

During the height of the American civil rights movement a folk song called *Keep Your Eyes on the Prize* helped remind those struggling for basic human rights not to lose sight of their goal amidst all the distractions and obstacles put in their way by those pitted against them. Similarly, Dr. Dan Fischer, a key leader in the effort to protect children from the abuses that have become so rampant in the FLDS community, is often heard reminding people “to keep their eyes on the ball, the ball being the kids.” Dr. Fischer’s admonition serves as a reminder that, regardless of what people might think about polygamy, the real issue that needs to be addressed is the many abuses—physical, sexual, emotional and otherwise—being perpetrated against children. It is these abuses, which result in untold pain and suffering on behalf of so many of the most vulnerable among us, that need immediate attention.

Lately, Dan’s admonition has taken on a whole new meaning. Like those who opposed the civil rights movement, the FLDS leadership, having no other defense, has resorted to attacking those who are exposing their crimes. Thus, the FLDS leadership has engaged in an orchestrated effort to discredit various attorneys general and other law enforcement officials, guardians and attorneys ad litem, and anyone else they perceive as a threat. Now, they have trained their sights on Dr. Fischer in response to the powerful testimony he gave before the United State Senate’s Judiciary Committee regarding the abuses occurring among the FLDS.

The orchestrated effort of the FLDS leadership to discredit Dan is wrong for at least one obvious and one not-so-obvious but equally important reason. First, it defames an honorable man who has done nothing but try to help children and stop the destruction of families. Plato admonished, “When men speak ill of thee, live so as nobody may believe them.” Those who know Dan Fischer, including his family members who are no longer under the control of FLDS leaders like Warren Jeffs and all those whose signatures appear below, know that the accusations levied by those still in the grasp of the FLDS are completely contrary to Dan’s character. Those who know Dan know of the goodness of his heart and his tireless commitment and self-sacrifice to help others.

Second, these spurious allegations concerning conduct that allegedly occurred upwards of 30 years ago divert attention from the only relevant issue at hand: the need to stop the abuses occurring today. Of course, getting the public to take their eyes off “the ball” is exactly what the FLDS leadership is hoping to do. We cannot allow this to happen. We need to remind ourselves of the reason why the FLDS are in the news in the first place, why Warren Jeffs fled from the law, why he was placed on the FBI’s Ten Most Wanted List, why he now sits in prison, and why two additional states besides Utah, as well as the federal government, are pursuing charges against him and his associates. To be perfectly clear, it is not because they practice polygamy. There are many that practice polygamy out of a sincere religious belief and who engage in no other crimes. The FLDS have become the target of law enforcement in at least three different states and by the federal government because of one thing: systemic child abuse in one form or the other.

Four years ago a group of six young men—a representative body of a much larger group—filed a lawsuit against Warren Jeffs, the FLDS Church and United Effort Plan Trust. These young men had been thrown out of their FLDS homes and ostracized from the only world they knew for various minor “sins” that Jeffs used as an excuse to weed down the male population and eliminate threats to his control over the people. These young men, some as young as 13, were turned out on the streets without any education to speak of, without any financial support and without any idea what the future had in store for them. It was akin to being thrown off a desert isle where they had lived their whole lives without knowing how to swim. Some have drowned, others have found a way to swim, all have struggled terribly.

At about the same time, one of Jeffs’ nephews filed a lawsuit detailing the sexual abuse Jeffs and his associates carried out on him as a young boy. Others who had been abused by Jeffs or at his command came forward to provide detailed evidence of their own abuse, thus corroborating the lawsuit’s allegations and further condemning Jeffs.

In another case, a young father filed suit in his effort to be reunited with his two-year-old son, who had been taken and kept hidden from him at the direction of the FLDS leadership. This was done in apparent retaliation for the father’s mistakes that might have revealed Jeffs’ whereabouts to law enforcement while Jeffs was in hiding. Like the case involving ostracized boys, this case is representative of many, many other incidents of families being torn apart at the direction of Jeffs to eliminate a potential threat and tighten his grip on the FLDS people.

In yet another case, Jeffs commanded a 14-year-old girl to marry her adult first cousin against her will, after which she was subjected to repeated sexual assaults in light of Jeffs’ injunction to the couple to “multiply and replenish the earth.” Again, this is only one of many similar cases. Texas law enforcement has uncovered overwhelming evidence of the continuing practice of marrying little girls, including Jeffs and other FLDS leaders swapping their teenage and pre-teenage daughters with each other to serve as “spiritual wives.”

