

THE OTHER SIDE[®]

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A GIVER'S GUIDE™

The Joy of Effective Giving When to Give, When Not to Give
Side-by-Side Comparisons of 123 Charitable Organizations
Jubilee Priorities Practical Suggestions Facts, Figures, More

SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

400 Washington, Montgomery, Ala. 36195

DESCRIPTION: SPLC says it provides legal services to poor blacks harmed by Ku Klux Klan-type activities. The bulk of its work, however, is the aggressive distribution of junk mail, soliciting funds for more junk mail.

0 VALUES FOR GIVING: Now and then, SPLC actually provides some worthwhile legal assistance. But mostly it's learned that there are a lot of people who will give large amounts of money to "help stop the KKK." And SPLC, for the most part, just feeds off that benevolence. It repeatedly snubs its nose at the public, refusing to come forward with anything but the crudest form of financial reporting. The standards of the Philanthropic Advisory Service of the Better Business Bureau are anything but harsh. But SPLC falls short of four of them. This is the kind of organization that saps the financial strength of a caring public, turning money that could be used for good into little more than more junk mail and a fat endowment for its own well-paid lawyers. You'd have to be absolutely bonkers to give SPLC a penny.

DATE BEGUN: 1971.

0 BOARD: 5 people serve on its board, but it doesn't meet often enough to meet minimum Better Business Bureau standards.

STAFF: SPLC has a paid staff of 31.

0 WOMEN: SPLC refused to say how many women are on its board or in key staff positions.

0 PEOPLE OF COLOR: SPLC refused to say if it has any people of color on its board or in key staff positions. But judging from a photo we've seen, the director and all SPLC's lawyers are white men.

0 GAY/LESBIAN HIRING: Refused to say.

0 SALARIES: Refuses to say how high its salaries go.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE: Yes.

CANADIAN AFFILIATE: None.

0 AUDIT: Whether SPLC's books are fully examined by an independent auditor, we can't say. It ignores all requests for audited financial statements, occasionally distributing a simplistic financial summary that shows its total expenses without revealing a thing about income or assets. Such summaries are totally worthless.

0 USE OF MONEY: Piecing together data from several sources, we think that in the year ended July 31, 1987, SPLC had income of \$4.9 million. 43% went to fund raising and "public education" (mostly stuff that any normal person would call fund raising), 28% to pad its bank balance, 25% to programs, and 4% to management. Outrageous.

0 CASH RESERVES: SPLC isn't saying (but we strongly suspect its cash and investments are astronomical.)