their arsenal: the Internet. While the traditional communication tools of extremists — meetings, fax trees, videotapes, shortwave radio, newsletters and magazines — are still the dominant means of spreading their message, the Internet is growing in importance. This worldwide computer network is a very useful tool for pumping out propaganda, facilitating rapid, confidential communication among members and sympathizers, while creating an on-line or “virtual” community of like-minded believers scattered around the country. It gives access to an audience many times larger than any the extremists have ever had, providing a national, indeed international, platform for a movement that has been much more successful organizing into local units than creating a coherent national presence.

While widespread computer use by militias and “common law courts” is relatively new, some extremists saw years ago that electronic communications could help their cause. In the 1980s, Louis Beam, a militant anti-Semitic, racist and anti-government extremist who has had a long association with the neo-Nazi Aryan Nations, saw a key role for computers in his struggle against democratic government. Believing “the government is the foremost threat to the life and liberty of the folk,” Beam urged “a thousand points of resistance,” a strategy that “does not have any central control or direction. . . .” He called it leaderless resistance. Knowing that leaderless resistance would inevitably create communication and coordination problems for “those idealist [sic] truly committed” to the goal of “defeat[ing] state tyranny,” Beam looked to “organs of information such as newspapers, leaflets, computers, etc., which are widely available to all, [to] keep each

person informed of events.” By the mid-1980s, he was trying to establish the “Aryan Nation Liberty Net,” a network of extremist-run computer bulletin boards designed to help coordinate the dispersed cells contemplated by leaderless resistance.

Despite Beam’s ambitions, the network floundered. Computers were costly and not widespread in the extremist community. Bulletin board systems were tricky to administer and had limited networking possibilities. Connecting to the computers often meant making long-distance calls and the slow communication equipment of the day required users to stay on-line for a relatively long time — with the connect charges adding up.

Today’s Internet technology provides extremists of all stripes with a communication system that goes beyond what Beam imagined. Sending mail, having real-time on-line “chats” or retrieving data from a distant source is now a simple — and relatively inexpensive — matter. In addition, the World Wide Web, a technology that was not available 10 years ago, provides a public forum for the distribution of all sorts of information that supports and is useful for anti-government extremists. A graphic, multimedia environment that uses eye-catching typography, bright and arresting images, sound — speech and music — and even video, the Web has enormous possibilities.

So it is hardly surprising that militia members and supporters have taken to the Internet and the World Wide Web. There are dozens of Web sites run by militias and militia supporters. In addition, there are Web Pages run by various “common law” and secessionist groups such as the Republic of Texas. Some sites are run by functioning militias and others are operated by

individuals who sympathize with the movement but are merely "cyberspace warriors." On the Internet — and the World Wide Web in particular — a well-designed presentation can blur the line between the real and the "virtual" organization.

treasonously subverting the Constitution in order to enslave the Citizens of the State of Montana, The United States of America and the World in a socialist union."

Warning on the Web rages against a sheep-like citizenry that cannot see the imminent danger:

*The militia pages on the Web uniformly reflect a fervid belief that any attempt to limit ownership of weapons of all sorts is prima facie evidence of the impending dictatorship by the vaguely defined "New World Order."*

*Warning on the Web* wants to officially thank those who have voted for the re-election of President Bill Clinton [sic]: You traitors have just insured that the New World Order will ultimately take over! . . . Thanks to YOUR stupidity we can now expect the following:

The militia sites or pages on the World Wide Web are filled with fantasies about a power-hungry government run by selfish, self-seeking, if anonymous, forces — a government that is about to impose a ruthless tyranny on the populace. Most express the view that the volunteers of the militia are the true defenders of liberty and democracy. The grandly named U.S. Militia, declaring itself "America's Last Line of Defense," stands "ready to defend [the] nation against the threat of tyranny and oppression, whatever its origin . . . [and is] prepared to wage eternal war by whatever means necessary to keep America free." The source of the threat: "all enemies, foreign and domestic." Restoring America rails against the "sheer number of government crimes, scandals and schemes." Featuring a graphic of the Bill of Rights stamped "Void Where Prohibited by Law," The Patriot Knowledge Base Home Page declares "Our Criminal Congress" guilty of "treason." The Militia of Montana Home Page warns that "The Conspirators to form a SOCIALIST ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT under the UNITED NATIONS are still at work

- Total ban on all rights to keep and bear arms
- Full Martial Law declared — possible use of foreign U.N. "peacekeepers."
- Confiscation of all guns owned by private Citizens
- More government-generated terrorism such as Oklahoma City, etc.

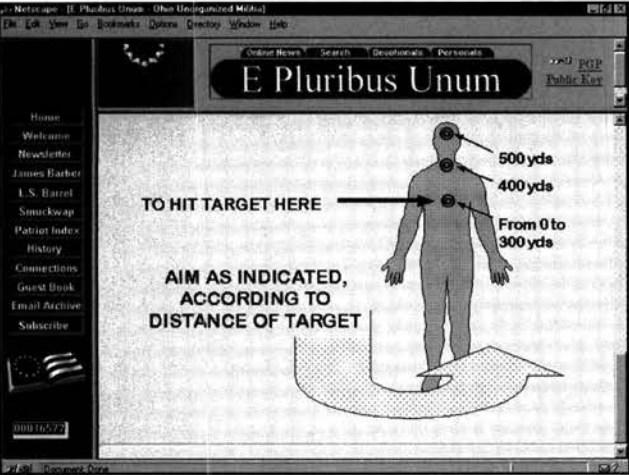
The Militia pages on the Web uniformly reflect a fervid belief that any attempt to limit ownership of weapons of all sorts is prima facie evidence of the impending dictatorship by the vaguely defined "New World Order." The Patriot Knowledge Base rails against "the aim and intent of the New World Order boys to disarm and subjugate [sic] the people. . . ." It sees the solution in a "Patriot movement [that] . . . must begin with educating fellow citizens, and then more victories at the ballot box." But ultimately "[i]t is an armed, united, intelligent and able citizenry that will defeat the enemy within. . . . [R]esorting to arms must be the very last act of the American Patriot. . . . [A]nd if and when the steady methods . . . fail — then



revolutionary style militias may be the *only* last resort. . . . [emphasis in the original]"

Militia Web Sites are filled with connections to sites about guns, survival and military training. The Central Ohio Unorganized Militia posts a "Typical Militia Table of Equipment" that begins:

- (1) WEAPONS AND AMMO, TOTAL 23 POUNDS
- (A) Weapons Case
  - Rifle
  - Pistol
- (B) Ammo Bag
  - Magazine, rifle, 7 ea., fully charged
  - Magazine, pistol, 3 ea., fully charged.



