

# Elohim City: extremists' enclave

Its name keeps surfacing in criminal investigations.

From staff and wire reports

MULDROW, Okla. (AP) — Up seven miles of bad road, past no-trespassing signs nailed to black-jack oaks, sits a major stop on the right-wing extremists' underground railroad.

It looks more like a low-rent trailer park. Ramshackle mobile homes and polyurethane huts sit willy-nilly on this Ozark mountain, hidden by woods and surrounded by the crackle of gunfire.

It's called Elohim City, and the name of the armed, all-white enclave of 80 or so religious zealots keeps popping up in criminal investigations.

Four of five white supremacists, including Mark Thomas of Longswamp Township, indicted last week on charges of conspiring to rob seven Midwestern banks have visited or lived there. One is engaged to a granddaughter of the compound leader.

And two weeks before the Oklahoma City bombing, Timothy McVeigh called the Oklahoma compound and spoke for nearly two minutes, phone records show.

Elohim City's leader is Robert G. Millar, a former Mennonite who brought his flock here 24 years ago. He is 71 and favors kilts and clerical collars. His followers, most of whom are related to him by birth or marriage, call him "Grandpa." Elohim (pronounced eh-loh-HEEM) is a Hebrew word for God.

Millar is considered one of the most important leaders of America's Christian Identity movement, a theology common to an assortment of right-wing extremist groups.

The movement teaches that its followers are at war with the U.S. government, that racial minorities are subhuman "mud people," that Jews are the offspring of Satan and that a "New World Order" endangers freedom.

"It is a religion on steroids," said Morris Dees of the Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks

extremists through its Klanwatch Project.

People seeking the company of like-minded zealots travel between Elohim City and other extremist encampments, including the Hayden Lake, Idaho, compound of Aryan Nations founder Richard Butler and the farm of Thomas, the Pennsylvania Aryan Nations leader.

Thomas is one of the four men indicted last week in the bank robbery case to have visited Elohim City. Two men who already have been convicted of committing some of the robberies took shelter at the compound during the spree, according to court testimony.

Another, 24-year-old Michael Brescia of Philadelphia, is engaged to marry Millar's granddaughter, Esther Den Hartog.

The robbers' intent, prosecutors say, was to finance a war against the government.

Elohim City itself remains unscathed. Millar has never been arrested, and his compound has never been raided.