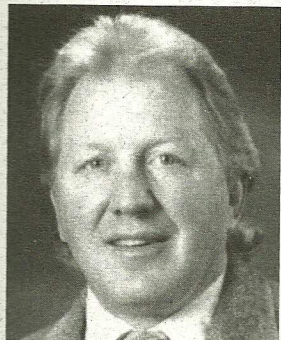


A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING? FORMER MONTANA RACIST PICKS FIGHT IN WYOMING

Rudy Stanko is asking Wyoming's Fremont County Commission to empower him to "eradicate" any wolf or grizzly bear, both endangered species, which he sees as a threat to his cattle. Stanko isn't a typical cattle rancher. As the self-proclaimed leader of the racist Church of the Creator, Stanko liked getting involved in



Rudy Stanko

debates over agriculture and cattle policies while he lived in Montana. It generally didn't take long for his anti-Semitic beliefs to surface.

Now living in Wyoming, Stanko wants the Fremont County Commission to grant him authority to kill wolves, an endangered species, that he claims are preying on his cattle. The com-

mission has taken Stanko's request under advisement, even though the county attorney has stated that federal law supercedes local law in this case, and that the Endangered Species Act must be enforced.

In looking at defying federal law, the county commission is flirting with "county supremacy." County supremacy, also known as county home rule, advances the idea that the county commission should have absolute power over the land within its borders. This absolute control would extend to public land under the federal government's jurisdiction and would allow the county to ignore federal and state law. It is embraced by both the anti-environmental "wise use" movement and the anti-government "patriot" movement.

Stanko claims that he is exercising his "natural common law rights," and thus is exempt from any federal law he thinks violates these rights, including the Endangered Species Act. His petition to Fremont County refers to the rights of the "sovereign states," and he has told the media his major problem is with the "Bolsheviks in Washington D.C." His views on rights and his terminology are identical to common-law groups like the Freemen. Freemen believe in different classifications for citizens. The highest class is made up of "sovereign citizens" who receive their rights directly from

God and are not bound by civil law. The anti-government crowd also believes socialists and communists have taken control of the government.

Capitalizing on Controversy

Rudy Stanko has always tried to capitalize on controversy. Stanko knew about the wolf problem before taking over the current allotment he uses for grazing. The allotment previously belonged to Dan Ingalls. Ingalls was very outspoken about wolves killing his cattle and frequently tried to get exorbitant funds from the Forest Service in restitution.

Even without Ingalls' publicity, Stanko had to know this history, because he was part of Ingalls' company since 1998. According to documents from the Wyoming Secretary of State's office, Rudy Stanko was the registered agent for Ingalls, Inc. Stanko is also listed as the

(Stanko, continued on page 6)



The photo is taken from Dan Ingalls' website titled "Predator Pages." It was accompanied by an article about Fish, Wildlife and Parks killing two wolves on Ingalls' allotment.

