

## Culture

### Anti-Tax Group Makes 'Final Warning' to Federal Government

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**Washington (CNSNews.com)** - A cross-country anti-tax rally culminated in the nation's capital Thursday, with several hundred protestors warning all branches of the federal government to "obey the Constitution, or else."

The conservatives and Libertarians attending the rally said their protest should serve as a wake-up call to lawmakers, but the Anti-Defamation League regards the protest as an "extremist" threat.

"The tax protest movement is a right-wing extremist movement," said Mark Pitcavage, director of fact finding for the ADL. "You're not talking about tax reformers here. You're talking about people who have incredible conspiracy theories about the government."

The ADL considers those who organized and attended the anti-tax rally to be such a serious threat, that the ADL included the group on its monthly calendar of "extremist events." Pitcavage said that the event's organizer - a group called "We The People Congress" - advocates an agenda that is "so far out of the mainstream" that the group has effectively disenfranchised itself from the rest of American society.

"These are people who do not think simply that taxes are too high or want tax reform," Pitcavage said. "They have convinced themselves they do not have to pay taxes and that there's a major government conspiracy designed to cover-up that fact."

Pitcavage also warned that the anti-tax movement is not confined to protest rallies.

"It's also a movement that has been linked strongly to violence; to attacks on IRS agents; to blowing up IRS offices, as well as many other crimes," he said. "There's a great deal of criminal activity associated with the movement."

#### 'Turn back time'

A spokesman for We The People Congress dismissed the ADL's accusations as "an incredible propaganda campaign." Mike Bodine said the sole purpose of the anti-tax rally (called Freedom Drive 2002) is to restore the Constitution to what it was in 1788.

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"Frankly, I don't understand how trying to uphold and defend the Constitution of this nation can be construed to be an extremist event by anybody," Bodine said. Unfortunately, we do question government," he added.

According to Bodine, his group has issued four "petitions for redress of grievances" to the federal government. Those petitions challenge the constitutional legitimacy and legality of the federal income tax; the Federal Reserve; the War Powers clause; and the USA Patriot Act.

The first petition states that there is no legal authority for the federal government to enforce the federal income tax on average Americans. He said research conducted by We The People Congress includes the sworn testimony of IRS agents and CPAs who support the group's claim.

The second petition accuses the federal government of auctioning off the U.S. Treasury to the highest bidding corporations, financiers and campaign contributors.

We The People Congress has also demanded that Congress and the president adhere to the Constitution's War Powers clause in the imminent war against Iraq. Bodine said the Constitution mandates that Congress must pass a formal declaration of war before the U.S. can commit troops to battle. A resolution, such as that recently passed by Congress, is not enough, the group insists.

"The reason that they don't make a formal declaration of war anymore, and that we haven't since World War II, is that it's very, very politically difficult to do," Bodine said. "But that's exactly why the Founding Fathers put it in there. It was supposed to be difficult to do."

Bodine said his group's final petition condemns Congress for passing the USA Patriot Act, which he said, contains language that clearly violates the Constitution. According to Bodine, the law makes it legal for law enforcement officials to disregard the "search and seizure" clause contained in the Fourth Amendment.

### **Armed and angry**

"We're trying to give the government a warning, kind of like a final warning," said Rick Stanley, a Denver businessman and member of the Libertarian Party, who recently tried to unseat Sen. Wayne Allard (R-Colo.).

Last March, Stanley released a comprehensive list of demands, including repeal of "all unconstitutional laws" at all levels of government. "In other words, they've been given the petition for redress of grievances many times, and the bottom line is we want them to obey the Constitution...or else," he said.

Asked what "or else" means, Stanley was evasive, but he hinted at armed rebellion, mentioning a "Million Gun March" he is planning for July 4, 2003.

"We're coming [to Washington] to make sure that they [the government] comply with the Constitution and with our petition demands.

"To me, it [the Million Gun March] will be the thing that dislodges the government that has overthrown America from its perch. And what's going to happen is 'We, the people' will be running the government from that day forward."

Stanley and Bob Schulz, the latter the chairman of We The People Congress, are urging anti-tax activists to stop paying their income taxes, which both men

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claim they already have done.

Stanley said his message to the federal government is clear: "We're cutting off your funding. We're cutting off your money supply."

But Stanley does not believe the vast majority of Americans will join his income tax rebellion against the federal government. He expressed the need for something "bigger" -- that "something" being the "million gun" event.

"On that day, we'll be coming armed," Stanley warned. "And then we're going to have rallies at every state capital in all 50 states [happening] at the same time," he said.

Asked by **CNSNews.com** how he intends to deal with District of Columbia gun laws (the D.C. code says, "Carrying a handgun in the District is prohibited"), Stanley showed no concern.

"What about D.C.'s gun laws?" Stanley asked. "They're null and void. Anything that violates the U.S. Constitution -- and the Supreme Court has said it probably a thousand times -- it's null and void, as if it never existed," he said.

According to Stanley's website, the million gun march will be held only if at least one million people sign a petition guaranteeing their presence at the march.

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