

Federal Grand Jury Charges Southern Poverty Law Center for Wire Fraud, False Statements, and Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering

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Between 2014 and 2023, the SPLC secretly funneled more than \$3 million in donated funds to individuals who were associated with various violent extremist groups including the Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nations, and National Socialist Party of America

A Grand Jury in Montgomery, Alabama, today returned an [indictment](#) charging the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) with 11 counts of wire fraud, false statements to a federally insured bank, and conspiracy to commit concealment money laundering. The United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Alabama Northern Division filed two forfeiture actions to recover alleged proceeds of the organization's fraud scheme. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) investigated this case with assistance from the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI).

"The SPLC is manufacturing racism to justify its existence," said Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche. "Using donor money to allegedly profit off Klansmen cannot go unchecked. This Department of Justice will hold the SPLC and every other fraudulent organization operating with the same deceptive playbook accountable. No entity is above the law."

"The SPLC allegedly engaged in a massive fraud operation to deceive their donors, enrich themselves, and hide their deceptive operations from the public," said FBI Director Kash Patel. "They lied to their donors, vowing to dismantle violent extremist groups, and actually turned around and paid the leaders of these very extremist groups - even utilizing the funds to have these groups facilitate the commission of state and federal crimes. That is illegal – and this is an ongoing investigation against all individuals involved."

The SPLC is a non-profit organization headquartered in Montgomery, Alabama, whose mission, according to its website during the relevant time period, was to be a "catalyst for racial justice in the South and beyond, working in partnership with communities to dismantle white supremacy, strengthen intersectional movements, and advance the human rights of all people."

According to the indictment starting in the 1980s, the SPLC began operating a covert network of individuals who were either associated with violent and extremist groups, such as the Ku Klux Klan, or who had infiltrated violent extremist groups at the SPLC's direction. Unbeknownst to donors, some of their donated money was being used to fund the leaders and organizers of racist groups at the same time that the SPLC was denouncing the same groups on its website.

“Donors gave their money believing they were supporting the fight against violent extremism,” said Acting United States Attorney Kevin Davidson. “As alleged, the SPLC instead diverted a portion of those funds to benefit individuals and groups they claimed to oppose. That kind of deception undermines public trust and social cohesion.”

Between 2014 and 2023, the SPLC secretly funneled more than \$3 million in donated funds to individuals who were associated with various violent extremist groups including:

- Ku Klux Klan
- United Klans of America
- Unite the Right
- National Alliance
- National Socialist Movement
- Aryan Nations affiliated Sadistic Souls Motorcycle Club
- National Socialist Party of America (American Nazi Party)
- American Front

According to the indictment, the objective of the scheme and artifice was to obtain money via donations through materially false representations and omissions about what the donated funds would be used for.

In order to covertly pay the individuals, the SPLC opened bank accounts connected to a series of fictitious entities. The covert nature of the accounts allowed the SPLC to disguise the true nature, source, ownership, and control of the fraudulently obtained donated money the SPLC paid the individuals. In order to keep the scheme going, the SPLC made a series of false statements related to the operation of the accounts.

A conviction will result in the forfeiture of financial gains from the alleged illegal activities.

Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche and FBI Director Kash Patel made the announcement in Washington.

The details contained in the civil forfeiture complaint are allegations only.

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