

# American Information Newsletter

Providing noteworthy news items from the Nation's alternative press

*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ - Ephesians 4:14-15*

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## "ANTI-CULT" GROUP DIRECTS FED AGENTS IN ANOTHER RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

The rise of social fascism which creates approved "client" status for some social groups and the perception of other social groups as "hated outsiders" is apparently entering a new, dangerous phase. The ideology is now allowing private political groups to direct the power of state against "hated outsiders" to conduct what appears to be fascistic persecutions. That hated outsiders can be demonized by propaganda and then killed with impunity was proven in Waco, Texas, in 1993. Few realize that the government's perception of the Branch Davidians in Waco as "dangerous outsiders" worthy of deadly attack was directed by an organization called the Cult Awareness Network (CAN). CAN designates as "cults" religions of which they disapprove and which generate strong social cohesion and which weaken members' allegiances to secular institutions. Members are said to be under the "mind control" of the leader because their beliefs often alienate them from the prevalent secular ideology. By CAN standards, the early Church would have been a "cult" and the Apostle Paul a "dangerous cult leader." It now appears that CAN has succeeded a second time to direct government agencies to persecute a group it defines as a "cult" and to imprison its "dangerous cult leader." Tony Alamo, admittedly a controversial figure in American Christianity, began a street ministry in the '60's. What made Alamo a "cult" to CAN was the communal living arrangement his religious movement used. He took the dregs of society, people without viable living arrangements including drug addicts, prostitutes, criminals and homeless hippies and integrated them into his church commune. Alamo says of these people, "Their primary commitments were to spreading the gospel, winning new converts and building their church. They were not interested in high wages and huge personal profits. Whether a church member worked in a church-run (tax-exempt) workshop or in an outside job, salaries were contributed to the church, and all personal necessities, all bills and expenses, including housing, medical care, food, clothing and schooling were met by the church." The monies from these collective efforts were invested in other enterprises which opened new opportunities to other "destitute" recent converts. The commercial successes of Alamo's ministry brought the attention of CAN who accused him of holding his members as "slaves" and of keeping them under "mind control." From 1976 through 1994, various government agencies "investigated" Alamo's operation at the direction of CAN. Multiple law suits were initiated against Alamo by such agencies as the IRS

and the Labor Department. The religious communes were defined as "personal property" owned by Alamo and a 1991 court judgment, initiated by CAN, gave the IRS the power to confiscate all church property and businesses for alleged "tax deficiencies." Armed IRS agents and marshals ejected homeless people from an Arkansas commune in the dead of winter. Over \$100 million worth of property was seized across the country, ten times the amount of the alleged tax deficiency. The property was then sold to a CAN lawyer in a clear "sweet heart" deal disguised as an "auction." The property was sold at well below its market value and the CAN lawyer, Peter Georgiades, resold it for a huge profit. Not satisfied with confiscating the church property which had provided the way out for thousands of former "dregs" and dividing the profits from these "dregs" labor between themselves and a CAN associate, the government also sought to imprison Alamo. They succeeded in 1994. By creating the legal fiction that the church's property was Alamo's "personal property," they now had a case against him for "tax evasion." In 1994, Alamo was sentenced to six years in prison. In June of 1995, Alamo was recommended for parole by a parole examiner because he was considered a model prisoner. The Federal Parole Commission, however, overturned the examiner's recommendation. The decision to deny parole was justified by information supplied by CAN and the Commission used the fascist organization's language to justify that denial. The Commission said that Alamo should be kept in prison because he exerted "unusually strong control over very vulnerable religious followers ...using destitute people, unwed young mothers and children to bring in money in exchange for living in subject's religious compound [note that the word "compound" is Waco language, Edit.]... [and] had followers abused physically and psychologically." The physical abuse allegation refers to a disproven CAN assertion that Alamo had directed the physical punishment of an 11 year old boy. One cannot help noting the irony in this pretended concern for the destitute which Alamo's communes helped. This government which drove those people back into the street and took away possibly their first healthy opportunity in life, this government which then consumed the profits from the very tools those destitute people's liberation, this government now cries great tears of "concern" for its very victims. The government obviously wants them back as hookers, crooks and druggies, as clients for its social fascist state. Obviously, Alamo's greatest "crime" is that he used the Gospel to compete with the government. Oh, nausea. *International Coalition for Religious Freedom* April 1, 1996 2020 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Suite 963 Washington DC 20006