

HATE CRIMES: BLACKS, JEWS AT RISK

HOW TWO CANADIANS HELPED NAB AMERICA'S TOP NEO-NAZI

Bill White has been called 'one of the most vicious anti-Semites' of his day. Now, thanks to Canadian testimony, the list of charges against the neo-Nazi chief includes threatening an Ottawa anti-racism campaigner

COLIN FREEZE

DECEMBER 12, 2008

A notorious American neo-Nazi was charged yesterday with threatening a prominent Canadian anti-hate campaigner, as well as blacks and Jews in the United States.

Bill White was indicted after secret testimony from a Canadian human-rights lawyer, Richard Warman - the alleged target of one threat - and also from Canadian Jewish Congress chief executive Bernie Farber.

The two men told a grand jury in Virginia last September that Mr. White and other U.S.-based white supremacists routinely threaten Canadians such as themselves, and Canadian agencies who challenge hate speech. This, and testimony from many other witnesses, led to seven new criminal counts against Mr. White.

The 31-year-old Mr. White, who describes himself as the "commander" of the American National Socialist Workers Party, was first charged last October with threatening a juror in a case against another white supremacist. U.S. prosecutors now allege Mr. White posted the addresses of many of his perceived enemies on the Internet, while urging his followers to hurt or kill them.

Print Edition - Section Front



[Enlarge Image](#)

More National Stories

- Access to information not a right, top court told
- Harper vows to name 18 new senators
- Organizers hope venue will be Olympic landmark
- Labour-mobility rules could mean exodus of rural MDs, licensing group warns
- Foreign workers decry 'harsh' dismissals from farms
- Go to the National section



The complaint specifies he criminally threatened Ottawa's Mr. Warman, who has mounted a one-man crusade to eradicate hate speech on the Internet by making more than 20 complaints to Canadian rights bodies over the years.

"He deserves to be killed," is what Mr. White allegedly said. The indictment reads that "William A. White knowingly transmitted in interstate commerce communications by Internet postings directed at RW, a Canadian lawyer, containing a threat to injure RW."

The U.S. complaint arrives in the midst of a heated Canadian debate about whether this country should rein in censorship laws. Last month, a much-anticipated report urged the Canadian Human Rights Commission to stop trying to censor hate speech, finding that censorship of Internet hate speech should be dealt with exclusively by criminal law.

But Mr. Farber is one man who disagrees with that position. The Toronto-based Jewish congress leader has spent decades battling neo-Nazis and white supremacists. He argued that Mr. White and his ilk can make hateful remarks for years while shielding themselves with free-speech laws.

"He is one of the most vicious anti-Semites I've had the displeasure of having had to deal with," Mr. Farber said in an interview yesterday. "He was issuing death threats against Richard, publishing his home address ... and fortunately, he wasn't able to find mine."

Mr. Farber has documented Mr. White's postings for years - including one targeting a Canadian Supreme Court Justice, Madam Justice Rosalie Abella, who is Jewish - but said he didn't know about the U.S. criminal investigation until he was asked to testify this summer.

He happily obliged and made the trip to Roanoke, Va. In that city of about 300,000 people, Mr. White is known as a real estate agent who urges poor blacks to get out of properties he wants to buy.

In an interview last night, Mr. Warman said he was glad to testify to the Virginia grand jury and will testify at trial.

"I want to see justice done," the Ottawa human rights-crusader said.

Asked if criminal law was adequate for dealing with hate speech, he said it wasn't - pointing out he first complained about the threats to his life more than two years ago, to police on both sides of the border.

Mr. White, occasionally wearing Nazi swastikas but always swaddling himself in U.S. First Amendment rights, has frequently insisted he knows the precise line between free speech and criminality. The cover of a magazine he published recently had the image of president-elect Barack Obama in a gun's crosshairs, under the headline "Kill this Nigger?"

He often espoused a special contempt for Canada's relatively constraining hate-speech laws which, he noted, didn't generally apply to him so long as he was in Virginia. "In terms of a Canadian, I think we'd actually have to conspire to kill him before it broke any legal lines," he said in a 2005 Internet post. " ... At least that seems to be what the feds keep telling Canada whenever they demand my arrest."

Yesterday in Virginia, acting U.S. attorney Julia Dudley said some lines had clearly been crossed, as she announced the new charges against Mr. White. "When freedom of speech turns into threats against innocent people, it is the responsibility of the law enforcement community to intervene and protect its citizens," she said.

The other counts against Mr. White alleged he made threats against poor black tenants suing their landlords. He is also accused of threatening a Pulitzer-prize winning Miami Herald journalist, a university professor in New Jersey, and mayor in that same state - all of whom are black.

Mr. White also stands accused of threatening a Citibank debt collector for trying to get him to pay his bills. The indictment refers to many of Mr. White's own alleged Internet postings, including ones that say, "We do fun stuff like start riots and kidnap famous Jews" and, simply, "Heil Hitler."

© Copyright 2008 CTVglobemedia Publishing Inc. All Rights Reserved.

CTVglobemedia

globeandmail.com and The Globe and Mail are divisions of CTVglobemedia Publishing Inc., 444 Front St. W., Toronto, ON Canada M5V 2S9
Phillip Crawley, Publisher