

Strassmeir Helped Fortify, Arm Elohim City Bunkers

Prosecutor's Claim He Wasn't Suspect Doesn't Square With Documents

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By J.D. Cash

Who is "Andy the German"?

More than a year has passed since that question was first raised by this newspaper, and the answer remains as murky as the Rhine River in spring.

Believed to be living in seclusion now at his family's fashionable home in Nassauische Street in the elegant Wilmersdorf section of Berlin, Andreas Carl Strassmeir, 37, remains the epitome of the Churchillian epigram - "a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma."

Linked by the media to neo-Nazi elements in the U.S., this is an unfamiliar and embarrassing situation for the eldest son of one of Germany's most respected and politically influential families.

"Andy the German's" father is Guenther Strassmeir, an experienced politician who escaped from communist-occupied East Germany after World War n and made his way to the top rungs of West Germany's mainstream, CDU political party.

Recently retired from official posts, the elder Strassmeir served 23 years in the parliament, but is best remembered as the architect of the reunification of the divided Germanies. It was a tedious and historic process he oversaw while serving as Parliamentary Secretary of State 'to the chancellor in Berlin.

Another well-known member of the family is Andreas' younger brother, Alexander, who currently serves as a representative on Berlin's elected council. But a recent barrage of negative publicity in the German media has caused an uproar in Berlin that now threatens the family's good name.

With unusual ferocity, the media is focusing on the eldest son of the Strassmeir clan, raising serious questions about rumors that "Andy the German" is a neo-Nazi - an accusation that carried a particular taint in modern Germany.

After years of slinking in the shadows of the borderless terrorist underground, Andreas Strassmeir has suddenly come under the bright media spotlight surrounding the Oklahoma City bombing trial of Timothy McVeigh.

The uproar is partly the result of documents being released that reflect statements made by gvernmeht informant Carol Howe — who claims that Strassmeir and flamboyant

American revolutionary Dennis Mahon promoted and planned the Oklahoma City bombing but somehow walked away unscathed.

Then there are all the witnesses in Kansas and Oklahoma who have placed Strassmeir with McVeigh in the years and days leading up to America's most devastating act of terrorism.

And if those allegations aren't tantalizing enough, it gets more exotic. The politically \$tout Strassmeir dynasty is now having to deal with yet another emerging scandal.

That latest involves the eldest son's stint at a very strange place called Elohim City in far eastern Oklahoma near the Arkansas state line. It was there that members of a ragtag band of neo-Nazi bank robbers, dubbed the Aryan Republican Army, bunked with this son of Germany's power elite.

The Machiavellian picture includes such oddball figures as "Commander Pedro," a self-styled revolutionary and cross-dressing pre-operative transsexual whom "special friends" call Donna.

Leaving lifestyle behind, Commander Pedro managed to lead a tiny army of societal misfits on a two-year crime binge, successfully looting over \$250,000 from some 22 banks in seven Midwestern states without a single crime scene arrest or fatality. And the scheme was as perverse as its leadership — finance the overthrow of the federal establishment and create an Aryan paradise of Third Reich vintage. Certain to add to the Strassmeir family horrors are FBI documents obtained by die media, spelling out "Andy the German's" direct involvement in training the far-right group.

Add to this bizarre picture (which even the National Enquirer would find hard to embellish) documents reviewed by the Gazette clearly establish that, in spite of the Aryan Republican Army's connections to Andreas Strassmeir, he has thus far been "untouchable" by the FBI.

A source close to the turmoil describes Strassmeir's Justice Department file as "a white-hot skillet."

So is Strassmeir somebody's undercover agent, perhaps someone who is part of an elaborate sting operation that included a string of bank robberies to finance a terrorist operation that eventually resulted in 168 murders in Oklahoma City?

Or, is Andy the German just a run-amok rebel from a wealthy and power family whose political stroke is so potent that it can blunt the force of the U.S. Justice Department?
Or .. is he both?

On Feb. 4, 1996, the Gazette wrote a detailed account enlisting phone records associated with Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols.

In that exclusive story the Gazette revealed that it was Strassmeir, Elohim City's security adviser, that Oklahoma City bombing defendant Timothy McVeigh made a phone call to only seconds after calling a Ryder truck rental agency in Arizona.

The person who took the call for Strassmeir later told the FBI that McVeigh's message was simply, "Tell Andy, I'll be visiting soon."

In subsequent stories, the newspaper presented eyewitness accounts linking the mysterious German tourist to Timothy McVeigh and a whole host of figures who are part of a violent fringe element made up of Aryan Nation and White Aryan Resistance members.

Identified as a person suspected in engaging in terrorism, State Department documents obtained by the Gazette reflect that Andreas Carl Strassmeir has been banned from the United States.

Other documents show that, before the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah federal building, Strassmeir was under investigation for various illegal activities - including firearms and explosives violations.

Such evidence is contained in government documents outlining plans in February of 1995 for Strassmeir's imminent arrest by agents of the Tulsa office of the BATF.

