


# America First Legal Reveals Explosive Documents Exposing Biden Department of Justice’s Partnership and Coordinated Campaign with the Southern Poverty Law Center to Weaponize Civil Rights Enforcement

 [aflegal.org/press-release/america-first-legal-reveals-explosive-documents-exposing-biden-department-of-justices-partnership-and-coordinated-campaign-with-the-southern-poverty-law-center-to-weaponize-civil-rights-enfor](https://aflegal.org/press-release/america-first-legal-reveals-explosive-documents-exposing-biden-department-of-justices-partnership-and-coordinated-campaign-with-the-southern-poverty-law-center-to-weaponize-civil-rights-enfor)

October 3, 2025

Today, America First Legal (AFL) released explosive new documents obtained through Freedom of Information Act requests and litigation showing how the Biden Department of Justice (DOJ) partnered with the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) and gave the left-wing extremist group unprecedented access and influence over federal civil rights enforcement, including training DOJ prosecutors, standing meetings with DOJ leadership, and regular “coffee and danish” meetings with top DOJ officials.

Biden’s DOJ not only offered SPLC a seat at the table—it handed over early access to FBI data, encouraged SPLC’s participation at standing quarterly meetings, and even invited the partisan extremist group to lead official trainings for federal officials. This access included regular communications with DOJ’s Civil Rights Division, as well as with the Office of the Deputy Attorney General. America First Legal has obtained THOUSANDS of pages of records of responsive documents to its requests, and will release additional findings in subsequent releases.

This was not a casual relationship; it was a deeply embedded partnership that put a discredited, ideological smear factory—best known for putting mainstream groups like Turning Point USA and Moms for Liberty on its “hate map” alongside the KKK—at the heart of the Justice Department’s civil rights agenda. Biden’s DOJ handed over the training of its federal prosecutors to SPLC, then cozied up to its staffers over coffee and danishes.

iv. It was a productive exchange of ideas, and provided concrete evidence that our police reform work is having significant impact.

4. Hate Crimes Symposium: CRT will provide an update on its upcoming hate crimes symposium.
  - a. From November 7-9, 2023, the Criminal Section will hold a hate crimes symposium focusing on the investigation and prosecution of federal hate crimes. More than 100 AUSAs and CRM Trial Attorneys are anticipated to attend as well as agents from the FBI's Hate Crimes/Domestic Terrorism Fusion Cell. While the presenters will primarily involve CRM attorneys, AUSAs, attorneys from the National Security Division, and staff from the SPLC will also present.

From: Michael Lieberman (b)(6) @splcenter.org>  
Sent: Thursday, April 20, 2023 8:35 AM  
To: Moosy, Robert (CRT) <(b)(6)>  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] an article lauding your Justice Department hate crime work

Good morning Robert,  
Is it time to reinvigorate our coffee and Danish meet up across from Justice?  
I hope we can do that soon.

Happy to say good things about your work [in this article about the Leadership Conference new hate crime report yesterday.](#)

He added, "No Justice Department has been as outspoken as [this one led by] Attorney General [Merrick] Garland."

Lieberman noted that the current DOJ is comprised of experienced civil rights attorneys like Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta and Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke.

"They know about hate crime, they've written about hate crime, and now they're in a position to speak out knowledgeably about hate crime and that is crucially important," he said.

Onward!  
Michael



**Michael Lieberman** he/him/his  
Senior Policy Counsel, Hate & Extremism | Policy  
Southern Poverty Law Center & SPLC Action Fund

T (b)(6)

(b)(6) @splcenter.org | splcenter.org | splactionfund.org

Emails show that SPLC received early, embargoed access to FBI hate-crimes data, giving its staff the chance to draft talking points and coordinate with DOJ before the data ever went public. Kristen Clarke, then-Assistant Attorney General for DOJ's Civil Rights Division, even reached out to SPLC staff, wondering "if there are federal civil rights matters of concern that

we should be tracking.” This was an invitation from the Biden DOJ for radical outside groups to help shape priorities and drive the very civil rights agenda that federal prosecutors were then trained to enforce. The result was federal civil rights enforcement that looked less like equal justice and more like SPLC’s hit list.

**OP**  
From: "Briden, Myesha (ODAG)" (b) (6)  
To: "Moffeire, Paul (CRS)" (b) (6)  
Subject: RE: Hate crimes data  
Date: Wed, 07 Dec 2022 19:57:47 -0500  
Importance: Normal  
Inline-Images: image001.jpg

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FBI, Paul,

During yesterday's call with FBI, SIS, CRT, EOUSA, and OPA, the components discussed the following plans in preparation for the data release:

- FBI conducted a Beta release on Monday that gave 5 organizations (the Leadership Conference, American Jewish Committee, ADL, SPLC, SJB Coalition, and the Arab American Institute) 24-hour access to the 2021 hate crime data.
- FBI is coordinating with OPA to conduct a press call at 8:30am on 12/12/22 before the data is released. FBI-CIS, FBI-CID and someone from either OASG or CRT will participate in the call.
- FBI will publish a press release as the data is made public, targeting DOJ regulars and outlets that have made specific outreach concerning the hate crime data.
- FBI-CIS is preparing FAQs that will be linked to the web-site data. (They will share the FAQs with OPA, CRT, EOUSA, and OIP.)
- CRT will host a call with 10 or so civil rights stakeholders either the evening of the data release or the morning after.
- OIP within the coming days/weeks, OIP will publish a blog post outlining upcoming hate crime grant awards under the Till and Shepherd/Byrd programs.

