



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on December 14, 2011

Sheriff Mack Announces Lawsuit Against SPLC, Run for Congress

At a speech in Sacramento, California, on December 10, Richard Mack, former sheriff of Graham County, Arizona, and founder of the Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association (CSPOA), announced that within a matter of days he will be filing a lawsuit in federal court against the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) for slander, libel and defamation.

Sheriff Mack, who [successfully challenged](#) the 1993 federal Brady handgun control act in a landmark case that went all the way through the United States Supreme Court, has been an outspoken champion of constitutionally limited government and a critic of federal usurpation and abuse of police powers. The forty-year-old Southern Poverty Law Center is notorious for lionizing left-wing extremists (such as unrepentant Weather Underground terrorist Bill Ayers) and equally notorious for smearing innocent individuals and organizations with the “racist,” “extremist,” “anti-semitic,” “anti-government,” and “hate group” labels. It is not surprising then that it has targeted Richard Mack for vicious treatment in a number of its publications and web sites over the years. But even more troubling than what it has published about him, says Sheriff Mack, are the lies that it has spread to law enforcement agencies about him in the seminars and training programs the SPLC conducts for federal, state, and local agencies.



Sheriff Mack, who was a speaker, along with this writer at the 53rd Anniversary Banquet of [The John Birch Society](#) in Sacramento, also announced to the assembled guests that he would also soon be filing papers to run in the Republican primary for the 21st Congressional District of Texas against incumbent Rep. Lamar Smith, whom Mack describes a “RINO” (Republican In Name Only). The 21st District includes much of San Antonio and Austin, as well as Fredericksburg, where Mack now resides.

In an interview with *The New American* after the banquet, Sheriff Mack, explained that he had



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contemplated a lawsuit against the SPLC for the past several months, but the difficulty, time, and expense of taking on such an endeavor against the well-funded organization had prevented him from doing so. In May of this year, however, he received a telephone call from an SPLC “reporter.” Mack says he was amazed and told the reporter: “This is really funny. You guys have been lying about me for 15 years and this is the first time you’ve bothered to call me.”

The reporter asked, “When did we ever lie about you?”

Sheriff Mack recounted the telephone conversation:

I said, well, recently you said I believe in shooting federal agents, killing federal agents — IRS agents in particular. I said I have never said anything like that. I don’t believe in violence. I spent 20 years in law enforcement and never slugged or slapped or hit or maced or shot another human being. So I don’t believe in violence and I’m not a violent person, nor have I been.

The SPLC reporter said he would check into that. Later that day, says Mack, he received a call from spokesman Mark Potok, who edits the organization’s *Intelligence Report*. Potok said, “Sheriff, we owe you an apology.”

Sheriff Mack says “I knocked on the phone and said ‘Is this really Mark Potok of the SPLC who doesn’t care who they lie about? I don’t trust you.’”

Mack says Potok then admitted, “We went back and reviewed the tape where we reported you advocated shooting agents and that isn’t what you said.”

Potok agreed to reprint a retraction. However, says Mack, the retraction was a tiny paragraph, compared to the massive coverage they had given to the earlier false charges about him. And it could not even begin to undo the vast damage they had done in smearing his name and the CSPOA before other law enforcement agencies.

Mack pointed out that Sheriff Dwight Nothstein of Carbon County, Pennsylvania, for instance, has publicly compared Sheriff Mack to Hitler and repeated the SPLC charge that he has advocated shooting federal agents.

“It does hurt me to see that the SPLC, which does training for every federal law enforcement agency, including other police and sheriffs agencies all across the country, will actually tell these people that there’s something inherently wrong with someone who quotes the Founding Fathers and our Constitution,” he told *The New American*. “That’s all I’m guilty of. And isn’t it interesting that I’m called a racist, a bigot, a hate group monger, and I [supposedly] hate everybody because I simply quote American ideals as expressed by the Founding Fathers? That’s my ‘crime.’ And yet I get slandered all over the country to my fellow brothers and sisters in law enforcement.”

But the Sheriff is not one to let such things get him down; besides a busy speaking schedule, he is very active with a number of positive efforts and is always upbeat and optimistic. In addition to launching his SPLC lawsuit and a congressional campaign, he is also releasing his newly published book, [The Magic of Gun Control](#) (cover shown above) and gearing up for his CSPOA [“Constitutional Sheriffs Convention”](#) in January 2012 in Las Vegas. He is hoping to bring together 150-200 sheriffs from across the country, together with other law enforcement officers to discuss with them their role in the “lawful and peaceful way to restore the Constitution and its Bill of Rights as the supreme law of the land.”

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