For reasons yet to be explained, that arrest -planned for two months before the Oklahoma City bombing — was postponed, and in the wake of the bombing, apparently scrubbed.

The Gazette has also located evidence that Strassmeir was immediately fingered as a suspect in the Oklahoma City bombing case, but was inexplicably allowed to live in this country illegally for nine months following the tragedy, without being interviewed by the FBI.

Adding to this suspicious picture, the Gazette has found that authorities only notified Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agents that Strassmeir was wanted for questioning in the Oklahoma City bombing after the subject had slipped into Mexico and made his way back to Berlin.

This newspaper also obtained a letter from Strassmeir's attorney, where he says his client's sudden departure from the U.S. was aided by members of Germany's elite counterterrorism unit, GSG-9.

Equally difficult to fathom are documents indicating that officials at the INS quickly cancelled the FBI's notice to detain Strassmeir, once the INS determined that the subject was back in Berlin.

And if this picture is not strange enough, sources indicate that the U.S. Department of State will not help FBI agents get Germany's cooperation so they can question

Strassmeir about members of the Aryan Republican Army bank robbery gang that operated out of his residence in Oklahoma.

Coming to America

While an officer in the Bundeswehr (German army), assigned to the Panzer Grenadiers, Lt. Strassmeir began making a series of visits to the United States. From Jun 18, 1988 until May 2, 1991, the Non-immigrant Information System (NIIS) maintained by the INS in Dallas, reflects he made a total of five visits to the U.S.

Making entries through Boston, Mass. (6/88), Washington, D.C. (4/89), Laredo, Texas (4/90), and New York City (1/90 and 5/91), NHS computers indicate that Strassmeir's initial visits are as a "tourist."

Strassmeir's attorney, Kirk Lyons, said in a Jan. 22, 1996 interview that Strassmeir began visiting the U.S. as a tourist in order to participate in various civil war reenactments. Lyons said that the multi-lingual Strassmeir received advanced training at a military officer's school in Hamburg, Germany, but got fed up with the regimented atmosphere of the military and ended his seven years of service to the Bundeswehr in 1989.

While Lyons believes his client received little or no intelligence training in the service, he also said that Strassmeir's real interests in being in the U.S. was so he could meet American girls and eventually settle down.

But those statements do not jibe with excerpts from interviews appearing in the May 19, 1996 edition of the London Sunday Telegraph.

Ambrose Evans-Prichard wrote, "Strassmeir says that he has received military intelligence training. Part of his work was to detect infiltration by Warsaw Pact agents, he explained, and then feed them disinformation."

Referring to his goals in the United States, the Telegraph quotes Strassmeir: "I discussed a job while I was in Washington, D.C. I was hoping to work for the operations section of the DEA ... It never worked out."

Indeed, on Feb. 28, 1992, Strassmeir was stopped by the Oklahoma Highway Patrol and a subsequent inventory of a briefcase found in the vehicle disclosed a variety of government documents in English and German.

Among the documents catalogued by the suspicious troopers were government forms Strassmeir had filled out, applying for work at the INS and DEA.

In an interview with Kirk Lyons on May 3, 1996, the lawyer first commented on a question regarding Strassmeir's possible role as an undercover agent, saying, "I think it's kinda silly that anyone would think that Andy would work with the feds in the first place."

After telling Lyons that this newspaper was aware of the documents found in Strassmeir's vehicle, the lawyer reversed himself and conceded that he and a retired Air Force intelligence specialist, Col. Vincent Petruskie, tried to get Strassmeir jobs with federal law-enforcement in 1989. "They just weren't looking for members of Germany armed forces to work at DEA or INS," Lyons said. "Col. Petruskie couldn't do anything with him or for him... Strassmeir had no green card (work permit). So, Andy decided to finish up his tour in the army. And so he came to Houston and I took him in."

Green card or not, according to Dallas INS records, when Strassmeir's visas were issued for his last two known entries to the United States, his classification was listed as a person approved to perform work in the U.S.

Also in the Telegraph interview, Strassmeir says he settled in Texas in 1991 and began working as a computer salesman.

And according to a pair of former members of a group called the Texas Light Infantry (TLI) ~ a mish-mash of civil war reenactors and survivalists - Strassmeir ' . may have landed that government job, after , all.

Interviewed independently, both men told similar stories about their recollections of Strassmeir.

Speaking on the condition of anonymity, they vividly recalled Strassmeir attending their meetings and soon the members began to suspect something unusual. Excerpts from a tape-recorded interview with one of the men was published by the Gazette on July 14, 1996.

"Strassmeir set me up and ruined my life," said the former member. Explaining, "Andy had been coming to our meetings and by July of '91, my life and freedom were in danger because of Strassmeir!" Detailing concerns about the German, he said, "Some of the members followed Strassmeir at night. We were suspicious of him and who he really was...He told us he was wanted by the Immigration Service because he said he was here illegally...Once we followed him to a federal building and watched him enter at night using a coded key pad...That's when we knew he was some kind of government agent."