The list of abuses goes on and on. We must therefore not be dissuaded by a smear campaign designed to distract us from our obligation to help stop these abuses. We must keep our eyes on the ball and ultimately win the prize by way of safeguarding America’s children and families today and in the future.

Aleena (Leenie) Fischer
(Dan’s wife)
Roger H. Hoole
Gregory N. Hoole
Kelly K. Hoole
Sam E. Brower

Shannon Price
Stanford Price
Iva B. Price
Heather Morrison
Dean Barlow
Allison Haskell

Lillian Chatwin
Brent Jeffs
Jody Jeffs
Richard Gilbert
Kevin Hemmert
Eldon Montgomery

Timothy Wood
Robyn Drown
Brad Drown
Michael Krumpelmann
Anna Lee Wilson
Stephen Singular
Kevin Hiatt
Megan Barnes
Angelene Chatwin
Brandon Jeffs
Shem Fischer (Dan's
brother)
Lisa Fischer
Jessica Feil
David Milne
Melissa A. Bankhead
John M. Hofeling
David Sharp
Daniel Fischer (Dan's
son)
Chance Warner
Kristen McMillan
Xela Genovese
Kim Neill
Kelli Young
Ahna M. Rymer
Debbie Anderson
Yolanda Garcia
Cesar Rodriguez
Cindy Slater
Peter Lund
Steven Bateman
Rosario E. Fajardo
Enos D. Steed
Richard Ream
Douglas Cole
Stephen Steadman
Adam Pace
Barry Hobson
Jeremy Johnson
David Kendall
Sid A. Smith
Michelle Rathburn

Jana St.Clair
Kevin Musig
DeLoy Bateman
Lynette Phillips
Cindy Cooke
Karen Phillips
John Ringoot
Corey Jaseph
Maren Smith
Rachel Bean
Diane Rogers
Cayla Rogers
Chase Rogers
Lee Hess
Dan J. Bills
Martin Hillman
Tiffany Carlson
Polly S. Black
Marie Hess
Vikki Vila
Diane McFarland
Tamra Gillett
Terry Tengler
Lindsey Murphy
Jerry Woodhouse
Yvette Gilbert
BJ Fischer
Paul Nielsen
Angela Evans
Mark Muszynski
Tamra Bolander
Pam Beebe
David Strate
Sebastian Zolnik
Gary White
Arleena Fischer (Dan's
daughter)
Shaelyn Oswald
Carmen Voelegi
Barbara Hill
Sonjia Yanez
Sara Luna-Cozby
Emile Azar

Liz Bell
Aaron Arthur
Angelo Diaz
Bonnie Chatwin
Nicolas Sondaz
Anita Raisch
Ashley Beus
Matt Buck
Amber Schofield
Troy Sluka
Mykel France
Cindy Bradley
Tana Shepherd
David Nuttall
Jim Wilson
Laura Chapman
(Mackert)
Phyllis Thibodeau
Trent Wilkes
Rena Mackert
Jared Pyle
Jon Krakauer
Peter Allred
Loralin Allred
Allisa Allred
Norma S. Estrada
Roseann Cooke
Rachel Jeffs (Dan
Fischer's daughter)
Bruce Jessop
Carl Ream
Travis Nielsen
Terry Stout
Matthew Perry
Diana Schroeder
Kris Morrill
Hollan Harper
Meg Palmer
Mario Palmer
Jay Frazier
David Atherley
Jill Elliott
Glenn B. Jeffs

Dana Fischer Jeffs
Richard Mueller
Rona Murphy
Sophie Nguy
Victoria Wallace
Jack Mcfarland
Jordan Mcfarland
Leslie Mcnutt
Kyle Jensen
Laura Jensen
Steve Caston
Jason Mcfarland
Crystal Mcfarland

Allen Gettelfinger
David Vu
Andrea Smith
Joanna La Verne
Julie Tidwell
Dawna Bistline
Louis Bistline
Dorothy LaBeau
Penny Shoptaugh
Brad Zitting
Linda Rose Carlton
(Chatwin)
Elaine Tyler

Becky Stout
Elissa Wall
Lamont Barlow
Lilly Snow
Carolyn Jessop
Nancy Simons
Mark Brinkerhoff
Al Giesler
Dallas Fears
Brad Hansen
Melanie Jones
Richard Tuttle