The on-line voice of militia figure J. J. Johnson.

E Pluribus Unum, the on-line voice of J. J. Johnson, one of the more prominent militia spokesmen, features a number of pages that list (with accompanying diagrams) the "aiming points for a full man-sized target to show where to aim to hit the target in mid-chest" at various distances up to 500 yards. And there are a large number of sites with information about how to buy guns and all sorts of survival equipment.

The World Wide Web has a network of Militia-related Home Pages. Many sites link to other Web Pages that are replete with gun-related, survival and paramilitary information, stories of corruption and murder in the highest realms of the government, as well as quack medical and monetary theories: the standard material of conspiracy theory on which much of the anti-government extremist movement thrives.

A group of militia Web Pages attempts to refute the charge that the movement is anti-Semitic, racist and xenophobic. These pages fervently declare that racism and anti-Semitism are incompatible with their definition of patriotism. The Missouri 51st Militia denounces those "racist elements which would deny freedom to certain groups." The Central Michigan Regional Militia even has a link to a site about the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto uprising, presumably to simultaneously show the advantages of an armed citizenry while distancing itself from the claim that the militia is anti-Semitic. Others demonstrate their inclusiveness by linking to the anti-gun control group, Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership.

Some militia pages claim to deplore "hate" groups, but their definition of "hate" is dubious. One site lumps well-known neo-Nazi, racist groups such as 14 Words Press and Aryan Nations in with organizations such as ADL or the Southern Poverty Law Center under an all-purpose heading of "enemies of the people." The site operator apparently regards groups concerned about the dangers posed by armed, self-appointed "patriots" as morally equivalent to groups that advocate the destruction of people because of their race or religion.

Other militias and militia-oriented Web Sites eagerly embrace racism and anti-Semitism.

The Patriot Knowledge Base Home Page prominently features that forged, hoary staple of anti-Semitic literature, *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*. Jack McLamb, a former Phoenix policeman who actively promotes militia membership and who is the founder of Police Against the New World Order, has a site that has, among others, a link to the Liberty Lobby's *Spotlight* page. The Delta Press, a site that is linked to a number of militia sites including the U.S. Militia, sells a variety of books about guns and tactical marksmanship. In addition, it prominently features an ad for *The Turner Diaries*, William Pierce's racist, anti-Semitic fantasy of white, militia-like groups rising up to cleanse the earth of all nonwhites and Jews in a catastrophic war of nuclear annihilation.



The Delta Press, a Web site linked to the U.S. Militia page, features an ad for *The Turner Diaries*.

While the World Wide Web reaches a general audience, the Usenet, a collection of public bulletin boards or community discussion groups, allows for more personalized propagandizing and recruiting. Several newsgroups provide a center for militia and conspiracy-oriented discussions. In these newsgroups, people write letters to the entire community of read-

ers who come to that particular newsgroup. Often the discussions degenerate into "flames," ad-hominem, frequently obscenity-filled attacks. The newsgroups, especially those dealing with controversy, often generate more rage than wisdom, but it becomes fairly easy to identify individuals who share common views and they can be reached by E-mail. In this way, people with similar views, though separated by vast distances, can meet the like-minded and exchange ideas.

A variation of the newsgroup is the private mailing list. These mail lists can be used to cement group solidarity and also allow people with common views to find each other. They can then use E-mail to continue a more private discussion. A number of militia, "common law" and conspiracy-mongering mail lists with names such as Patriots, Law and Justice, Republic-of-Texas and Free World Order ("fighting . . . New World Order type-tyranny") are easily accessible on the Internet.

E-mail is the Internet technology for private communication. It provides a channel for extremely rapid communication among individuals or groups. While the merchandising of extremist ideas takes place on the Web and public debate about extremist beliefs rages in the newsgroups, the extremists can talk privately or plan among themselves.

For the paranoia-driven militia community, such communication does have one drawback: it is not really private. Anything that passes over the Internet is potentially open to interception and this creates real anxiety for militia-oriented Internet users. Consequently, they make use of encryption technology that hides the content of their communications. This makes the contents unreadable by anyone without the "key" to decipher the message. A

software program called PGP (short for Pretty Good Privacy) that makes encryption of E-mail a relatively simple matter is available as "free-ware" on the Internet. Extremists frequently post their "public" PGP key on their Web sites or in their newsgroup messages. Using this public key, anyone can write to them and encode the message with it. But only the recipient, the holder of the "private" key, can read the message.



***Technological developments in computer communications are likely to increase militia interest in the Internet.***

Technological developments in computer communications are likely to increase militia interest in the Internet. In the last year or two, the number of people around the world using the Internet exploded to an estimated 35 million by the end of 1996. While the staggering growth rate may be slowing, new ways of accessing the Internet — high-speed cable TV modems, low-cost "Internet appliances" that are simply stripped down computers, or even

less expensive "Web-TV" devices that connect users through TV top adapters and a phone line — have the potential for sparking an even greater expansion of the Internet audience. These lower-priced devices and the trend to flat-rate unlimited access have the potential to allow the less affluent or less technologically adventurous to go on-line, "surf the Web," and send E-mail. And it is among this group that the militia movement finds many of its most eager adherents.

Web-savvy extremists such as Randy Trochmann, one of the founders of the Militia of Montana, are aware of this. The Internet is "THE GREAT EQUALIZER," proclaims a flyer for an Internet advertising service that lists Trochmann as an "Independent Representative." Distributed along with an announcement for a "Self-Sufficiency and Preparedness Expo" held in Spokane, Washington, in early February 1997, the brochure declares that "Unlike mass-media advertising, a Web page is an effective target-marketing tool." Rhetorically asking, "How Do Successful People and Movements Become Successful?" it provides a somewhat ominous answer: "They Take Action!" It urges: "Do yourself and America a favor. Whether you realize it or not, your future is ONLINE!"

# Preparedness Expos

Anti-government extremists are attempting to recruit sympathizers at gatherings known as "Preparedness Expos." These expos, which have been held in cities across the country since 1989, are advertised as conventions on "Emergency Preparedness," addressing such topics as "Self-Reliant Living," "Food and Water Storage" and, cryptically, "Constitutional Issues." They attract survivalists, outdoorsmen, firearms enthusiasts and all sorts of conspiracy buffs. Attendance at these events has ranged from a few hundred to thousands.


Most booths at the shows do sell materials on "preparedness" or survivalism but many seminars and speeches are devoted to extremist politics and conspiracy theories. Expos over the last two years have featured several of the most prominent names in the anti-government extremist movement: Mark Koernke, Bo Gritz, Jack McLamb, Bob Fletcher, John Trochmann and J. J. Johnson.

