

# Democrats Beclown Themselves by Defending SPLC Amid KKK Funding Scandal

TYLER O'NEIL • April 23, 2026

The [Southern Poverty Law Center](#), which makes its money by exaggerating “hate” to scare donors and by comparing conservatives to the Ku Klux Klan, was itself funding Klan members—and now major Democrats are beclowning themselves by defending it.

Like a dog returns to its vomit, so [Democrats return to the ridiculous claim](#) that the SPLC is some sort of noble civil rights group and that to attack it is to attack America’s soul.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., claimed that the Justice Department’s indictment against the SPLC is “turning what America’s all about inside out.”

He noted that “in 1983, the [Ku Klux Klan](#) tried to burn down the Southern Poverty Law Center for daring to oppose its hatred.”

“More than four decades later, the Trump administration is trying to do the same thing in the courtroom,” Schumer said.

That’s a powerful line, but is it true?

Schumer didn’t address the [specific charges in the indictment](#)—six counts of wire fraud, four counts of bank fraud, and one count of conspiracy to conceal money laundering. Nor did he address the allegations that the SPLC didn’t just pay \$3 million to a set of “informants” in white nationalist and neo-Nazi groups, but actually *directed racist social media posts* and

*helped bring more people to the white nationalist “Unite the Right” rally in [Charlottesville in 2017](#), paying the very same extremists it highlighted on its website.*

The Democrat merely dismissed the idea as laughable.

“It has nothing to do with alleged wire fraud, with the Southern Poverty Law Center somehow working in coordination with the KKK,” Schumer said. “That’s ridiculous on its face! It doesn’t pass the laugh test.”

If the good senator has any evidence the SPLC did *not* fund KKK members, I’d love to see it. The claim is extraordinary, but that doesn’t mean it isn’t true. The SPLC hasn’t denied it—the group has merely argued that it was funding “informants” in order to protect victims from potential violence.

## Doug Jones

Doug Jones, a former senator from Alabama, also condemned the indictment as “pure political retribution,” casting the SPLC as a noble group “seeking justice on behalf of individuals and communities who cannot seek that justice themselves.”

He noted one of the SPLC’s legal victories in the early 1980s and claimed, “It is absolutely ridiculous to think that they were raising money in a fraudulent way simply because they did not disclose publicly all of the tactics they were using in trying to ... dismantle” white nationalist groups.

As for “paying informants,” Jones noted that “those are the tactics used by law enforcement every day.” He added, “I know firsthand that the Southern Poverty Law Center in the years past have given this information, and shared this information with local law enforcement and the FBI.”

Jones served as an assistant U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Alabama from 1980 to 1984, and he returned to that district as U.S. attorney from 1997 to 2001.

While it stands to reason that the SPLC's paid informants program dates to the 1980s—when the center faced a violent attack from the Klan—Jones could not have known “firsthand” about the SPLC's informant program from 2014 to 2023, the period in the indictment.

## Not Your Daddy's SPLC

That's ultimately where so much of the Democrats' defense of the SPLC falls apart. Sure, in the 1970s and 1980s, the SPLC did a great deal of noble work.

The thing is, the SPLC's fundraising strategy focused on fighting the KKK, and the center eventually ran out of grand dragons to slay. It repurposed its Klanwatch program to the broader “Hatewatch,” and started putting mainstream conservative and Christian groups on a “hate map” with largely defunct Klan chapters.

The early SPLC represented poor people in the South—it even represented white people in a reverse racism case. But today's SPLC routinely smears conservatives, and the “hate map” has inspired real violence.

In 2012, a terrorist targeted the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C. He later told the FBI that he used the “hate map” to target FRC. Last year, the SPLC added Turning Point USA to the “hate map.” A few months later, Tyler Robinson allegedly murdered Charlie Kirk, saying he had had enough of Kirk's “hate.”

The SPLC has entered into information sharing with Antifa agitators through a mediator. One of its lawyers was arrested in 2023 at a Molotov cocktail riot. The group repeatedly covers for Antifa, Black Lives Matter, and Jane's Revenge.

It's high time Democrats like Schumer and Jones wake up and smell the Molotov cocktail fumes. This isn't their daddy's SPLC. It's a scandal-plagued left-wing smear factory that lost all credibility long ago and has now been publicly revealed for the farce it has been for decades.

The list of SPLC scandals sounds like something out of Mad Libs: [racial discrimination](#), [sexual harassment](#), [offshore accounts](#), [inspiring terrorism](#), [union-busting](#), [transgender ideology](#),

critical race theory, ties to Antifa, demonizing concerned parents, and anti-Christian bias. If you want a reason to distrust the SPLC, pick your poison.

Anyone promoting SPLC as a noble civil rights group should reckon with its considerable baggage—and it's only gotten worse since I wrote the book about it in 2020.

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