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Monday

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Ex-Klan Leader Charged In Burglary

By Merritt Cowart
Marietta Daily Journal Staff Writer

The former head of the New Order Knights of the Ku Klux Klan is out of the Cobb County jail on a \$9,000 bond after being charged Saturday with burglary at the Marietta home of self-styled white racist J. B. Stoner, who is in an Alabama prison serving time for bombing a church in Birmingham.

Dr. Edward Fields, 51, who has been ousted as a leader of the National States Rights Party and formed his own NSRP organization, surrendered Saturday at 5:36 p.m. and was charged with burglary, Cobb County Sheriff Bill Hutson said. Fields was released on \$9,000 bond posted by his wife, Hutson said.

Some members of Stoner's National States Rights Party dispute Fields' claim that he is the new head of the party, once chaired by Stoner, who resigned last year and turned W. Eugene Wilson of Jacksonville, Fla., as head.

Fields is accused of breaking into the National States Rights Party headquarters, which are in Stoner's home on Cherokee Street near Kennestone Hospital, around 10:30 a.m. Saturday and taking a \$9,000 addressograph machine, 10,000 addressed file cards, stencils and a .38-caliber pistol, according to the warrant.

The warrant was taken out by Jerry Ray, who is serving as a caretaker of the Stoner property. The NSRP building served as Stoner's home for 12 years. He is serving a 10-year prison sentence for the 1969 bombing of a black Birmingham church in which no one was injured.

Cobb County Magistrate T.O. Shrivant issued the warrant for Fields Saturday after two witnesses told authorities they saw two men break into the house and drive away. Stoner and Fields filed suit in Cobb on May 3 to prevent the anticipated selling of Stoner's home by other NSRP officers. The burglary at Stoner's house came one day after Christian Rights, a subgroup of the original NSRP, filed a \$700,000 counterclaim against Stoner and Fields.

The May 3 complaint will be heard July 19 by Cobb Superior Court Judge Grant Brantley. Christian Rights oversees the land, building and offices of the states rights party and claims it owns the property. The dispute centers on Stoner's and Fields' contention that Christian Rights was not properly incorporated and any action the board may take would be illegal.

Wilson, who is board chairman of Christian Rights, has said the board does not plan to sell Stoner's home. Fields could not be reached for comment.

DR. EDWARD FIELDS
Released On \$5,000 Bond

Rift Between White Racists Widens After Fields' Arrest

By Merritt Cowart

Marietta Daily Journal Staff Writer

The rift between Dr. Edward Fields and the chairman of the National States Rights Party, W. Eugene Wilson of Jacksonville, Fla., continues to widen with Fields' arrest Saturday on charges of burglarizing the home of convicted church bomber J.B. Stoner in Marietta.

Fields Monday afternoon would not comment on the burglary charges or the warrant taken by Jerry Ray, caretaker of Stoner's property on Cherokee Street near Kennettons Hospital.

Ray accused Fields, who is out of the Cobb County jail on \$5,000 bond, of breaking into Stoner's house Saturday morning and taking addressed file cards and envelopes.

Attorneys for J.B. Stoner go to court in an attempt to free him from prison. — 3A

stencil, an addressograph machine and a .38-caliber pistol.

The screen to the basement entrance to Stoner's home is torn and the door is window broken. A second window into an office upstairs where the lists and mailing equipment are kept was also broken and entry was made through a window, Ray said.

The warrants for Fields' arrest was issued by Magistrate T.O. Sturdivant after two witnesses said they saw two men break into the house and drive away. Ray said two German Shepherd dogs that guard the house would not attack Fields.

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Montgomery and then vice chairman Wilson was he "didn't want one penny spent on the Klan."

Ray said Montgomery left as chairman of the party after three months in 1963, and Wilson was named party chairman. He said Wilson tried to evict Fields as well as look responsibility for opening mail and bank accounts away from him.

Fields, who resigned from the National States Rights Party and as editor of The Thunderbolt, a white racist newspaper, filed suit earlier this year in an effort to retain

publication rights.

