

Liberty Dollar's Von NotHaus Indicted

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Bernard von NotHaus and three others were indicted in early June in U.S. District Court for the Western District of North Carolina alleging conspiracy to promote the use of their privately produced Liberty Dollars instead of Federal Reserve Notes.

They are charged with an "unlawful operation to publish, possess and sell for profit, coins in resemblance and similitude to U.S. coins" and "uttering and passing and attempting to utter and pass, a coin of silver in resemblance of genuine coins of the United States in the denominations of five dollars and greater and intended for use as current money."

Von NotHaus turned himself in June 4 at the U.S. Marshall's Office in Fort Myers, Fla.

He described his experience in a June 5 "Liberty Dollar Alert" e-mailed to individuals on his list of contacts.

He wrote, "I was immediately escorted to a holding cell. After an hour or less, I met with the Pre-Trial Service rep and made it to court at 11 (a.m.) in chains and handcuffs. The female judge was businesslike and granted my request to attend my son's graduation in Physics from UCLA next week. After fingerprinting, signing a \$50,000 Appearance Bond, one final meeting with the Pre-Indictment Service rep, I was free."

He explained, "I just want to prove that I have a right to issue my own currency and if anybody chooses to use it then it is a 'private contract.' It is certainly not a crime."

Collectors of exonumia are familiar with the silver Liberty dollar pieces of various denominations, which depict the head of Miss Liberty and the legends, "Liberty" "Trust In God" and a date.

The reverse carries a torch that resembles the one held by the Statue of Liberty.

"When groups seek to undermine the U.S. currency system," said acting U.S. Attorney Edward R. Ryan, "the government is compelled to act. These coins are



not government-produced coinage, yet purchasers were led to believe by those who made and sold them that they should be spent like U.S. Federal Reserve Notes. Such claims are a violation of federal law."

The Liberty Dollar group is based in Evansville, Ind. Its Web site is www.libertydollar.org.