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Fed Files II: FBI Informant Created One of Largest Nazi Groups in American History | **Headline USA**

Ken Silva

13–16 minutes

([Ken Silva](#), [Headline USA](#)) An [FBI](#) informant cofounded one of the largest and oldest neo-[Nazi](#) organizations in U.S. history: the National Socialist Movement, a group connected to numerous crimes and violent events, including the deadly 2017 [Charlottesville](#) “Unite the Right” rally, according to previously unpublicized records reviewed by [Headline USA](#).

The documents—a trove of FBI memos, affidavits and court records that this publication has dubbed the “[Fed Files](#)”—further indicate that the NSM allegedly had informants in prominent positions throughout much of its nearly 50-year history.

Once known as the “[Hollywood Nazis](#)” for its flamboyant demonstrations and crude propaganda, the NSM has also been accused of being co-opted by the FBI in a lawsuit filed by a former member who is now in prison.

Multiple current and former NSM members denied any affiliation with the FBI or law enforcement.

The FBI declined to comment for this story.

NSM's Founding

The NSM was founded in 1974 by Cliff Herrington and Robert Brannen, both of whom were chief lieutenants of prominent American fascist George Lincoln Rockwell—the founder of the original American Nazi Party in 1959.

By 1976, there was growing suspicion in the Nazi movement that Brannen was working with the FBI.

In fact, the NSM's own publication, the *National Socialist*, released an article in April 1976, denying accusations from a rival group—the National Socialist White Peoples Party, or NSWPP—that Brannen was an informant. The *National Socialist* article called the accusations a “reckless and irresponsible smear attack on Comrade Brennan.”

But the NSWPP was right about Brannen.

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OF THE UNITED PROVISIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL GUIDELINES
AND INCLUDE YOUR OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION IN THIS REPORT.

END.

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Capitulated individual, operated as a racial informant (probationary) and as an extremist informant from 4/16/65, until the present time. Is a member of the National Socialist Liberation Front, White Confederacy, and the United Klans of America, Inc. Informant is also a close associate of members and leaders of the National States Rights Party, The American White Nationalist Party and related groups. Informant has furnished timely and valuable information concerning the activities of these groups and is presently authorized regular monthly payments of up to \$150 per month for services and up to \$200 per month for expenses. Informant's photograph and description appeared in the February, 1976, NSMTP publication and he was named as an informant. Connecticut Office reviews this conviction by the national leader of the NSMTP as an attack on informant motivated entirely by inter-organizational jealousy. Informant's group, the NSMTP, has published a newsletter, and the Connecticut Office is taking special precautions to insure the informant can in no way be successfully exposed jeopardizing his personal safety. Prompting instructions to Connecticut necessary to insure that proper consideration is given to maintaining preliminary investigation of NSMTP.

An FBI memo warning that undercover informant Robert Brannen's cover had been compromised

Commenting on that *National Socialist* article several months later, a May 1976 FBI memo warned that Brannen's cover might have been blown.

The redacted memo doesn't show the informant's name, but it clearly identifies Brannen by referencing the *National Socialist* article and the accusations floating around him at the time.

"Informant's photograph and description appeared in the February 1976, NSWPP publication and he was named an FBI informant," the FBI memo said.

"Informant's group, the NSM, has publicized a rebuttal, and the Cincinnati Office is taking special precaution to ensure this informant can be operated successfully without jeopardizing his personal safety," the memo said.

Despite the accusations against Brannen, he continued to lead the NSM undaunted for almost another decade until he suffered several strokes in 1983.

The other cofounder of NSM, Cliff Herrington, denied that his former colleague was ever a federal informant.

"I knew Robert F. Brannen personally. He wasn't on the take," Herrington said in an email to this publication.

As an aside, Herrington also confirmed reports that his wife, Andrea Herrington aka Maxine Dietrich, founded a Satanic cult called the Joy of Satan Ministries. The discovery of Herrington's Satanic leanings is a reason cited by White for why he left the NSM in the mid-2000s.

"Yes! I am married to HP Andrea Herrington nee Dietrich!! Many ivy league critiques have said she was worthy of Master Degrees! Oh, ps SHE & Her Lieutenants are completely right!" Herrington said in a typo-ridden email, which he signed, "Herrington Heil Hitler!"