In an out of court agreement, Fields got back The Thunderbolt, but a dispute remains over whether Fields had to vacate Stoner's house and give up the rights to party membership lists.

Stoner and Fields filed suit May 3 to prevent the anticipated selling of Stoner's house by NSRP officers. Fields contends the property belongs to him and Stoner and that any action taken by the new board of Christian Rights Inc. would be illegal.

The defendants in the suit, Wilson, Montgomery, Ms. Bickley and Amy

since he used to work there.

Ray said Monday the tires on two cars belonging to Dorothy Bickley, party secretary, had been slashed at her home sometime between Sunday night and Monday morning.

The house where Stoner has lived for 12 years is also the headquarters of the National States Rights Party (NSRP), a white racist organization.

Fields charges that at an April 7 convention of the NSRP, members voted to fire Mrs. Bickley, the party's long-time secretary, and Ray.

Fields also contends he heads the NSRP and is half owner of Stoner's house.

"I've tried to take a warrant to get Mr. Ray evicted, but these legal matters take time," Fields said. Ray, who lives in the basement of the party headquarters, said Mon-

day that Fields has been attempting to evict him and Mrs. Bickley in order to take over the building for the Ku Klux Klan against Stoner's wishes.

Fields is head of the New Order Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Luther King Jr.'s convicted assassin, James Earl Ray.

Ray also charges Fields has converted donations made to the NSRP to finance Klan publications and operations.

Ray charged that Fields may have taken the mailing list because he "was all shook up about that paper."

The newspaper Fields was referring to is called "The States' Rights Voters League" and is not sponsored by the National States Rights Party.

A four-page article in the news-

papers to have him evicted on conversations by some party members that his house was being turned into "a Klan Imperial Wizard office" which Fields calls a "total and complete lie."

"I never had any plans to turn the building into a Klan headquarters," Fields said.

Ray said the conflicting letters from Stoner are indicative of a person who is having difficulty adjusting to prison life and whose opinion changes with the flow of information he gets. He said Stoner changed his mind about Fields after

paper alleges, among other things, that Fields served as an officer in the National States Rights Party and the Klan for profit and that he is a bigamist.

Fields calls the publication a "slander sheet worse than The National Enquirer" and "The Star" and termed the article "trash."

"It's outrageous because if I were called a bigamist because I paid for a different light, I would be in jail," Fields said.

He said he is considering filing a libel suit against the authors of past four-page newspaper.

Fields charges that Ray and Mrs. Bickley are "squatters who now occupy the building — my building."

"I own the building," Ray says. "I robbed myself for things I paid for as furniture and typewriters, because these are things I paid for

myself. I've been locked out by the so-called Christian Rights Party while I was vacationing in Panama City, Fla."

Fields said he is "disgusted with the whole thing" and "hopes to have the squatters evicted."

"My attorney says they have no leg to stand on," Fields said.

Ray sees the problem in a different light.

"The real trouble began when J.B. turned himself in and the Rev. H.B. Montgomery became chairman," Ray said.

Stoner is serving a 10-year sentence at St. Clair Correctional Institute in Odenville, Ala., for the 1958 bombing of a black Baptist church in which no one was injured.

Ray said Stoner's instruction to see FIELDS, Page 6A

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Ms. Dunn said. Extra workers would have to be hired to handle the special election, Ms. Dunn continued, and that, too, could present a problem, since all available poll workers are utilized during a presidential election year.

"By calling a special election earlier it won't cost any more separate workers to handle the election," Ms. Dunn said.

Cobb Probate Judge Vernon Duncan, who is the county elections superintendent, will call the special

election for Tuesday, June 23, with qualifying opening Friday, May 25, and closing Thursday, May 31.

Qualifying for the non-partisan special commission election will be done at the Probate Court building at Washington Avenue and Haynes Street on the east side of the county courthouse complex in Marietta.

Qualifying for the \$9,500-per-year job will continue even though it's for only a small portion of the usual four-year term, Ms. Dunn said.

The last election register to vote for the special election on June 25 will be