

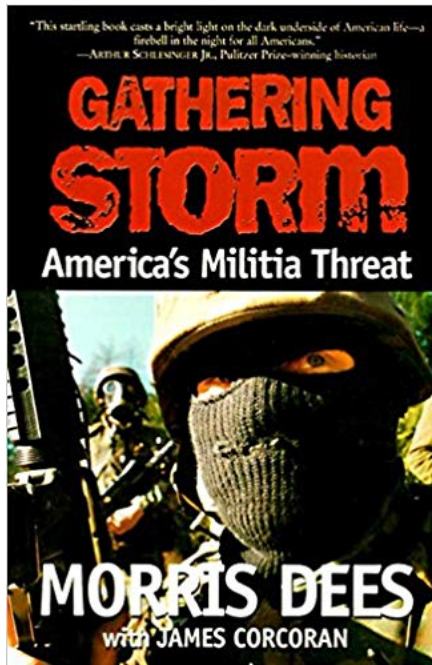
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'GATHERING STORM' WARNS OF GROWING MILITIA THREAT

Nancy McAllister, Of The Dispatch Staff

In *Gathering Storm: America's Militia Threat*, Morris Dees warns of the growing number of radical militia groups in the United States.

Many of these right-wing paramilitary, Christian "patriot" groups have racist and neo-Nazi ties. Many believe that violence is justifiable. They practice "leaderless resistance," a concept of small cells of "patriots" answerable to no one, "free to do everything on their own . . . whatever comes into their hearts to do."

Militia leaders have called for the assassination of Dees, chief trial counsel for the Southern Poverty Law Center and its Militia Task Force.

He recounts how April 19 became a significant date to the militias. In 1995, the Militia of Montana began to weave several events around the date, which the group wanted to have recognized as Militia Day: the scheduled execution (April 19, 1995) of murderer

and white supremacist Richard Wayne Snell; the incineration (April 19, 1993) of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas; the start of the showdown at Ruby Ridge, Idaho, (the actual date was Aug. 21, 1992) in which Randy Weaver's wife and son were killed by FBI sharpshooters; and the 1776 burning of Lexington, Mass., by the British (another incorrect date).

On April 19, 1995, the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City was bombed. Timothy McVeigh, an ex-soldier with militia connections, awaits trial. According to McVeigh's friends, *The Turner Diaries*, a 1978 white supremacist novel, was McVeigh's "bible." In the book, white supremacists use a truck bomb to blow up a federal building, then start a guerrilla war in which federal officials, Jews and blacks are subjected to mass annihilation. The author, William Pierce, is the leader of the National Alliance, a group committed to doing "whatever is necessary to achieve (a) White living space and keeping it White." The group's membership bulletin suggests that homosexuals, "race mixers" and "hard-core collaborators" be placed in railroad cattle cars and "double-timed" into an abandoned coal mine.

McVeigh traveled the country selling copies of *The Turner Diaries* at gun shows, often at reduced prices in order to gather converts.

Dees offers a convincing account of the growing threat of domestic terrorism by militia groups.

"We must respect each person's point of view . . . but there is no place in the debate for those who would impose their views on others at gunpoint," he writes. A chilling book, *Gathering Storm* should be taken seriously.