

ATF Informant Says Cover-Up

by William F. Jasper

After nearly two years of adamant denials that any federal agencies had even the slightest inkling of any plot to blow up the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City, federal prosecutors have been dealt a stunning blow. Just weeks before the scheduled March 31st start of the trial of bombing suspect Timothy McVeigh, a series of revelations have forced the Justice Department to concede that they did indeed have an undercover informant inside a white supremacist group which this magazine and other news organizations had previously linked to McVeigh. Even more important, newly available evidence from this informant and other federal sources strongly supports the suspicions that Andreas Karl Strassmeir, a mysterious German national reported on previously in these pages (see THE NEW AMERICAN for [June 24, 1996](#) and [July 8, 1996](#)), not only was a confederate of McVeigh, but was also a federal undercover operative.

During the first two weeks of February, Justice Department officials went into panic mode in an attempt to suppress what threatened to become an avalanche of exposés by major media organizations concerning the freshest and most damning proof that federal authorities had detailed information about the bombing conspiracy long before the fateful explosion of April 19, 1995. The primary object of their alarm was Carol M. Howe, a 26-year-old former Miss Teenage America semi-finalist and honors student from Tulsa, Oklahoma who had become involved with the militantly racist White Aryan Resistance (WAR), the Aryan Republican Army (ARA), and a related white separatist community in Oklahoma known as Elohim City.

Early Warnings

According to Howe, in mid-1994 she was approached by ATF Agent Angela Finley and became a confidential informant for the agency. Agent Finley regularly debriefed Howe concerning her activities with WAR chief Dennis Mahon of Tulsa and her many visits to Elohim City.

According to J.D. Cash, investigative reporter for the **McCurtain Daily Gazette** in Idabel, Oklahoma, specific warnings of plans to blow up the Murrah Building were contained in the more than 70 reports Howe made to Finley during 1994-95. Cash, who has broken many of the major stories on the Elohim City connection to the bombing, had apprised THE NEW AMERICAN of his discovery of the ATF informant months ago. However, it was not until early December 1996 that he learned Howe's identity and began a series of interviews with her that culminated in an extensive and explosive article published in the **Gazette** on February 11th.

Utilizing contacts and information developed by Cash, the ABC **20/20** team, which had already produced an important report on the government's prior knowledge in its January 17th broadcast, obtained a telephone interview with Howe, who had gone into hiding. This interview was deemed so "hot" that ABC decided not to wait for the regular **20/20** airing but to break it on the evening news with Peter Jennings. Part of the impetus for this quick-release decision came from the fact that the NBC **Dateline** team was also closing in on the same story.

Aware that ABC was preparing to broadcast what was potentially a devastating blow to the Clinton Administration's repeated claims that it had no forewarning, the Justice Department began a preemptive strike. Calling journalists and news groups, particularly those gathered in Denver to cover the McVeigh trial, Justice officials warned that ABC would be breaking a story that was sensational and irresponsible, and that grossly misrepresented the ATF's and FBI's prior knowledge of the OKC bomb attack. At the same time, Justice officials were bearing down on Jennings and ABC executives. To the dismay of the **20/20** and ABC News crews, who recognized a major scoop, ABC management buckled and the show was scratched.

Strassmeir Connection

Two nights later, however, Tom Brokaw and NBC News did give some significant coverage to this important story. In a special investigation story, NBC's Mike Boettcher reported on the Carol Howe revelations and ran heretofore unseen video footage of Howe (with a large swastika tattoo on her arm) and others at Elohim City firing weapons during their paramilitary training. The broadcast also featured a 1994 German television interview in which Mahon and Howe appeared. In that interview, Howe, ironically, was asked if she thought that their neo-Nazi group had been infiltrated by federal agents. Of course, she coolly replied, giving no indication of her own role in that effort. With file videotape rolling of Andreas Strassmeir in Berlin, NBC's Boettcher stated:

Howe gave the government information before the bombing on alleged threats by others in Elohim City, including this man, Andreas Strassmeir. According to federal documents, Strassmeir was the military training officer for Mahon's organization called the White Aryan Resistance. The FBI summary of informant Carol Howe's report states, "Strassmeir has talked frequently about direct action against the U.S. government. He is trained in weaponry and has discussed assassination, bombings, and mass shootings. Strassmeir and Mahon have taken three trips to Oklahoma City."

The NBC report on Howe ended by noting that "the government acknowledges in federal documents that she was their informant. While Carol Howe reported on white supremacists, their talk about bombings and anti-government threats, there

is no evidence that she reported a specific threat to the Murrah Federal Building before the bombing."

But according to others, there is indeed evidence of a "specific threat" to the Murrah Building in Howe's ATF reports. Sources familiar with the reports informed THE NEW AMERICAN that as far back as November 1994, Howe warned that two Elohim City residents were casing three federal buildings in Tulsa and Oklahoma City and that Howe also secretly filmed Strassmeir, Dennis Mahon, and ARA bank robbers Peter Langan and Kevin McCarthy arming and painting hand grenades.

