

# 'Howe: I'm Not Keeping My Mouth Shut Any Longer'

Thursday, March 13, 1997 - McCurtain Daily Gazette  
By J. D. Cash

The incredible saga of Carol E. Howe — a former undercover informant for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) — took another bizarre twist Wednesday when the U.S. Attorney's office in Tulsa released criminal indictments against the former college honor student and ex-Tulsa Opera Debutante.

Carol Howe has recently been the subject of several national news stories since the McCurtain Daily Gazette discovered evidence that she had reported to her BATF "handlers" a plot to bomb the Oklahoma City federal building by members of a neo-Nazi religious cult located in eastern Oklahoma.

The three-count indictment alleges Howe conspired with former housemate James Dodson Veifhaus Jr. to willfully make a bomb threat and possessed a nonregistered destructive device.

On Dec. 13, the FBI raided the Tulsa residence that Howe shared with Viefhaus after receiving information concerning a cryptic message on the pair's answering machine.

During a Dec. 18 preliminary hearing, FBI agent Pete Rickel told the court that a search of the residence found ammonium nitrate and other chemicals that could be used to make a bomb.

The agent also testified that books describing how to make bombs, plus various weapons, were found at the property.

According to testimony at the hearing, the raid was touched off when a person in Seattle, Wash., reported a menacing message on an answering machine that was subsequently traced to the residence of Viefhaus and Howe.

Viefhaus was arrested after he admitted it was his voice on the answering machine. The Gazette has learned that the message included references to a holy war with an "Aryan" agenda.

The pre-recorded message also contained a statement referring to a letter purportedly received from "a high-ranking revolutionary commander" demanding that action be taken against the government by all white warriors by Dec. 15 — and that if the action were not taken, bombs would be activated in 15 pre-selected cities.

Subsequently, Viefhaus was indicted for his role. He has been in custody since December awaiting trial.

## Timing of Indictment Questioned

As for Carol Howe, the 26-year-old blonde dropped out of college recently. She has been living in seclusion at an undisclosed location since her work as a contract undercover informant for the BATF was first revealed in an exclusive Feb. 11 interview printed in the Gazette. The Tulsa World reported this morning that Howe's attorney, Allan Smallwood of Tulsa, said his client will turn herself in next week and that he expects to vigorously defend her against the charges.

Adding to the twists and turns in the young woman's life, Howe is believed to be a key witness for the defense in the upcoming trial of Timothy McVeigh. Speaking on condition of anonymity, a source on the McVeigh defense team said the timing of the indictments against Howe — coming two months after Vieffhaus' were handed down and only weeks before the McVeigh trial begins — appears to be a desperate attempt by the Justice Department to impugn her credibility before she testifies in Denver.

## Warned of Bombings in Advance

During the course of several meetings and telephone interviews earlier, Howe told the Gazette that she warned the BATF for months about plans to bomb three Oklahoma City federal offices prior to the actual April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

Howe also told this newspaper that she believed the raid on her property last December was part of a plan to destroy her — saying she feared her life was in jeopardy because of her knowledge of the plot to bomb the Murrah building and the government's failure to heed her warnings. Indeed, according to documents recently discovered by the McVeigh defense team, Howe told her "handler" with the BATF that Tulsan Dennis Mahon and former Elohim City resident Andreas Karl Strassmeir announced as long ago as November 1994 that three potential sites for destruction had been selected. Those potential targets, Howe's reports stated, were the Tulsa federal building, the Tulsa office of the IRS and the Oklahoma City federal building.

Howe also told authorities that other residents of Elohim City, a religious cult near the Arkansas state line close to Muldrow, were being whipped into a frenzy about a coming holy war. The compound's religious guru, the Rev. Robert Millar, said that holy war would come by April 19, 1995, she said.

According to Howe's report, Millar in January 1995 began warning the residents of Elohim City that they would "end up like David Koresh and the Branch Davidians if (they) did not act first." Howe also told authorities that Strassmeir and Mahon actually "cased the Murrah building on three occasions before the bombing."

According to Howe's April 21 interview with authorities, she said she did not recognize the name Timothy McVeigh but believed the sketches of subjects being circulated by the FBI were men she knew at Elohim City who associated with Mahon and Strassmeir.

Although Carol Howe's BATF files indicate she passed each of the polygraphs administered while she worked for them, incredibly no one at the Justice Department obtained arrest and search warrants for anyone at Elohim City.

Nor did the FBI ever interview Strassmeir and Mahon about Howe's information.

Instead, Howe's reports indicate her rate of pay was increased for \$120 per week to \$400 per day after the Oklahoma City bombing when she was persuaded to return to Elohim City, alone, and see what sort of activity was going on there.

After spending four days at the compound, Howe reported back to authorities that Mahon and Strassmeir had disappeared from the property and that there had been an influx of heavily armed men preparing for a raid.

The Justice Department now says Howe was unreliable and had to be fired. During the course of our interview with Howe, she said on several occasions that she believed the FBI had been attempting to lure her into doing something illegal for quite some time in order to put her in jail — or, at the very least, to stop her from going public with what she knew about the April 19, 1995, bombing.

Howe, in an interview earlier this year, produced a faxed document from a person she said had been contacting her for several months, regularly encouraging Viefhaus and her to get involved in various illegal acts, including purchasing machine guns.

Reflected on the document acquired by the Gazette is a telephone number indicating where it was faxed from. Oklahoma City private investigator Bruce Dierks traced the phone number to 2926 S. 130th E. Ave. in Tulsa.

Dierks said the residence was rented in the name of "E. Ingersoll" but that when the phone records were checked, the bill was actually paid by now well-known FBI informant Richard E. Schrum.

Schrum testified last year at a bombing trial that resulted in convictions for several persons accused of plotting to bomb gay bars and synagogues. Schrum testified during the trial that he was paid by the FBI to infiltrate right-wing groups.

At press time today, Carol Howe contacted J.D. Cash and said she was returning to Tulsa to surrender to authorities.

But Howe was apparently not intimidated by the federal action, defiantly telling Cash:

"If the Justice Department thinks this is going to sjhut me up...well, it's going to have the opposite effect...These are actions clearly designed to discredit my before the McVeigh trial."

She left this parting promise: Tm not keeping my mouth shut any longer about Oklahoma City!"