

The John Tanton “White Nationalist” Smear

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) was ecstatic when its operatives searched through hundreds and hundreds of US Inc. founder, John Tanton’s personal papers and correspondence that he had donated to the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan, and found one single sentence.

In a Dec. 10, 1993 memo he sent to his friend, University of California Santa Barbara professor and fellow ecologist, Garrett Hardin, Tanton wrote:

“I have come to the point of view that for European-American society and culture to persist, requires a European-American majority (in the United States), and a clear one at that.”

“You see,” the SPLC’s sleazy character assassins yelled, “Tanton is a white nationalist, just like we told you.” And here’s the shred of evidence. Naturally they ignored that it was buried among boxes and boxes of Tanton letters and memos that would convince any objective reader that John’s constant, overriding concern was always with population pressure due to immigration and high birthrates, and the harm it did to conservation and the natural environment. The SPLC quickly disseminated its “great find” to all its open border allies and special interests who had long claimed the only motive for U.S. immigration laws and border controls was “racism” and “white nationalism.” Here at last was the founder of the modern immigration movement, identified and outed.

But the SPLC was careful to omit the sentence that Tanton had added right after the offending one. He wrote:

“I doubt very much that our traditions will be carried on by other peoples – they have their own. I’d be glad to have your thoughts on this point.”

The reason was that sentence makes it clear that Tanton wasn’t concerned about race. He was worried about the preservation of European culture and traditions, which can be the preserve of a pluralistic and diverse society like the United States. Subsequent history shows that John Tanton was right about that concern, like he was about so many others.

That is illustrated today by the large and growing “no-go” Muslim enclaves in many European countries and in certain parts of the U.S. and Canada, where Islamic Sharia law prevails and Islamic practices like female genital mutilation, child marriage, and polygamy are widely practiced, despite laws to the contrary. And as Tanton was keenly aware from extensive travel, few cultures possess the same environmental and conservation ethic that European cultures do.

I have known John Tanton since 1981, and I have had the honor of working alongside him for several of the organizations he founded. During that entire time, I saw him work comfortably with Americans and immigrants of all backgrounds and ethnicities who shared his concerns, and never once heard him make a racist or bigoted remark about any group. In fact, in one of our earliest conversations, I remember him cautioning several of us to avoid people that held such ugly opinions. Unlike the SPLC’s founder, Morris Dees, John Tanton never campaigned for segregationist politicians, or defended the Ku Klux Klan. But then, unlike Dees, John Tanton has always been a consistently principled and honorable man.

KC McAlpin