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Mediator tells of neo-Nazis

Richard Salem describes a difficult case to law students

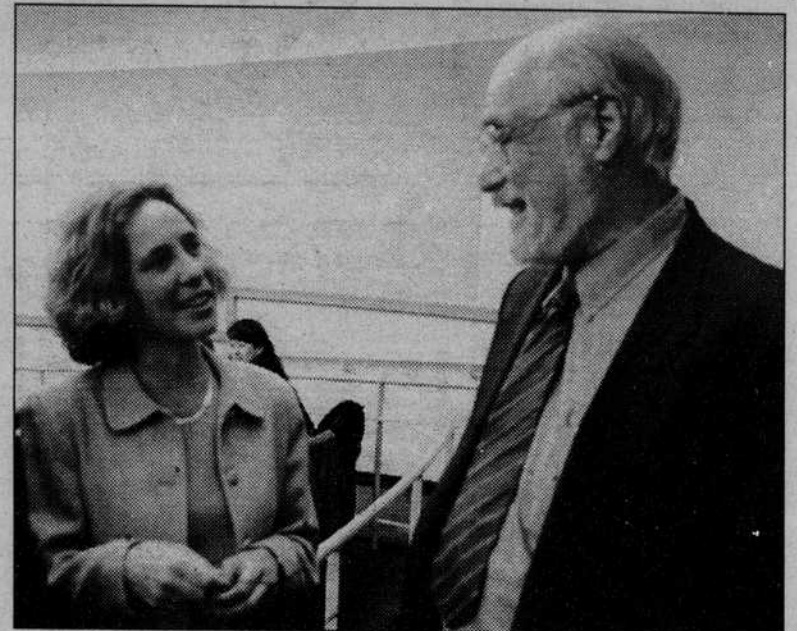
By Hank Hager
Oregon Daily Emerald

Richard Salem, former U.S. Community Relations Service federal mediator, said Wednesday night that if he had not helped intervene in a dispute between neo-Nazis and Holocaust survivors, he would have been afraid for the lives of those involved.

Salem's speech, "Should We Mediate with Neo-Nazis?", addressed the nearly two-year long battle between the residents of Skokie, Ill., and the neo-Nazis. The speech at the Knight Law Center attracted more than 50 interested law students and community members.

Lisa Kloppenberg, director of the Appropriate Dispute Resolution program, said even though the incident occurred far in the past, there is still reason to analyze it.

"Even though the Skokie Nazi



Tom Patterson Emerald
Law school associate dean Jane Gordon discusses with former federal mediator Richard Salem his speech on conflict resolution, presented Wednesday to several law students.

case came 25 years ago, there are still conflicts," she said. "It is worth taking a look at."

From 1976-78, Salem played an important role in the dispute between the neo-Nazi National Socialist Party of America and the Holocaust survivors living in the

mediate the dispute. But at the time, the role of the federal agency was not as a mediator.

"The parties wanted a conflict, not a resolution," Salem said. "We served as an intermediary between Skokie and the neo-Nazis, and from our experience, we were able to give advice."

Eventually, a split in the neo-Nazi party allowed for Skokie residents to rest easier regarding the neo-Nazi presence in the city. Salem had convinced the party to hold their rally at a free-speech plaza in Chicago, and on July 9, 1978, the party held its demonstration.

"You set a goal and try to find a way to stop this thing," Salem said.

Jane Gardner, assistant dean of the Knight Law Center, said she hopes law students can take a look at the situation that occurred and apply what they know to the future.

"This case raises a lot of questions about constitutional law," she said.

“The parties wanted a conflict, not a resolution ... We served as an intermediary ...”

Richard Salem
former federal mediator

community. Frank Collin, leader of the neo-Nazi group, attempted to gain access to Marquette Park, but was rebuffed unless he paid a \$350,000 bond in case of damage. When he could not afford to do so and tensions rose between the two groups, Salem and his partner, Werner Petterson, were assigned to

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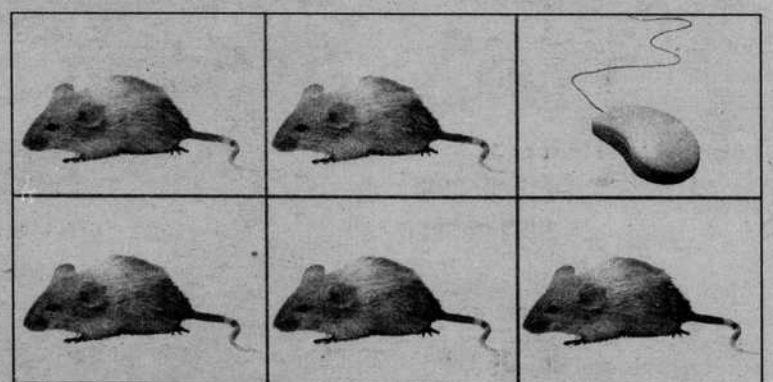
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