At a 1996 expo in Orlando, J. J. Johnson warned that the Atlanta Olympics would bring "martial law" to the United States. Other alarmist themes fed to Expo audiences claim that the Government perpetrated the Oklahoma City bombing and that Federal authorities are building concentration camps to incarcerate Amer-

icans who attempt to oppose the New World Order.

The hatred promoted at these expos is directed not only against the Government but against minority groups as well. At recent expos in Orlando and Denver, Christian Identity literature was freely available. Anti-Semitic tracts by Eustace Mullins have also appeared. Pro-militia and pro-"common law court" material distributed at expos has contained vicious anti-Semitism.

Dan Chittock, who has been organizing expos since 1989, has said, "We are not out to offend anybody. . . . I don't feel there is hatefulness at the show at all. These are down-to-earth, salt-of-the-earth people who are trustworthy Americans." Chittock claims that he does not allow racist material at the events. But the evidence to the contrary is overwhelming.



*At recent expos in Orlando and Denver, Christian Identity literature was freely available.*

# STATE-by-STATE

## Western States

As in other parts of the country, the Western states overall have experienced little growth in militia activity, but have witnessed substantial expansion of "common law court" operations. Militias are strongest and most widespread in Arizona and New Mexico, and they have declined in Colorado, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. "Common law courts," however, have begun to spring up in states across the West, most notably in Arizona, California, Oregon and Washington.

## Alaska

Monthly "common law court" meetings have been held in the Anchorage Public Library.

## Arizona

Feelings of anti-government hostility have been increasing throughout Arizona, and have encouraged the formation of at least one militia in every county. Sources say most of these groups are deliberately small, secretive and loosely-organized; an estimate of their numbers is therefore difficult.

Several larger, more visible militias are also engaged in paramilitary training:

- The state's largest and best organized group is the Arizona Sons and Daughters of Liberty in Prescott Valley. It is led by David D'Addabbo and has between 25 and 50 members.
- The Constitution Militia of 1791, located in Cornville, is led by Sheila Reynolds, and comprises about 20 members. Reynolds regularly communicates with militia sympathizers on the Internet and publishes a militia-oriented newsletter.
- A loosely-knit militia called the Arizona Rangers conducts weapons training in

greater Phoenix and reportedly also has met in Pinal County.

- The Greater Arizona Mutual Protection Association, which is affiliated with Arizona Sons and Daughters of Liberty, meets in Glendale, about 10 miles west of Phoenix. It has about 20 members.

Ten members of a Phoenix group dubbed the "Viper Militia" by law enforcement officials pleaded guilty in December 1996 to charges of providing explosives instruction and a variety of weapons charges. They were sentenced on March 18, 1997. Two additional Viper members, Christopher Floyd and Charles Knight, face similar charges and are scheduled to be tried in spring 1997.

There are currently two established "common law courts" in the state, but sources say at least two dozen more are beginning to organize. In Mesa, 25 miles southeast of Phoenix, a group called the Arizona Township meets regularly in a church. The Township has hosted a national meeting of "common law court" activists. An offshoot of the Arizona Township called the Arizona Township Association convenes in Tucson. Three of its members were convicted in late 1996 by a Pima County jury in connection with liens the trio had filed against the property of local police officers, prosecutors and judges. They face up to three years in prison.

Also in Tucson, "common law court" activist Peter Cojanis, who describes himself as "Prosecutor, Commander-in Chief by Grand Jury Mandate of August 18, 1994," has issued a number of phony court documents over the years, some of which have included anti-Semitic diatribes.

## California

Militia activity has slowed in California, while "common law courts" have become increasingly widespread. In Southern California, militia groups include the Constitutional Militia of Southern California; the Militia of California, headed by D.R. Clark; and the Southwestern Border Militia, which has about 25 members and is led by Rick Wolvin.

An organization called the Granada Forum, located in the San Fernando Valley, regularly attracts anti-government activists to its meetings, which feature speeches by militia and "common law court" figures. The Forum's weekly hotline updates callers on developments in the movement. An offshoot of the group is the Granada Pavillion, in Granada Hills.

"Common law court" activities have particularly escalated in the San Diego area. Regular meetings of one "court" have been conducted at the American Opinion Bookstore, a clearinghouse for right-wing extremist literature. Another "court" has been convening at the Holiday Inn in San Diego, with about 100 participants in attendance. On at least one occasion, racist beliefs were promoted.

Elsewhere, the Freedom Law School, run by Peyman Mottahedeh in Tustin, California, teaches students how to rid themselves of "oppressive taxation and control." In Orange County, "Our One Supreme Court" meets routinely in Costa Mesa and Garden Grove. The "court" has "indicted" and issued phony liens against 10 Orange County municipal court judges. The level of the "court's" activities has fluctuated but was especially high in fall 1996, following the indictment in Southern California of Freeman associate Elizabeth Broderick (see "Criminal Activity").

Another California Freeman associate, John Patrick McGuire of Santa Rosa, studied at the Freeman's Montana compound from September to November 1995. In February 1996, he was arrested and charged with harassing and threatening two California judges. McGuire's father reportedly attempted to bail him out of a Sonoma County jail using a phony Freeman check. Bail was not granted.

Nine people suspected of belonging to a Modesto tax protest group called the Juris Christian Assembly are currently being tried on charges related to the 1994 beating of Stanislaus County Clerk Karen Mathews. George K. Reed, his father George L. Reed, and Roger Knight are accused of plotting the attack on Mathews and getting Roger Steiner to carry out their plan. Prosecutors assert that the men targeted Mathews because earlier she had refused to remove an IRS lien on property owned by George L. Reed. During the attack, Mathews was repeatedly beaten and slashed with a knife. Her assailant also put an unloaded gun to her head.

## Colorado

Six militia cells are known to be operating in Colorado. Two of the groups are active in the Southeastern corner of the state, three are located in the Denver metropolitan area and at least one unit meets in Weld and Larimer Counties. While membership numbers have declined, today's activists are more militant. "Common law court" activity has slowed following the indictment of 13 anti-government extremists in the state. Two "courts" continue to meet, however: the American Lawful Association, run by Doug Campbell in Adams County, and a group in Colorado Springs, led by David van Pelt.



## Idaho

During the standoff between FBI agents and the Montana Freeman, an Idaho-based group calling themselves the Freeman Patriots staged a rally in Lewistown, Montana, in support of the Freeman.

Gary DeMott leads the Boise-based Idaho Sovereignty, a "common law court"-type group. In September 1996, DeMott threatened to have state public officials "arrested" because their oaths of office do not include the words "so help me God." Steps were taken to insure the safety of the state employees.

