

SCHAKOWSKY, WEINER CALL ON ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO TO INVESTIGATE THE WORLD CHURCH OF THE CREATOR

WASHINGTON, D.C. U.S. Representatives Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) and Anthony Weiner (D-NY) today called on Attorney General Janet Reno to launch a federal investigation of the World Church of the Creator (WCOTC) pursuant to the Attorney General's Guidelines on Domestic Security/Terrorism Investigation.

During the Fourth of July weekend, Benjamin Smith, a member of the WCOTC, went on a two-state shooting spree in Illinois and Indiana, targeted and wounded minorities, and killed two innocent men. Following the shootings, WCOTC leader commended Smith for his "activism."

The WCOTC has also been linked to other crimes, including the killing of an African American man in Florida and an assault in Miami, and evidence indicates that the WCOTC may be linked to the recent fires that burned down three synagogues in Sacramento.

In a letter to Reno, Schakowsky and Weiner wrote, "State and local law enforcement in Illinois and Indiana are generally well-equipped to handle investigations of crimes such as those alleged to have been committed by Benjamin Smith. However, given that the World Church of the Creator's membership appears to have grown dramatically in recent years, and given that this group's propensity for violence suggests a pattern of interstate criminal activity, we believe that a full field Federal investigation is warranted."

A copy of the letter to Attorney General Reno is attached.

August 6, 1999

**Attorney General Janet Reno
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530**

Dear Ms. Reno:

We write to urge you to initiate a full field investigation of the World Church of the Creator (WCOTC) pursuant to the Attorney General's Guidelines on Domestic Security / Terrorism Investigations.

As you know, during the Independence Day Weekend Benjamin Nathaniel Smith went on

a two-state shooting spree, killing two people and wounding nine more. Disturbingly, Smith appears to have targeted Jews, African Americans and Asians. Press accounts have identified Smith as a member of the WCOTC; indeed, that organization's leader recently commended Smith for his "activism" in disseminating the WCOTC's racist and anti-Semitic propaganda. The WCOTC appears to have become a national organization: it operates with over 35 post office box addresses and 22 different web sites. The group's stated goal is to "mak[e] this an all-white nation and ultimately an all-white world." Formerly known as the Church of the Creator, the WCOTC has been linked to a 1992 Florida killing of an African American war veteran, to a 1997 Miami assault on a father and son, and to a 1993 skinhead attempt to foment a California race war. In addition, evidence indicates that the WCOTC may have had a role in the fires that burned down three synagogues this past April in Sacramento.

State and local law enforcement in Illinois and Indiana are generally well-equipped to handle investigations of crimes such as those alleged to have been committed by Benjamin Smith. However, given that the World Church of the Creator's membership appears to have grown dramatically in recent years, and given that this group's propensity for violence suggests a pattern of interstate criminal activity, we believe that a full field Federal investigation is warranted.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.