If CRS has anything to add, please send it to me so I can inform the group.

Best,  
Myesha

Date: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 at 4:55 PM  
To: "Clarke, Kristen (CRT)" (b) (6)  
Cc: Lynn Tolerson (b) (6) [ltolerson@spjcenter.org](mailto:ltolerson@spjcenter.org)  
Subject: RE: Touching Base

Hi Kristen,

Thanks so much for reaching out. I would be delighted to find time to talk. Unfortunately, I'm leaving the country tomorrow and will return early next week. If next week is not too late, I would appreciate the time. I've copied my assistant Lynn on this message in the hopes that she can work with your team to schedule.

All my best,  
Margaret

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From: Clarke, Kristen (CRT) (b) (6)  
Sent: Friday, October 28, 2022 1:18 PM  
To: Margaret Huang (b) (6) [mhuang@spjcenter.org](mailto:mhuang@spjcenter.org)  
Subject: Touching Base

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.**

Margaret,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to see if we can find time for a 15 minute call. I wanted to flag some of our work on prison conditions and other work in the Deep South for your awareness, and see if there are federal civil rights matters of concern that we should be tracking.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kristen

Kristen Clarke  
Assistant Attorney General  
Civil Rights Division  
U.S. Department of Justice

**OP**  
Hi Michael,

Were you in the group who got a **copy from FBI**? Could  
Thanks,  
Robert

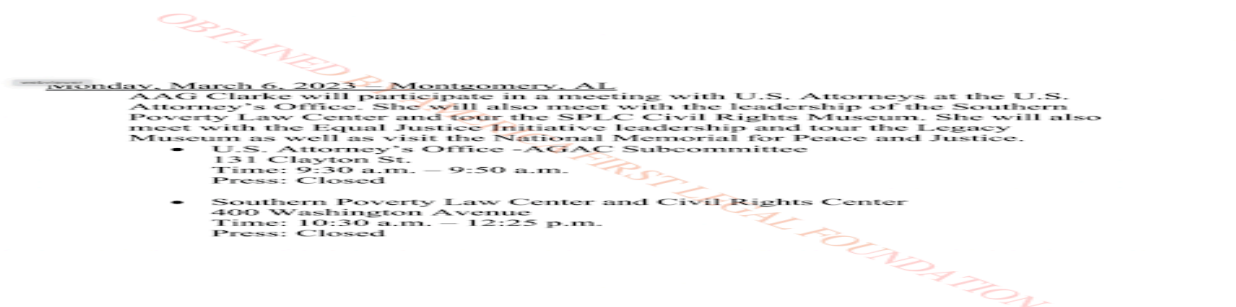
The partnership was institutionalized through quarterly DOJ Civil Rights Division meetings where the SPLC was a regular participant. Agendas show SPLC’s assigned speaking roles—like training attendees on “public education re: hate crime data release”—and schedules were even shifted around to accommodate top Biden officials like then-Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta. These quarterly meetings also included other controversial, partisan groups like Rainbow Push, Color of Change, Human Rights Campaign, National Action Network, Southern Coalition for Social Justice, Law for Black Lives, and others.



AFL previously uncovered documents showing that not long after, the Department of Homeland Security's now-debunked Homeland Intelligence Experts Group declared that "most of the domestic terrorism threat" in America "comes from supporters of the former President." The Biden Administration was rife with this politicized, dangerous narrative that targeted half the country as extremists not deserving the full protection of the Constitution.



DOJ leaders also developed a close rapport with SPLC staff. Then-Assistant AG Clarke emailed the group expressing how much she was "looking forward" to visiting them on an official government trip to Montgomery, Alabama, in which she also toured SPLC's headquarters. Other DOJ staff described regular "coffee and Danish" meetings with SPLC operatives, underscoring the day-to-day collaboration between the Justice Department and a radically partisan firm.



This relationship culminated in public platforms: the SPLC was given a prime speaking slot at the DOJ's 2023 "hate crimes symposium," in which it trained more than 100 federal prosecutors. R.G. Cravens, a senior SPLC analyst, used the opportunity to equate "viewpoint diversity" with "white nationalism" and even falsely tied AFL's lawsuit against Target to bomb threats—failing to mention that the very article he cited confirmed the threats came from Leftists demanding more LGBTQ merchandise on the shelves.

To: Clarke, Kristen (CRT (b) (6)) Smith, Johnathan (CRT (b) (6)) Sooknanan, Sparkle (CRT (b) (6))  
From: Mosey, Robert (CRT (b) (6))  
Sent: Fri 10/27/2023 6:58:17 AM (UTC-4:00)  
Subject: NAC Hate Crimes Symposium  
113971 - CLE AgendaFinal.docx

If it's not too late, we should mention this at the DAG Meeting?

