

## 'Smaller, More Virulent' Hate Group, Not KKK, Responsible For Package Bomb Killings -- Hooks

by Chester A. Higgins, Sr.  
(Special To NNPA)

NAACP Executive Director Benjamin L. Hooks was maintaining a level-headed cool. This, despite the recent rash of package bombings that killed a Birmingham, AL, federal circuit judge, and a Black Savannah, GA, NAACP lawyer/city councilman, and the scare that was engendered by the interception and disarming of two other bombs, one in Atlanta, the other in the Jacksonville, FL, NAACP office, before they could do any damage.

But Dr. Hooks is concerned and revealed that as a result of these latest criminal assaults, a HOTLINE: 1-800-NAACP-55 is being installed at the NAACP's headquarters in Baltimore. It will be manned on a 24-hour basis for persons who may have information that could lead to the arrest and conviction of the criminals. The NAACP official also told NNPA that the organization's branches nationwide had been alerted to be on guard against package bomb mail bombs.

After huddling in a closed door, two-hour session with the FBI at NAACP Baltimore headquarters, Hooks told the NNPA: "These bombings are serious, but I get threats at least two or three times a week. Callers muttering 'You SOB,' 'Jew-Loving so-and-so' and letters dripping with hate. I just don't read more of them, especially if they arrive without a signature." He added that this recent murderous activity refutes critics who decry the organization's effectiveness in civilrights work. "Our enemies certainly know who the the chief opponent is," he said.

The NAACP official said he did not believe the Klan is responsible for the mail bombs. "I think it is a much smaller, much more virulent and malignant white supremacist group. But what gets me is the kind of mentality these people possess that makes them think they can get away with killing a federal judge."

Federal Judge Robert S. Vance, of the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, died at his suburban Birmingham, AL, home after opening a package containing a bomb. Robert E. Robinson, Black Savannah lawyer and city councilman, was fatally injured when he opened a similar package. A third bomb was intercepted in the

mailroom of the 11th Circuit's headquarters in Atlanta. A fourth bomb package was discovered in Jacksonville, FL, addressed to the NAACP's "legal counsel", according to the Jacksonville, sheriff's office.

The sheriff's office said Ms. Willye Dennis, President of the Jacksonville NAACP branch, received the package earlier but because she was late for a meeting, she put it in her desk drawer unopened, thus perhaps saving her life. For by the time she returned, news of Robinson's death by a similar bomb had been announced, and Ms. Dennis called police to investigate. Ms. Dennis called police to investigate. Ms. Dennis called police to investigate.

FBI sources said the bombs seemed to be linked, bearing similar wrappings, stamps, and return addresses of persons who were later cleared of any involvement.

FBI Director William Sessions and Justice officials seem to lean toward the Klan as the criminal culprit behind the package bomb murders. Like Hooks, however, they point out that the criminal activity involving the bombs is centered in three states -- Alabama, Florida and Georgia -- comprising the 11th Circuit judicial area. They cite the rulings of several judges in civil rights cases, including Judge Vance's, that went against the Klan and the fact that Robinson participated in a school desegregation case (although he lost), indicating a possible Klan revenge motivation.

In Montgomery, AL, Pat Clark director of the Southern Poverty Law Center's outstanding KlanWatch Project, told NNPA that her organization was non-

plussed concerning the identity of the mail package bomb murderers. Appearing to agree with Dr. Hooks that the perpetrators may not be the Klan, she said: "They seem to be racially motivated but we haven't been able to pinpoint them. It's no doubt a white supremacy group, but these seem so well organized, their actions well thought out and implemented. Before (the racists) have always been inept in implementing criminal processes. Someplace along the line, some informat has let the police know what was about to happen. There was always a loose lip. But this seems to be a tightly held, well thought-out activity by this secret group, with no apparent inside police informants."

Klanwatch won a \$7 million judgement in the March 21, 1981, lynch murder of 19-year-old Michael Donald in Mobile, AL. The verdict was against the United Klans of America, said to be the most notoriously vicious of all the Klan groups. KlanWatch also won a \$ million judgement against White Knights of the KKK, and the Invisible Empire, including 11 defendants, after the Klan attacked a Civil Rights Brotherhood March, Jan., 1987, in Forsyth County, GA.

Althea T.L. Simmons, the NAACP's able Washington Bureau chief, reminded NNPA that the NAACP's Southeast Regional Office in Atlanta had been a target of a gas bomb earlier this year. In early February, the downtown office building in which the Washington, DC, NAACP bureau is located, she revealed. Also earlier this year, bullets fired at the NAACP's main headquarters in Baltimore, shattered some windows. No injuries, however, were reported.

## Reform Jewish Leader To NAACPs Hooks: We Stand With You Against Racist Violence'

In a telegram to NAACP executive director Benjamin Hooks, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations -- central body of Reform Judaism in the United States and Canada -- said this week that "we stand with you against the threats and violence by racists and hater."

Albert Vorspan, senior vice president of the UAHC and director of its Commission of Social Action, sent his

message of support to Mr. Hooks following the bombing murder of Robert E. Robinson of Savannah, a Georgia state legislator and local NAACP leader, and the successful dismantling of another package bomb that had been sent to NAACP headquarters in Jacksonville, Fla.

"We share your conviction that these deeds are aimed at our entire democratic and constitutional system," Mr.

## Goodwill Shows Appreciation

The growth of Goodwill Industries of Southern Nevada over the past two years is "impressive but not surprising" to Gov. Bob Miller who was one of several dignitaries present for this organization's First Annual Appreciation Award Banquet.

Joining the Governor were State Senator Joe Neal, State Assemblyman Jack Regan, Judge and Mrs. Earle White, NAACP President the Rev. and Mrs. Jesse Scott, Regional Director of the Governor's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities Suzanne Thomas, TV-8 news anchor George Knapp and nearly 200 supporters of this service organization.

The honor came as a surprise to Quillin who was the evening's master of ceremonies. Quillin has a long history of volunteer service of Goodwill Industries of Southern Nevada. He is past chairman of their board of directors and is currently an active member of their advisory board.

Quillin was one of 52 supporters of Goodwill Industries being honored that evening.

With her "heartfelt thanks for the support that each of you have given me over the past two years," Goodwill Industries' president and chief executive officer Irene Lemley personally presented four special awards.

The first award, Forever

Faithful, was given to executive committee member Nick Pandelis and his wife Cheryl. Angel of the Year went to board member and awards banquet committee member Bobby Page. Volunteer of the Year was presented to board chairman and Las Vegas city councilman Steve Miller. Lemley presented the President's Award to long time Goodwill Industries supporter Leo Lewis.

Special recognition was accorded Ellen Pelach, a client-employee of Goodwill Industries who was recently selected Disabled Female Employee of the Year by the Governor's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities.



Pictured above is Judge and Mrs. Earle White. In the center is Diana Reed-Waters, member of Goodwill Industries Board of Directors and Chairman of the Banquet Awards Committee.

"We're all here tonight because we love Goodwill Industries and are grateful to them for the fine job they are doing in the area of vocational training and rehabilitation of our state's disabled and disadvantaged citizens," said the Governor who mused, "and I'm personally grateful to them for resecuring me from a scrumptuous dessert."

Gov. Miller was referring to the dinner-reception he was hosting that same evening for 14 visiting Western State's governors. Gov. Miller left this event early to attend Goodwill Industries' awards celebrating and to personally present the Humanitarian of the Year Award to Ted Quillin.

Vorspan said.

"These vicious assaults cannot and will not intimidate the coalition of decency in America or undo the gains we have made together."

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