## Montana

Widespread disenchantment with anti-government extremists, fueled by the Oklahoma City bombing and the Freeman standoff, has forced militias into decline in Montana. The Militia of Montana continues to put out its monthly newsletter, *Taking Aim*, and to market an assortment of militia-oriented literature and survivalist paraphernalia.

The confrontation between the Freeman and the FBI began in late March 1996, when Federal agents attempted to serve arrest warrants on 14 members of the group on charges of orchestrating a conspiracy to defraud Federal, state and local governments. The standoff finally ended 81 days later with the peaceful surrender of the Freeman to the FBI (see "Criminal Activity").

In February 1997, nine members of the "Yellowstone County Supreme Court" held a "habeas corpus hearing" in Billings in support of the Montana Freeman, to discuss the possibility of getting the Freeman released from Federal custody. A week earlier, one of the supporters issued phony legal documents demand-

ing the attendance of officials at the U.S. Marshal's Service, the U.S. District Court, county clerk's office and the U.S. Attorney's office. The papers also ordered the officials to have the Freeman tried before their "common law court."

## New Mexico

There has been some shifting and reorganizing of New Mexico militia groups in the past year but membership figures appear steady. Many militias are heavily armed and some, like the Bernalillo County Militia, conduct paramilitary training sessions.

Groups operating in the Farmington area are part of the Four Corners Patriot Movement and reportedly harbor racist views. Other smaller cells with such beliefs are located in the western part of New Mexico.

Most militias in the state have joined under the umbrella of the New Mexico Citizens Regulated Militia, which has an estimated membership of 300. Its meetings, however, draw no more than 35 people.

There has also been a moderate amount of organized "common law court" activity. The Constitutional Task Force holds regular meetings at the University of New Mexico Law Library and in January 1997 sent two of its members to a national training session in Missouri. The Liberty Forum, another such group, convenes weekly.

## Oregon

The Central Oregon Regional Militia was active in Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson Counties through the early part of 1996, but has been quiet in subsequent months.

The state's "common law court" movement is considerably stronger and more vocal. "The Common Law Supreme Court of Oregon" is based in Salem, but has also held meetings in the Springfield City Hall and in the Veteran of Foreign Wars Hall in Creswell. A spokesman for the group is John David Van Hove, who calls himself Johnny Liberty. Van Hove peddles *Reclaiming Your Sovereign Citizenship*, a "common law" how-to manual filled with sample pseudo-legal documents, including a "Certificate of Exemption From Withholding" and a "Sales and Use-Tax Exemption Certificate." He also operates the Cascadian Resource Center, a propaganda mill for the anti-government extremist movement. The Salem "court" has "re-considered" cases previously decided upon in genuine courts, and has also issued liens against judges and other public officials.

"Our One Supreme Court," whose leaders include Jimmy Williams, Steven Fair, Gary Harvey and Ron Wardell, has met in Wasco County. In Grants Pass, the "United States District Court of Oregon" has brought "charges" against a local judge. The Multnomah County Common Law Court, also known as the Multnomah County Common Law Jural Society, is chaired by Charles Stewart and has attracted about 30 people to its regular sessions. The "court" has "tried" IRS agents and other Federal officials.

An anti-government extremist organization called the Embassy of Heaven has some of the trappings of a "common law court" group. Its members print their own drivers' licenses and license plates and believe they are exempt from state and Federal law. The group is based on a 34-acre encampment 13 miles southeast of Salem and is headed by Pastor Paul Revere, whose real name is Craig Douglas Fleshman.

In January 1997, authorities arrested Fleshman and evicted members of his organization from their settlement for refusing to pay back taxes.

## Washington

Militia activity in Washington State has dropped off somewhat in recent months, but is still going on in at least 12 counties: Chelan, Clark, King, Kitsap, Klickitas, Pierce, Skamania, Snohomish, Spokane, Stevens, Yakima and Whatcom.

One of the main possible deterrents to further growth in the state's militia movement was the indictment in July 1996 of several members of the Bellingham-based Washington State Militia, on conspiracy charges.

The state's "common law court" movement, on the other hand, appears to be flourishing.

"Courts" have been meeting in Snohomish, King, Kitsap and Pierce counties, as well as on Mercer Island, and in Wenatchee and Ritzville. The Washington Christian Jural Society has held seminars on subjects related to "common law."

## Wyoming

While there is little evidence of militia activity, three "common law courts" are known to have met in the state. One such "court," located in Star Valley, also operates a "court" in Idaho. It issued "quiet title" documents to public officials. In early 1996, a second "court" convened once in Douglas, under the leadership of anti-government activist Dave Dameron, and with the participation of 13 "jurors." In Hewlett, a "court" affiliated with the "Pennington County Common Law Court" of Rapid City, South Dakota, met in March 1996, with 14 jurors present. Several members of the "court" are currently under investigation for bank fraud, so further sessions have not been held. It has also



become popular among Wyoming activists to file phony legal notices declaring oneself a "Sovereign" citizen and a "Freeman Character."

## Northeastern States

Anti-government extremist activity in the Northeast mirrors the national trend: militia groups have receded, taking a backseat to "common law court" groups and individuals employing "common law" tactics. In some states, including Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island, militias were never a significant threat. But in other states where militias were more prevalent, most notably in Pennsylvania, the movement has been less vocal and has kept a lower profile. As for the "common law court" movement, anti-government extremists have been known to declare themselves "sovereign citizens" and file bogus legal documents in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. Six "common law court" organizations have been formed in Southeastern Pennsylvania; a leader of a "court" in Massachusetts hosted a lecture by longtime anti-Semite Eustace Mullins.

### Maine

Individuals calling themselves "sovereign citizens" have filed numerous phony legal documents with public officials.

### Maryland

The Maryland State Militia meets regularly in a suburb of Washington, DC. The group is thought to have as few as a dozen members.

### Massachusetts

In Western Massachusetts, a "common law

court" group comprising approximately three dozen activists convenes regularly under the leadership of Steven Maye and Andrew Sanzone. Maye has also filed "common law" documents with the clerk's office in Great Barrington. In September 1996, Sanzone hosted a lecture delivered by Eustace Mullins, a veteran anti-Semitic conspiracy theorist and Holocaust denier.



The Hillsborough Troop of Dragoons operates a Web site with its sister organization in Vermont, Troop B of the Dragoons.