Herrington led the NSM from the time of Brannen's major stroke in 1983 until 1994, when he appointed Jeff Schoep to succeed him.

The Jeff Schoep Era

Schoep, who led the NSM from 1994 until shortly after the Charlottesville “Unite the Right” rally, has also been accused of being an FBI informant.

Unlike Brannen, the allegation against Schoep isn’t clearly corroborated by FBI memos. And the accusation comes from a controversial source: former NSM member Bill White, who is now serving time in prison for multiple felony convictions.

White accused Schoep of being an informant in an 2017 FOIA lawsuit he filed against the FBI from prison, as well as a 2020 court declaration in which he unsuccessfully sought compassionate release. White attached the FBI memo about Brannen to this same court declaration.

In his FOIA lawsuit, White sought records about the NSM, Schoep and a slew of other players he alleged were part of an FBI right-wing entrapment operation.

According to White, the FBI took control of the NSM as early as 2004, and likely much earlier. White said in his FOIA lawsuit that the FBI and ATF “would use the National Socialist Movement to hold phony ‘white supremacist’ rallies.”

“The FBI-JTTF [Joint Terrorism Task Force] would also arrange for violent counterdemonstrations against these rallies through informants in groups such as Anti-Racist Action ... The ATF was also using the NSM in a similar fashion,” White said in his FOIA lawsuit.

“Neither party was disclosing that the rallies were fraudulent,” White added. “Instead, the federal government was using the rallies to make it appear as if there was a ‘domestic terrorist threat’ when no such threat existed.”

As for Schoep, White said he believes the former NSM leader was an FBI informant because, among other reasons, Schoep would “frequently lie” when they worked directly together in 2005 to 2006.

“Schoep frequently asked me to go various places to perform tasks that only advantaged the FBI-JTTF operation, either by adding legitimacy to their front groups or to get me away from situations,” White said.

“It is virtually impossible for Schoep not to know that he is acting primarily in the interests of the FBI-JTTF operation, and not in his own interests, if he were a sincere advocate for National Socialism,” White added in his lawsuit, which was ultimately dismissed by a judge for procedural reasons.

In an October 2020 sworn declaration to the court in a separate matter, White provided more details on why he thinks Schoep worked with the feds.

The convicted Nazi cited a heavily redacted FBI memo he obtained via FOIA. The memo said that the FBI interviewed an NSM associate who was in Chicago when law enforcement arrested Matthew Hale—a white nationalist in prison for allegedly soliciting an undercover FBI informant to murder U.S. District Judge Joan Lefkow.

“[Schoep’s] presence in Chicago with Matt Hale at Hale’s arrest make it clear that [the FBI memo is referring to] Schoep,” White said in his sworn declaration, also claiming: “I know from prior releases that Minneapolis Field Division Squad 4 handled Jeff Schoep.”

When presented with White’s records, Schoep admitted to being detained briefly and talking to law enforcement upon Hale’s arrest, but he denied talking to the FBI about Hale or any other topic. He said he spoke to U.S. Marshals when Hale was arrested and he

was detained, offering no info.

"I was detained for a couple hours at the most and was being questioned. If the FBI was there, I don't recall them identifying themselves, I just remember being told it was US Marshals," he told *Headline USA*.

"They asked why I was in Chicago with Matt, I said he was a friend, and I was there to support him ... It was like 20 years ago I don't remember every stupid question they asked, but I know I didn't offer them anything more than who I was and why I was there," he added.

"All my dealing with law enforcement pressure over the years ended in the same manner: very little or nothing to say."

Schoep, who was reportedly given probation for a felony burglary charge in 1998, also said his home was raided by law enforcement twice—once by federal law enforcement—which he said is further evidence that he was never an informant.

Additionally, Schoep noted that White was an avowed communist before he joined the NSM.

"I took a lot of sh*t from longtime members of the NSM for even allowing Bill to join the group," he said of White.

"I believed everyone deserved a chance and even with his past history as a communist; I believed he changed his views," he added. "... Big mistake on my part."

To Schoep's point, White hasn't offered clear-cut proof that Schoep was an FBI informant.

White's accusations were contested by the Justice Department, and a district court ultimately dismissed his application for compassionate release (his accusations against Schoep were one small part of a 97-page court declaration he submitted in support of

his release). White's FOIA lawsuit implicating Schoep was also unsuccessful.