Hate Crimes Symposium at the NAC. From November 7-9, 2023, the Criminal Section will hold a hate crimes symposium focusing on the investigation and prosecution of federal hate crimes. More than 100 AUSAs and CRM Trial Attorneys are anticipated to attend as well as agents from the FBI's Hate Crimes/Domestic Terrorism Fusion Cell. While the presenters will primarily involve CRM attorneys, AUSAs, attorneys from the National Security Division, and staff from the SPLC will also present.

1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

LUNCH

2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

**SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER:  
INTELLIGENCE REPORT (No CLE sought)  
R.G. Cravens**

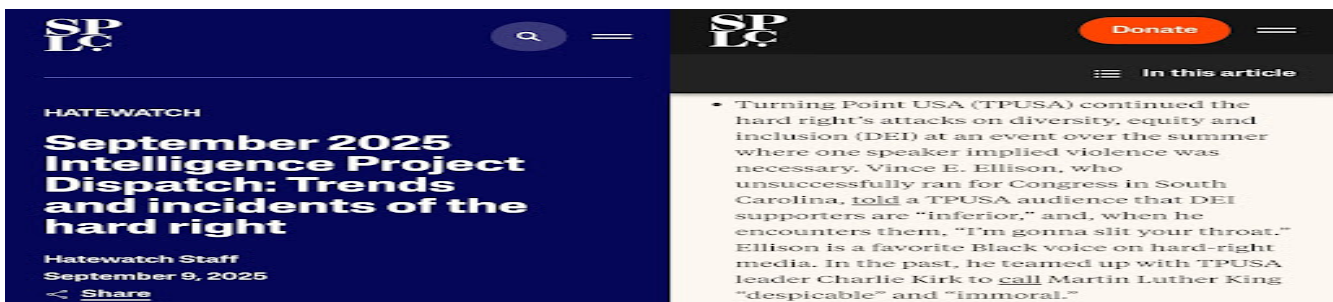
This presentation will provide an overview of important, disturbing trends and developments within the anti-LGBTQ movement, including the surge in threats and violence against transgender people, children, and their caregivers. By focusing on commonalities in rhetoric, symbols, locations, and actors involved in violent anti-LGBTQ attacks and targeted intimidation, this presentation will help investigators and prosecutors identify potential evidence and motivations for bias crime.

3:00 - 3:15 p.m.

REMARKS FROM THE ACAC CIVIL RIGHTS

Crucially, this symposium took place just one month after the October 7 attack by Hamas on Israel, one of the worst antisemitic massacres of the 21st century, in which over 1,200 innocent Israelis lost their lives. Yet DOJ and SPLC devoted their agenda to advancing partisan causes. Not a single initiative, speech, or even statement aimed to address antisemitism or to protect Christians and Jews against hate crimes.

SPLC has refused to tone down its inflammatory rhetoric directed at mainstream conservative groups and viewpoints. In fact, SPLC included Charlie Kirk and Turning Point USA in its "Hatewatch" newsletter, smearing both the group and its founder as dangerous extremists. The newsletter was published just one day before Kirk's public assassination at the hands of a radical leftist. SPLC did not apologize for its article in the wake of Kirk's assassination, nor did it condemn or even comment on his murder that took place in broad daylight on a college campus.



Attacking its political opponents while failing to condemn actual violence is nothing new for SPLC:

- SPLC did not condemn the recent targeted attack on an ICE facility in Dallas, Texas, in which a leftist opened fire, killing at least two people.
- SPLC did not condemn the attempted assassination of Justice Brett Kavanaugh, though it did incite violence against him online on multiple occasions.
- SPLC did not comment on the leftist arsonist who broke into the home of Democrat Governor Josh Shapiro while he, his wife, and their family were sleeping, smashing windows and igniting two Molotov cocktails.
- SPLC did not condemn the October 7th attack on Israel by Hamas, nor has it condemned the resulting surge in antisemitism.

By partnering with and outsourcing its hate-crimes enforcement to the SPLC, the Biden DOJ corrupted civil rights for partisan gain. It trained federal prosecutors to smear political opponents while ignoring real acts of violence occurring routinely during the Biden Administration. And the cost is not abstract—lives have already been lost, ripped away by radicals affirmed by violent leftist rhetoric for years. Until the Left breaks from the dangerous radicalism that has infected its ideology and abandons its obsession with silencing its opponents over protected speech, American lives will remain at risk.

“Every American should be bothered by the fact that the Biden DOJ appears to have acted as a pawn of radical activists at the discredited, beclowned SPLC,” said Gene Hamilton, President of America First Legal. “By weaponizing civil rights enforcement, Biden’s DOJ undermined the rule of law and endangered the constitutional rights of Americans who did not fall in line with their radical agenda.”

AFL will continue exposing the extent of this coordination between the Biden DOJ and the SPLC, ensuring federal civil rights enforcement is returned to the American people, not controlled by partisan smear factories.

[Read the document production here.](#)

[Read more about the investigation here.](#)