## New Hampshire

Militia activity in the state has slowed in recent months. The Constitutional Militia, headed by Ed Brown, has no more than five members. The White Mountain Militia, led by Scott Stevens, met regularly in the early part of 1996, but was less active toward the close of the year. In Hillsborough County, the Hillsborough Troop of Dragoons has a membership of about 60, but its operations are likely to be hampered by the recent conviction of its leader, Fitzhugh MacCrae. MacCrae pleaded guilty in March 1997 to stealing \$100,000 in military equipment from Fort Devens, a Massachusetts Army base. He also pleaded guilty to charges that he lied to an FBI agent when he

stated that the equipment was stolen by members of a Massachusetts gang. His sentencing date is set for May 14, 1997.

The Troop is also affiliated with the Vermont-based Troop B of the Dragoons; they are collectively called the Regiment of Dragoons. The Regiment operates a site on the World Wide Web which offers a collection of "field manuals," including *The Terrorist's Handbook* and *The Anarchist's Handbook*.

## **New Jersey**

Organized militia activity in the state centers around the New Jersey Militia, which holds regular meetings in Long Branch. The group has protested U.S. participation in United Nations peacekeeping missions by burning the U.N. flag, but there is no evidence that it engages in paramilitary training.

Several bogus liens have been filed by independent "common law" activists operating around the state, but there appear to be no established "court" groups. Legislation counteracting elements of "common law court" activity based on ADL model legislation has been proposed in the New Jersey State Assembly.

## **New York**

While there are few signs of full-scale, organized militia activity in the state, at least two groups have been formed by anti-government activists to address militia-related issues.

A group called the Committee of Correspondence reportedly gathers weekly in Middletown to discuss a perceived plot by the U.N. to take over the country. Members have argued that the Federal Reserve is a fraud and that foreign troops are training on U.S. soil. At least one member has refused to pay his taxes. The

Committee also publishes a newsletter, the *Wallkill Journal*, which has called homosexuals "servants of Satan."

Several members of the Committee also formed "Our One Supreme Court" in Dutchess County and filed a document in the county clerk's office declaring their authority to "issue . . . arrest warrants and advertise by bounty to bring the criminals to speedy trials." Boyd Brewer, a "grand juror" for the "court," owes more than \$130,000 to the IRS. Brewer has refused to pay taxes because he claims the IRS is a collection agency for international bankers and not an agency of the Federal government.

## **Pennsylvania**

In early 1996, approximately 15 established militia organizations were known to operate around the state with varying degrees of activity, while several additional militias were in their infant stages. The groups were based in Bedford, Blair, Bradford, Bucks, Chemung, Chester, Delaware, Elk, Greene, Jefferson, Lancaster, McKeane, Montgomery, Perry, Potter, Warren and Wyoming Counties. Since then, few of these groups have staged public gatherings, making it difficult to assess their current size and strength, or even whether all of these groups remain.

The Bucktail Militia, located in Potter County, has held regular meetings with an attendance of about 20 members and claims to have brigades in McKeane, Warren and Elk counties. In March 1997, the group's Allegheny Mountain Division launched a monthly publication.

There has been a flurry of "common law court" activity in 12 Pennsylvania counties. The "courts" have filed bogus legal documents against local judges, magistrates, police officers

and prosecutors and, in some cases, have intimidated them with veiled threats. There has been sporadic activity by individuals who declare themselves "sovereign citizens"; in several cases these activists were indicted or convicted in connection with their fraudulent acts. In addition, six "common law court" groups operate around the state:

- In Chester County, William Reil, a self-described "Free Born sovereign Christian Citizen," heads a group called Victims of the Corrupt Legal System. Reil has filed phony lawsuits against numerous public officials and in April 1996 was sentenced to 30 days in prison in connection with disorderly conduct, traffic violations and fleeing from police.
- Sovereign American Citizens has held meetings in Denver, Pennsylvania, and in Lancaster County. Kenneth Allan Hornak, a leader of the group, was arrested in October 1996 and charged with harassment, disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. About 20 of Hornak's followers accompanied him to a subsequent hearing.
- A "court" in Lancaster County calling itself "Our One Supreme Court" holds bi-monthly sessions and has a membership of 50.
- A group called Free the People Committee has met in York County and is headed by Jim Grove. A meeting in early spring 1996 attracted 20 people.
- Also in York County, Gary Hahn leads One Nation Under God. About 50 people attend its regular sessions.

## Vermont

Troop B of the Dragoons, an offshoot of the New Hampshire-based Hillsborough Troop of Dragoons, is active in the state, with about 40 members. The Second Continental Army, led

by Monty Witherspoon, has an estimated membership of 100.

## West Virginia

The West Virginia Mountaineer Militia is the only organized militia group in the state, with an estimated 145 members. In October 1996, several of the Mountaineers, including leader Ray Looker, were indicted on Federal charges of conspiring to bomb an FBI fingerprinting facility (see "Criminal Activity").

## Midwestern States

"Common law courts" have surpassed militias as the chief means by which Midwestern anti-government extremists attempt to intimidate and harass their enemies. Bogus documents, false liens, phony license plates and pseudo-legal nonsense are plaguing government agencies throughout the region. Extremists in Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri and Ohio have been convicted of illegal activity stemming from their "common law court" ideology.

### Illinois

The state's strict law against training with weapons for the purpose of fostering civil disorder may be responsible for the nearly complete absence of visible militia activity in Illinois. A number of southern Illinoisans have been convicted of crimes connected to "common law court" activity in neighboring Missouri. Floyd Heubner of Quincy, Donald L. Shaffer of Mendon and Donald L. Young of Rushville were convicted of tampering with a judicial official after they assisted Dennis Logan (see "Missouri") in filing a \$10.8 million bogus lien against a Missouri judge.

## Indiana

Active militia units in Indiana include the Howard County-based Indiana Citizens Volunteer Militia and the Tippecanoe County Citizens Militia. Other militias operate in the following counties: Laporte, Marshall, Morgan, St. Joseph's, Allen, Johnson, Marion, Ripley, Warrick, Dearborn, Starke, and Kosciusko.

## Iowa

A "common law court" group in Winneshiek has reportedly held sessions, sent false money orders to creditors and filed bogus liens against IRS agents. Another "court" has been active in Decorah.

## Kansas

On December 13, 20 and 27, 1995, an ad was run in the Topeka Metro News listing the "Justices" for selected counties in Kansas and the 23 rules to be used in those "courts."

Activists have issued numerous other notices declaring the establishment of bogus judicial bodies known as "Our One Supreme Court," but there has been little actual activity.

Rockie Broaddus, a retired Topeka police officer who has reportedly organized "courts" in Kansas, signed a bogus document that was submitted to a real court in Florida.

The Constitutionist Networking Center in Baldwin has sent out bogus legal notices and propaganda.

## Kentucky

Two Kentucky-based militia groups have been active: the Kentucky Citizens Militia and the Defenders of Liberty.

