



montana
HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK

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**Whitefish Hate Group Representative Makes National Media,
Denounced by State and Local Human Rights Activists**

Montana once again made national news this week for the far right, white supremacist activity that has targeted the state and region. The May 9th [episode](#) of MSNBC's "The Rachel Maddow Show" featured a critique of the Whitefish-based National Policy Institute and its chairman, Richard Spencer. Maddow isn't the only one critiquing the activity. The Montana Human Rights Network is appalled at the group's hateful and anti-Semitic message and condemns Spencer locating the group's headquarters in the state.

"For decades white supremacists have targeted Montana and the Pacific Northwest as a place to create their Aryan homeland. Spencer is just following the misguided idea that Montanans are supportive of his brand of hate," Said Rachel Carroll Rivas, co-director of the Network.

Maddow's show focused on Spencer's recent attempts to push the conservative right even further toward overt white supremacist ideas.

"Spencer is building off on an idea that has long been attempted by hard right activists. The conservative political nature of the Flathead has been a draw for hate groups. Hard right activists there have attempted to use politics as a way to mainstream their message and line up behind candidates to gain credibility, but in reality they are often interested in trying to create communities that look the way they want- all white," said Carroll Rivas.

Will Randall is a board member of the Network and active with the local Flathead group Love Lives Here. Randall said, "As a Whitefish native, I remember the ethnic diversity that has helped make Whitefish what it is today. Whitefish has a long history of including diverse communities: Japanese folks and the local Filipino community, even the decedents of the Chinese railroad workers who migrated to the region so long ago and, of course, our American Indian community. The National Policy Institute's hateful philosophy runs counter to who this community is, and I think the majority of our community continues to stand against this kind of hatred."

Randall is one of many local Flathead residents that has worked to create a positive and accepting vision of the community and has taken part in opposing other area hate activities by activists like [Karl Gharst](#) and [April Gaede](#).ⁱ Two years ago, hundreds of people gathered outside of the Kalispell library in support of the local Jewish community and in protest of Holocaust denial films being shown by Gharst. The films drew few supporters and were advertized as “alternative history”.ⁱⁱ

Similarly, the National Policy Institute (NPI) is one of many organizations attempting to make white supremacist ideology more palatable by presenting it in pseudo-academic forms. Founded by far-right publisher [William Regnery II](#) in 2005, the group says it represents “White Americans” who possess “the unique heritage of Europe, Christianity, cultural excellence, and the scientific awakening.”ⁱⁱⁱ

In late 2011, NPI’s chairman died and was replaced by Richard Spencer. Spencer moved the group’s headquarters from Georgia to Whitefish, Montana. Spencer has solid roots in the “academic racism” community. Following a stint as the editor of a magazine founded by a self-described anti-Semite, he moved into a similar position with the online “Alternative Right.”^{iv} The publication, which lists [Spencer as its founder](#), has been described as a venture of the [VDARE Foundation](#).^v A virulent anti-immigrant group, VDARE is named after Virginia Dare, said to be the first English (white) child born in the New World in 1587. The Southern Poverty Law Center categorizes [VDARE as a hate group](#).

On [alternativeright.com](#) and its associated [Facebook page](#), Spencer writes and posts about “heretical perspectives on society and culture—popular, high, and otherwise—particularly those informed by radical, traditionalist, and nationalist outlooks.” The website claims to have been founded in 2010 and that other contributors include: Mark Hackard, Alex Kurtagic, Keith Preston, and Roman Bernard.^{vi} The “perspectives” shared on the website include questioning the very existence of the Holocaust.^{vii}

In September 2011, the National Policy Institute held an event at the National Press Club to release its *Majority Strategy: Why the GOP Must Win White America*. The report urged the Republican Party to “reach in” to its base of white voters instead of “reaching out” to minorities. The report told the GOP to embrace immigration restrictions, end civil rights laws, and stop all forms of affirmative action. Spencer was joined by [James Edwards](#), a favorite talk-show host of racists and anti-Semites, and Jared Taylor, founder of another academic racist group, American Renaissance. When answering a question from a person of color at the event, Taylor said, “All we want is the freedom to associate only with our own kind, to not be forced to deal with you.”^{viii}

NPI has recently critiqued the conservative Heritage Foundation for focusing their opposition to national comprehensive immigration reform legislation on economic issues. Maddow made this part of the focus of her recent segment on the group. The National Policy Institute would rather base its opposition to the legislation on xenophobic ideas that Hispanics have inferior values and IQs. Spencer writes, “I’d much rather live in an impoverished backwater where my friends and neighbors would be White than in a super-rich metropolis of aliens. Immigration isn’t all about money.”^{ix}

“Spencer makes clear what we have been saying about the immigration debate, it is about race. When Montana passed the anti-immigrant referendum LR 121 in the fall of 2011, we opened the flood gates for xenophobia like that of the National Policy Institute. Like the community of Whitefish and the state of Montana, we are a nation made of immigrants. Most of us have an immigrant story in our family history. We can’t let racism get in the way of important and good policy like comprehensive immigration reform,” said Carroll Rivas.

Spencer’s hateful ideas were overt when he spoke at an [American Renaissance](#) conference in April 2013. Taylor has claimed people of color are more “psychopathic than whites” and are so inferior that they cannot

sustain any form of civilization. At the event, Spencer called for a “peaceful ethnic cleansing” that would clear parts of North America for only white people. “It is perfectly feasible for a white state to be established on the North American continent,” he said, “I have a dream.”^x

NPI prominently features the essay *What the Founders Really Thought About Race* on its website. Its overall purpose is discussing how America was better when,

“Whites believed race was a fundamental aspect of individual and group identity. They believed people of different races had different temperaments and abilities, and built markedly different societies...They believed that only people of European stock could maintain a society in which they would wish to live, and they strongly opposed miscegenation. For more than 300 years, therefore, American policy reflected a consensus on race that was the very opposite of what prevails today...[History reflects] a clear conception of the United States as a nation ruled by and for Whites.”^{xi}

The Southern Poverty Law Center categorizes the [National Policy Institute as a hate group](#). It has also referred to it as one of four organizations that plays a leading role in the world of “academic racism.”^{xii}

ⁱPage 3, <http://www.mhrn.org/publications/specialresearchreports/AprilGaede.pdf>

ⁱⁱ<http://www.mhrn.org/publications/fact%20sheets%20and%20advisories/Gharst%20-%20citizen%20grand%20jury.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ<http://www.npiamerica.org/about/>

^{iv}<http://www.splcenter.org/blog/2010/03/15/paleocon-starts-new-extreme-right-magazine/>

^v<http://www.splcenter.org/blog/2010/03/15/paleocon-starts-new-extreme-right-magazine/>

^{vi}<http://alternativeright.com/about-us/>

^{vii}<http://alternativeright.com/blog/2013/5/10/holocaust-amnesia-day>

^{viii}<http://www.splcenter.org/blog/2011/09/11/national-press-club-hosts-white-nationalist-event/>

^{ix}<http://alternativeright.com/blog/2013/5/10/ibkyq7qyvfmec8ysxc9n32jcwh6l6j>

^x<http://www.splcenter.org/blog/2013/04/07/american-renaissance-speakers-call-for-white-homeland/>

^{xi}<http://www.npiamerica.org/media/reports/TheFounders.pdf>

^{xii}<http://www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-report/browse-all-issues/2006/summer/irreconcilable-differences/the-groups>