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Neo-Confederates

League of the South loses members and momentum

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Within days of the Sept. 11 terrorist strikes in New York and Washington, Michael Hill, president of the neo-Confederate League of the South, suggested that the attacks were somehow deserved, "the natural fruits of a regime committed to multiculturalism and diversity."

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Such a proposition is debatable, to say the least. But what is absolutely certain is that Michael Hill, for one, is reaping some of what he has sown.

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In a series of embarrassing developments, prominent members have renounced the League or distanced themselves from Hill's secessionist views, his scorn for public education, and his distaste for interracial marriage.



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Despite these views, and the listing of the League as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, Hill had long insisted that his is merely a mainstream "pro-South" organization.

That claim has taken some battering of late.

First, Richard Withers, an attorney for the school board of Nassau County, Fla., came under fire in August for representing the school board while belonging to the League, which derides public schools as "propaganda factories." Claiming he hadn't known the League's views on public schools or racial separation, Withers resigned his membership.

Then, after Hill published his view of the terrorist attacks, the League's Missouri chairman, Lewis J. Goldberg, resigned. Calling Hill's views "un-Christian and cold-hearted," he lamented that Hill's position had been "high-fived" by other League leaders.

Soon, George Kalas, former Webmaster for the group, and Jim Langcuster, a founding member, both criticized the League, arguing that it should abandon its secessionist goals and instead begin "a strategy of constructive criticism" of the U.S. government.

Perhaps the most significant blow of all came with the resignation by Donald Livingston as head of the Institute for the Study of Southern Culture and History — the "educational arm" of the League, which runs workshops and disseminates books and pamphlets.

A professor of philosophy at Emory University, Livingston said he was put off by the group's racism and other "political baggage." It is the high-profile participation of Livingston and a number of other "respectable" academics in the League that has helped Hill propel his membership to around 10,000 people.

Livingston, who says he will remain a League member for the time being, told the *Intelligence Report* that he now plans to begin his own nonracist institute to "concentrate on what is good in Southern culture, both black and white."

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