## Michigan

Michigan-based militia leaders Ray Southwell and Norm Olsen are no longer as prominent as

they were during the early days of the movement. Mark Koernke (aka Mark from Michigan), however, continues to appear at anti-government gatherings across the country.

Some militia training exercises and protests continue to take place in Michigan. Nearly 250 militiamen and supporters turned out to protest the anniversary of the United Nations at the state capitol in October 1996.

With the waning influence of militias in Michigan, anti-government extremists have begun using the tactics of "common law courts" to harass and threaten their perceived enemies. The Michigan Jural Society Association, the "country of Michigan Common-Law venue Supreme Court" [sic], and Fathers for Equal Rights have attempted to reject and evade the true judicial system of the state by producing and distributing pseudo-legal documents.

State legislators are considering a bill that would make it a crime to attempt to issue bogus legal decisions in the name of these phony courts.

## Minnesota

Most Minnesota militias have faded from view over the last year. A Duluth-based group calling itself the Arrowhead Regional Militia has distributed propaganda, but does not appear to have a significant following.

The "common law court" movement in Minnesota, on the other hand, has grown in recent months. Activity has been reported in Todd, Otter Tail, Wadena, Douglas and Ramsey Counties. One St. Paul-based "common law court" group ordered two county judges to appear as defendants in their phony tribunal. After ignoring the notice, one of the judges reportedly received an order to pay \$10,000 or

risk "subsequent common law action," in "Our One Supreme Court."

Minnesota agitators have sent numerous other bogus documents to government officials and have filed bogus liens against them. Three Minnesotans, Marilyn Kerkvliet, Ronald Kerkvliet and Roger Leffler, were convicted on mail fraud charges in connection with tactics learned from the Montana Freemen.

## Missouri

The more extreme militias in Missouri have become less visible, while moderate militiamen have become increasingly involved in the "common law court" movement.

A number of militia groups remain on the scene, including 10 brigades of the Missouri Militia. Other active militias are: the First Missouri Volunteers, led by John Moore; the Northern Missouri Regional Militia; the Gray Wolf Regiment; the Crawford County Militia; Phelps County Militia; Gasconade County Militia; Iron County Militia; Ash Grove Militia; and a group known as Boone's Rangers.

Numerous "common law courts" have operated throughout the state. Dennis Logan led a "court" in Lincoln County that had attracted dozens of activists before Logan and several followers were convicted of filing a \$10.8 million bogus lien against a judge. Other Lincoln County agitators reportedly filed similar liens against a prosecutor and a state trooper. Some Missouri "common law court" activists have even tried to seek damages against government officials in real courts using their own twisted version of the law. The suits, which seek damages of over half a billion dollars, are pending.

## Nebraska

"Common law court" pseudo-jurists in Nebraska are among the nation's most active. Groups using the name "Our One Supreme Court" have flourished across the state, employing most of the tactics typical of the movement nationwide: declarations of sovereignty, indictments against government officers, intimidation of law enforcement, the filing of bogus liens and the holding of in absentia "trials" of their perceived enemies. "Common law court" activists have flooded Nebraska courts with nonsensical documents and tirades that claim to represent the true "common law." Among the most active groups have been the York and Douglas County branches of "Our One Supreme Court."

## Ohio

Most militias in Ohio have opted to become less visible, letting the "common law courts" serve as the public face of anti-government extremism.

Forty-seven Ohio counties have known militia units. The Ohio Unorganized Militia maintains several small units in the state, but is less vocal and visible than in the past. E Pluribus Unum, a militia propaganda outfit, also holds "common law court" sessions. Other militias include the Franklin County Militia, the Guardians of American Liberty and the Buckeye Brigade.

"Common law court" tactics have been used in every county of the state. Bogus "courts" operate in Claremont, Cuyahoga, Franklin, Licking and Wayne Counties. Using the name, "Our One Supreme Court," activists have convened bogus tribunals and charged judges and law enforcement authorities with treason, among other crimes. They have also filed countless false liens against public officials.

## South Dakota

Little militia activity has taken place in South Dakota since the 1996 demise of the Gregory-based Tri-States Militia.

Lawmakers in South Dakota faced with the threat of "common law court" activity in their state have introduced legislation to protect people who have had bogus liens and other legal papers filed against them. In the most extreme such case, "common law court" activists issued a \$25 million lien against a Deputy United States Marshal.

## Wisconsin

Long home to the Posse Comitatus and one of its offshoots, Family Farm Preservation, Wisconsin has seen a considerable amount of "common law court" activity in recent years. Indeed, veterans of the Posse and Family Farm have promoted the formation of these so-called courts.

Donald Treloar, who has led a Wisconsin militia, has attempted to organize "common law courts" across the state. Treloar and several colleagues have issued papers declaring that their "Supreme Court" will be backed by a "militia" to prevent miscarriages of justice.

Having faced the menace of the Posse Comitatus in years past, Wisconsin has already criminalized the filing of false liens, impersonating a public official and simulation of the legal process. In the wake of the recent rise of "common law courts," the state legislature is considering a bill that would enhance the penalties for such activity and make it easier for victims to find legal relief.

## Southern States

Organized militias continue to meet in most of the Southern states, but there has been a noticeable decline in their public activities. This may stem in part from the successful prosecution of militia activists who committed crimes in the region. "Common law courts," on the other hand, are becoming increasingly popular forums for anti-government extremists, particularly in Texas.

## Alabama

The Gadsden Minutemen, the most active and well-known militia group in Alabama, continues to conduct paramilitary training on weekends. Mike Vanderboegh is active with a group called the 1st Alabama Militia.

## Arkansas

There are several active militia groups in Arkansas: The Washington County Militia, which boasts its own handbook; the Unorganized Militia Affiliate in Boone, and the Pyatt Patriots in Marion County. Stewart Douglas Waterhouse, a self-proclaimed militia leader from Arkansas, charged with several Federal offenses, is in prison without bail in Billings, Montana.

"We the People" in Yellville, Arkansas, is the center of "common law court" activity in Arkansas. It is under the leadership of Earl "Bud" McNaught and Evelyn Kelly, who spread their propaganda via fax. McNaught has filed a \$9.3 million lien against an officer who arrested him in connection with a traffic violation. As many as 20 additional activists operating individually in Arkansas have asserted that the official courts have no jurisdiction.

## Florida

Numerous militia groups operate throughout the state of Florida. Among the more prominent Florida militias are: the Panhandle Militia; the Florida Militia 2nd Regiment, and the 19th Regiment, Brevard County Militia. The latter group reportedly engages in paramilitary training.