Headline USA has published a separate [story about White's background](#), explaining why this publication thinks his allegations are worth reporting.

In any event, Schoep now openly collaborates with the FBI and other law enforcers since disavowing his Nazi lifestyle in the wake of Charlottesville—an apparent change of heart that has drawn [much scrutiny](#) in liberal media.

"Honored to speak twice at Midwest Police Expo for Illinois [#PoliceChiefs](#) Association and FBI," Schoep [tweeted](#) on Aug. 21.

"Thx [#FBI](#) for the commemorative coin. Its [sic] ironic, how life has changed. In the past I avoided LE like the plague, today we are on the same side in service to [#humanity](#)."

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pic.twitter.com/rNopQD8kAG

— Jeff Schoep (@SchoepJeff) [August 21, 2023](#)

Schoep has also openly consorted with former FBI informant Jesse Morton, who was an [al-Qaeda](#) recruiter in the post-9/11 era until he was arrested in 2011.

Schoep and Morton both participated in a panel about countering violent extremism sponsored by the DHS-funded nonprofit organization Parallel Networks in November 2021, about a month before Morton was found dead in a Florida hotel room.

Despite openly working with law enforcement now, Schoep still

bristles at the suggestion that he was an informant in the Nazi movement.

“Outright accusing me of being an informant: Wow,” he said in an email to this publication. “If I was still in the movement, you might have gotten a visit for that accusation—and not a visit from law enforcement.”

Other Feds in the NSM

Assuming that Schoep wasn't, in fact, an FBI informant, the NSM was nevertheless infiltrated by feds during his leadership tenure.

For example, court proceedings revealed in 2007 that the leader of NSM's Florida chapter, David Gletty, was an informant.

Gletty had organized a NSM Nazi rally in Orlando in 2006. So when he was outed as an informant over a year later, it sparked an uproar in the local black community.

“That revelation came Wednesday in an unrelated federal court hearing and has prompted outrage from black leaders, some of whom demanded an investigation into whether the February 2006 march was, itself, an event staged by law-enforcement agencies,” the *Orlando Sentinel* reported at the time.

Gletty later published a memoir titled *Undercover Nazi*, in which he disclosed that three ATF agents also attended the Orlando rally.

Prison inmate White, who was also attended the Orlando rally, said in his 2020 declaration that he now believes the majority of Nazi demonstrators were informants.

“I estimate that about three of the twenty to twenty-five persons who participated were not federal agents: myself, Laura Sennett, aka Isis, and an undercover reporter for a local paper,” White said.

In 2012, another prominent member of the NSM revealed himself

as a federal informant. The informant, Brian Holland, had been the NSM's candidate for U.S. President in 2008.

Holland told his story on the popular radio show Coast to Coast AM, telling host George Knapp about how he infiltrated the white-supremacy movement in 1999.

Holland explained that his job entailed going to neo-Nazi gatherings and reporting on their activities to the FBI. According to Holland, at times he was making up to \$8,000 a month.

According to Holland, he was terminated by the FBI without warning and told by the bureau, "Now you don't exist."

"With the shake of a bureaucratic hand, the third highest-ranking neo-Nazi in the country was put to pasture after 11 years of risking my life," he said.

NSM is currently commanded by Burt Colucci, who told Headline USA that he, too, was asked to be an informant.

Colucci said he turned down the FBI's offer.

"The FBI likes to play games no matter what side of this you're on. They actually came to me and told me they could 'supplement my income,' offering me—they didn't specify what exactly they meant or or how much, but they said they'd supplement my income," he said.

"I told them I don't want anything to do with them and to talk to my lawyers, so they did—they talked to my Arizona lawyer at the time," he said, adding, "I would have personally told them to f*ck off and keep their money, but my lawyer's like, 'Let me tell them. I'll say it a little bit nicer for you.'"

But Colluci, who deleted Schoep's NSM email accounts after taking control of the group, said he isn't concerned whether his former leader was an informant.

"All of these people are long gone, whether informants at the time or not," he said.

Meanwhile, a jury ruled in November 2021 that the NSM owes \$1 million for its actions at Charlottesville in 2017, while Schoep owes \$500,000.

Schoep has an appeal pending in that case.

Ken Silva is a staff writer at Headline USA. Follow him at twitter.com/jd_cashless.