Howe also reportedly has identified Timothy McVeigh and Michael Fortier as visitors to Elohim City in December 1994. However, she says she knew them as "Tim Tuttle" and "Mike Fontaine." Tim Tuttle is a name that other witnesses have also reported McVeigh using.

Transparent Denials

Back in November 1996, federal prosecutors complained vigorously that discovery requests by defense attorneys suggested "that there may have been 'prior knowledge (of the bombing) by the government' and, in particular, suggests that the bombing actually may have been a misguided 'sting operation' conducted by the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (BATF)." This was completely "unfounded," they insisted, "because the prosecution is not withholding anything that even remotely would support such an outrageous charge." But the Carol Howe testimony provided to the ATF goes far beyond "remotely" supporting this charge. And if anything is "outrageous" it is the prosecution's previous suppression of this "nonexistent" evidence, which it has now been forced to provide to the defense teams for McVeigh and Nichols. It is altogether possible, however, that the defense attorneys may also elect to suppress the evidence, since Howe's reports link McVeigh to Strassmeir, Mahon, and Elohim City -- connections which McVeigh's lawyers deny.

The Justice Department has repeatedly denied -- to the press, the bombing victims' families, and the federal court -- that it has any information linking Strassmeir to the Oklahoma bombing. That position has now become so patently ludicrous that even many of the willfully blind Establishment mediameisters may eventually catch on and inadvertently give away some of the deceptive game plan. Carol Howe's testimony is not the only evidence linking the government's prime suspect, Timothy McVeigh, to Andreas "Andi" Strassmeir. As reported in THE NEW AMERICAN in earlier stories, the two are connected by:

- A call to Elohim City for "Andi" placed on McVeigh's calling card from Kingman, Arizona on April 5, 1995.

- A traffic ticket issued to McVeigh in 1993 on a remote rural road just a few miles from Elohim City.
- Witnesses in Herrington, Kansas (where Terry Nichols resided) who reported seeing McVeigh with Strassmeir.
- A belated admission by Strassmeir that he had met McVeigh at a gun show and purchased some military clothing from him.
- Witnesses who identify Strassmeir's Elohim City roommate, Michael Brescia, as the elusive John Doe No. 2.

Ignoring the Obvious

Incredibly, the *soi-disant* investigative reporters of the prestige press have failed thus far to connect the obvious dots. Even if one ignores the mountainous evidence now accumulated pointing to prior knowledge and swallows the Justice Department line, one is faced with a glaring problem: Why didn't the ATF or FBI arrest Strassmeir, Mahon, and company *after* the bombing, or, at the very least, bring them in for questioning? On the basis of Carol Howe's reports alone, these should have been the FBI's prime suspects. In the months following the deadly blast, hundreds of federal agents interviewed thousands of witnesses and suspects, and many militia groups with no known criminal intentions were targeted in high-profile raids while Strassmeir, a foreign national at high risk of fleeing, was ignored. Months after the bombing, after Strassmeir had fled to Germany, the FBI decided it might be worthwhile to interview him. By then, of course, it was too late; the best they could do was conduct the interview by telephone.

Is the FBI really that incredibly inept, or were they under orders to let Strassmeir walk because he was an important undercover asset for the bureau or some other federal agency? In the period since the bombing, the FBI and ATF have shown that they have had deep moles placed in a great many militant "right-wing" organizations from coast to coast. It is incomprehensible that they would have neglected the notorious Aryan socialists who flowed through Elohim City on a regular basis, especially since people affiliated with the group had been involved in an earlier bombing conspiracy targeting the same Alfred Murrah Building in 1985.

In a series of interviews conducted in Berlin last year with Ambrose Evans-Pritchard of the *Daily Telegraph* of London, Strassmeir stated that he came to the U.S. in 1989 because he was planning to work on a special assignment for the U.S. Justice Department. "I discussed the job when I was in Washington," he told Evans-Pritchard. "I was hoping to work for the operations section of the DEA [Drug Enforcement Administration]." But, Strassmeir said, "It didn't work out." Or did it? Last July THE NEW AMERICAN interviewed Vincent Petruskie, a former

Air Force officer whom Strassmeir identified as a CIA agent and friend of his father. Petruskie, who now runs Petruskie Associates, a business consulting firm in Manassas, Virginia, confirmed that "Andi wanted to work for the U.S. government -- DEA, Justice -- undercover," and he had put the German soldier in touch with "some people in Washington."

One of Strassmeir's closest friends in the U.S., Dennis Mahon, asserts that Strassmeir had been a member of Germany's elite GSG-9 counter-terrorism unit. According to Strassmeir himself, he had done undercover work in Germany for the German government before coming to America.