Other Florida militias include several regiments of the Florida State Militia; the North Central Florida Militia; the North Florida Patriots Network; the Northwest Florida Regional Militia, Alligator Brigade; the Florida Highlander Patriots; the Marion County Citizens Militia; the Panhandle Militia; the Constitutional Militia of Florida; the Pasco Constitutional Militia, and the Patriot Training Network.

Dan Daniels of the notoriously racist National Association for the Advancement of White People has attempted to organize an NAAWP Militia but has gained few recruits.

"Common law courts" operate in at least three Florida counties. These groups include the Restoration Township Jural Society in Brevard County, "Our One Supreme Court" in Palm Beach County, and We The People, in Hillsborough County. Court clerks across the state have received reams of bogus documents produced by these and other pseudo-legal activists. Some government officials reportedly have been targeted with bogus liens against their property.

Bob Johansen, formerly of the Florida Militia 2nd Regiment, has advocated the organization of a "common law court."

## Georgia

The 112th Georgia Militia was active until its

members were convicted of stockpiling pipe bombs in 1996 (see "Criminal Activity").

In January 1996, Louis Debroux, a Georgia-based "common law court" activist, pleaded guilty to plotting to murder a local judge (see "Criminal Activity").

## Louisiana

In addition to the Norwela Common Militia and its associated fax network in Bossier City and Shreveport, there are the Lafayette-based Militia of Louisiana, and the Red River Militia (which has also been active in Texas), also based in Bossier City. The Red River Militia was founded by Robert and Jon Whittington, who are cousins. Robert Whittington was arrested by the FBI in the spring of 1996 and charged with impersonating a Federal officer. News reports at the time indicated that approximately 1,000 weapons were found in his possession. Federal charges against Whittington were dropped, but he still faces state charges of false imprisonment and impersonating a law officer.

There are several active "common law court" groups: the "Common Law Court of Louisiana," Enlightened Patriots, the Louisiana Pro-Gun Coalition and the Common Law Defense Fund, all in or around Lafayette. A group called the Defenders of the Republic meets in the Baton Rouge area. The memberships of the Lafayette organizations overlap somewhat.

## Mississippi

Militia and "common law court" activities are rare in Mississippi. The state's militia operations center around the Mississippi Militia, headed by Drew Rayner and based in Ocean Springs. In February 1997, more than a dozen militia members from several states showed

their support for a Southaven family threatened with eviction by the city. Along with the other militiamen, Rayner stood outside the home and said he hoped a peaceful solution could be reached, but threatened, "force would be met with force." As of this writing, the situation has not been resolved, but no one has resorted to violence.

Legal notices of property liens for extravagant amounts of money have appeared in some local Mississippi newspapers. In April 1996, a former affiliate of the Posse Comitatus in Texas caused a scene in a Harrison County court room by challenging the validity of the court. He was held in contempt, but charges were never pursued by the court.

## North Carolina

The Alamance Minutemen, a militia led by Jeff Rudd, reportedly includes five other members: "Intelligence Officer" Paul Jordan, Walt Dannel, William Parham Edwards, William Stogmer and William Sullivan. The North Carolina Civil Militia, formerly known as the North Carolina Citizen's Militia, serves as an umbrella organization for statewide militia groups. It produces and disseminates training manuals and other propaganda materials, and has a site on the World Wide Web. William O'Brien, a "common law" activist in Wayneville, familiarizes members of the group with "common law court" tactics.

The Citizens for the Reinstatement of Constitutional Government, a 60-member "common law court"-style group with militia sympathies, holds meetings in Monroe and Matthews. Steven Hance, and his sons James and John, have said they attended meetings of the group. In March 1996, the Hances hid out on the ranch of the Montana Freeman, and remained

on the compound throughout the 81-day stand-off with the FBI. The Hances fled to Montana after skipping trial in North Carolina on charges that they had assaulted a police officer and resisted arrest in August 1995. Steven Hance had been stopped in his truck by a police officer for driving without a license plate. Police say he refused to present a driver's license, and that his sons, also in the truck, drove the truck away while several police officers had their hands caught in the vehicle's open windows. The three men are now incarcerated in Montana on charges related to the Freeman stand-off.

Two "common law courts" calling themselves "Our One Supreme Court" meet in the state, one in Kinston, and the second in Franklin. Despite the racist nature of many "common law" precepts, the Kinston-based "court's" members are African-American. Members have filed meritless lawsuits against public officials in their own and neighboring counties, and in one case, have refused to make mortgage payments. More than 30 individuals list themselves as "jurors" of the "court." The "court" in Franklin is led by self-declared "chief justice" Peter Stern, and attracts about 100 people to its monthly meetings. Members have filed Freeman-style liens in Wayne, Lenoir, Haywood, Macon and Cherokee Counties. In March 1996, two of its "justices" were arrested and charged with threatening a Federal prosecutor and intimidating an IRS agent with their pseudo-legal documents.

## Oklahoma

Ray Lampley, leader of the now-defunct Oklahoma Constitutional Militia, and two cohorts, were convicted in April 1996 of plotting to bomb targets including the Houston office of the Anti-Defamation League, the



Southern Poverty Law Center, gay bars and abortion clinics. Lampley was sentenced in July 1996 to 11 1/2 years in prison.

United Sovereigns of America in Del City, Oklahoma, is a clearinghouse for "common law court" and other conspiracy-oriented materials, including the anti-Semitic *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The organization, whose leaders include Jerry Henson, Wayne Gunwall and Darrell Frech, has also held seminars teaching "common law" tactics and has sold phony Freeman-style money orders. Henson was convicted in June 1996 and later sentenced to eight years in prison in connection with printing and selling the bogus checks. In January 1997, Gunwall pleaded guilty to conspiring to avoid paying taxes by harassing U.S. Treasury Department employees.

## South Carolina

Several militias are active in the state: the South Carolina Civilian Militia Corps, headed by Ian Roebuck of Taylors; the South Carolina Citizen Militia based in Clearwater, and the Southeastern States Militia, a self-styled militia umbrella organization. Each militia organization supports an Internet Web site and, in January 1997, Dan Ellenberg of the Southeastern States Militia published "Articles of Alliance for the Southeastern States" and a "Militia Code of Conduct" on the Southeastern States Militia Home Page.

"Common law court" adherents are active in various parts of the state. A tax resistance periodical, the *Patriot Cannon*, is published in Anderson, and an outfit called AWARE sells pseudo-legal how-to tapes and is based in Greenville.

A number of local gun shows have been doing a booming business in the sale and use of plas-

tic burial cache containers for food, ammunition and firearms.

## Tennessee

Harry Bibee, leader of the Tennessee Volunteer Militia, has distributed militia propaganda. He has promoted the activities of militias in neighboring states and has made claims about the alleged "unlawful" activity of Federal law enforcement.

The Chester County Clerk's office has reportedly received bogus legal documents from a local "common law court" advocate.

## Texas

In the months after the Oklahoma City bombing, militias were found to be flourishing throughout the state. Many elements of the Texas militia movement have now taken a new turn, however, making it more difficult to assess their activities as a distinct group. An estimated 12 militias have folded their operations into the Republic of Texas, an anti-government group which claims that Texas was illegally annexed by the U.S., and views itself as the true Lone Star State. The Texas Constitutional Militia, for example, once the strongest and most prominent militia in North Texas, is now working with leaders of the RoT. The RoT has established its own county-based militia-type cells which it calls "defense forces."

A militia group in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, composed of ex-bikers, is reportedly heavily armed and potentially violent. They conduct training exercises at several locales west of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex.

There has been an explosion of "common law court" activity throughout the state. The most prominent activists are members of the Republic of Texas, who have filed thousands of bogus

liens and other pseudo-legal documents against Texas officials ranging from Governor George Bush to local officers. The RoT also operates two "common law courts," located in Lubbock and Arlington.

But other activists have also played a role in clogging the Texas courts. An Orange County woman filed a \$1.8 billion phony commercial lien against Texas politicians claiming a "breach of political duties." In Liberty County, a man issued paperwork declaring himself a "freeman" in an effort to avoid paying a \$300,000 sexual harrassment judgment against him. Thirty Bexar County activists have filed "default judgments" against local officials.

"Common law courts" have convened in Harris County, Austin, Kerrville, Victoria, Houston, Fort Worth and San Antonio. Alfred Adask, Dallas publisher of the "common law"-oriented magazine, *Anti-Shyster*, also runs an organization called Citizens for Legal Reform, which

serves as a propaganda outlet for the "common law court" movement. The group has attracted between 300 and 500 people to its bi-monthly meetings.

## Virginia

In addition to hosting several active militia groups, Virginia is home to Eustace Mullins, a leading anti-Semitic propagandist, who frequently appears at militia and anti-government events (see "Anti-Semitism and Racism"). The Virginia Citizens Militia is led by a 25-year-old highway worker, Douglas Jeffreys. Jeffreys is also the spokesman for another group, the First Virginia Freeborn Civilian Militia. A militia named VIGIL is located in the Tidewater region of Virginia; it has approximately 10 members and puts out two publications. Another group, Citizens in Action, claims 40 members across Virginia and is led by Don Doyle. It describes itself as pro-gun and pro-American.

# Appendices

## APPENDIX A

### ADL MODEL ANTI-PARAMILITARY TRAINING STATUTE

A. (1) Whoever teaches or demonstrates to any other person the use, application, or making of any firearm, explosive, or incendiary device, or technique capable of causing injury or death to persons, knowing, or having reason to know or intending that same will be unlawfully employed for use in, or in furtherance of, a civil disorder; or

(2) Whoever assembles with one or more persons for the purpose of training with, practicing with, or being instructed in the use of any firearm, explosive or incendiary device, or technique capable of causing injury or death to persons, intending to employ unlawfully the same for use in, or in furtherance of, a civil disorder —

Shall be fined not more than \$\_\_\_\_ or imprisoned not more than \_\_\_\_ years, or both.

B. Nothing in this section shall make unlawful any act of any law enforcement officer which is performed in the lawful performance of his official duties.

C. As used in this section:

(1) The term "civil disorder" means any public disturbance involving acts of violence by assemblages of three or more persons,

which causes an immediate danger of or results in damage or injury to the property or person of any other individual.

(2) The term "firearm" means any weapon which is designed to or may readily be converted to expel any projectile by the action of an explosive; or the frame or receiver of any such weapon.

(3) The term "explosive or incendiary device" means (a) dynamite and all other forms of high explosives, (b) any explosive bomb, grenade, missile, or similar device, and (c) any incendiary bomb or grenade, fire bomb, or similar device, including any device which (i) consists of or includes a breakable container including a flammable liquid or compound, and a wick composed of any material which, when ignited, is capable of igniting such flammable liquid or compound, and (ii) can be carried or thrown by one individual acting alone.

(4) The term "law enforcement officer" means any officer or employee of the United States, any state, any political subdivision of a state, or the District of Columbia, and such term shall specifically include, but shall not be limited to, members of the National Guard, as defined in section 101(9) of title 10, United States Code, members of the organized militia of any state or territory of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the District of Columbia, not included within the definition of National Guard as defined by such section 101(9), and members of the Armed Forces of the United States.

## APPENDIX B

### *ADL MODEL "COMMON LAW COURTS" STATUTE*

A. (1) Any person who deliberately impersonates or falsely acts as a public officer or tribunal, public employee or utility employee, including but not limited to marshals, judges, prosecutors, sheriffs, deputies, court personnel, or any law enforcement authority in connection with or relating to any legal process affecting person(s) and property; or

(2) Any person who simulates legal process including, but not limited to, actions affecting title to real estate or personal property, indictments, subpoenas, warrants, injunctions, liens, orders, judgments, or any legal documents or proceedings; knowing or having reason to know the contents of any such documents or proceedings or the basis for any action to be fraudulent; or

(3) Any person who, while acting falsely under color of law, takes any action against person(s) or property; or

(4) Any person who falsely under color of law attempts in any way to influence, intimidate, or hinder a public official or law enforcement officer in the discharge of his or her official duties by means of, but not limited to, threats of or actual physical abuse, harassment, or through the use of simulated legal process—

Shall be guilty of \_\_\_\_\_ and fined not more than \$\_\_\_\_\_ or imprisoned not more than \_\_\_\_\_ years, or both.

B. (1) Nothing in this section shall make unlawful any act of any law enforcement officer or legal tribunal which is performed under lawful authority; and

(2) Nothing in this section shall prohibit individuals from assembling freely to express opinions or designate group affiliation or association; and

(3) Nothing in this section shall prohibit or in any way limit a person's lawful and legitimate access to the courts or prevent a person from instituting or responding to legitimate and lawful legal process.

C. As used in this section:

(1) The term "legal process" means a document or order issued by a court or filed or recorded for the purpose of exercising jurisdiction or representing a claim against a person or property, or for the purpose of directing a person to appear before a court or tribunal, or to perform or refrain from performing a specified act. "Legal process" includes, but is not limited to, a summons, lien, complaint, warrant, injunction, writ, notice, pleading, subpoena, or order.

(2) The term "person" means an individual, public or private group incorporated or otherwise, legitimate or illegitimate legal tribunal or entity, informal organization, official or unofficial agency or body, or any assemblage of individuals.

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