Quickly the information was circulated to other members of the group. Strassmeir was told to stop coming to the meetings. "After that," the man explained, "all hell broke loose. The ATF set me up on two occasions. And some of the other guys were set up, too. Finally, I took off." Kirk Lyons says that Strassmeir's next stop was Elohim City.

"I'm the reason that Andy was at Elohim City. I put him there," said Lyons. "So if there was a plan...I guess I'm part of it"

Lyons said that since Strassmeir had no work permit, the attorney "had to find a place for Andy where he could live off the land."

"We asked Millar to take him in," Lyons recalls. "They had an agriculturally based economy community out there. And there would be a way for Andy to live and prosper without violating any immigration laws. That's why we put Andy out there." But Zara Patterson III, one of the elders at Elohim City, summed up Strassmeir's intentions differently.

"From the moment Andy got here, (mid- August 1991) all he wanted us to do was illegal stuff. I had to keep telling Andy that we were defensive here,...not offensive. I had to keep telling him that we didn't want any trouble with the feds." Rev. Millar also recalled the problems with Strassmeir.

"Andy wanted us to get into the illegal gun business, and when I found out about it, I put a stop to it."

Really?

Doin' The Oklahoma Goosestep

In February of 1992, state troopers set up a roadblock near the entrance to Elohim City. The purpose was to check for required documents such as drivers' licenses, tags and proofs of insurance. Strassmeir was among those stopped.

But interviewed later, one of the troopers said Strassmeir fooled him. "There were two men in the vehicle. The driver as it turns out was Strassmeir, but he gave me his buddy's name, Pete Ward. And that is how I wrote him up."

Cited for not displaying an Oklahoma tag, and failing to carry a valid driver's license, the ticket indicates it was issued to Peter Nelson Leslie Ward Jr., with a date of birth, 2/18/68.

But Ward's Oklahoma driver's license shows his date of birth as 12/30/68. Another tell-tale clue of the apparent forgery is reflected on the signature line of the citation where "Jr." preceded Ward.

While Strassmeir was apparently able to fool the troopers as to his true identity for a time, still his car was impounded pending a resolution of the charges. And inside the vehicle was a briefcase that had caught the trooper's attention.

Wrecker driver Kenny Pence of Muldrow remembers the event vividly. "That guy was some kind of weird cookie," said Pence. "I tell ya the next day - after I locked his car up in my yard - I started gettin' calls from all over the place."

Pence recounted the series of events, "Some high-powered lawyer in Houston called. Some general or major or somethin' in the Carolinas called. The governor's office called. The district office for the Highway Patrol called. And then someone at the State Department called."

It seemed that whoever owned the faded red '83 Chevrolet wagon was important. "You bet," said Pence. "Everyone was telling me to turn that car back and give those papers back to that boy and don't charge him nothin'. They all kept telling me this was the big-big boo-boo. And the guy at the State Department said this boy had immunity or something. You know, he was some kinda diplomat.

"That general in the Carolinas wanted to know about the briefcase. Heck, you know...those troopers inventoried it all...but those folks were sure worried about what was in there."

Pence added sardonically, "Man I couldn't get that car out of here fast enough. And when that nut showed up to pick up his car, he got real upset when he saw that the briefcase had been gone through. He settled down in a while and said, 'Well, no one will be able to understand what these are, anyway.'"

After the incident, Strassmeir apparently decided he needed a valid driver's license. But the problem was, he was now considered an illegal alien because he had overstayed his visa.

How the problem was skirted is unknown. But in 1992, Strassmeir was able to obtain a valid Social Security number.

Then on August 28, 1992, he was issued a driver's license from Tennessee, complete with photo, accurate physical description and date of birth.

Armed with legitimate identification, Strassmeir began traveling the gun show circuit, buying fatigues, firearms and assorted types of survivalist gear.

Elohim City residents interviewed by the Gazette say he also set into motion a strict training regimen for the natives. "I never saw anyone so eaten up with the military stuff as Andy was," recalled Zara Patterson HI. "I was in the marines, but Andy was like nothing I ever saw before. He said he wanted to take over security and training here at EC, and I said fine. It was one less headache for me."

According to an FBI intelligence report, Strassmeir's years at Elohim City were spent setting up and operating a terrorist training facility.

A May 10, 1995 FBI investigative report says:

"Strassmeir is alleged to be a German citizen whose father was a former member of the German parliament. Strassmeir was a member of the German military and according to sources the principal militia trainer at Elohim City.

"Strassmeir has an outstanding federal warrant issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) since failing to leave this country in 1991.

"Strassmeir is alleged to train platoonsized groups consisting of approximately 30 to 40 individuals approximately every three months at the Elohim City facility. These individuals are comprised of members of various militia groups throughout the United States.

"Additional documents reveal that at one time Strassmeir was attempting to purchase a 747 aircraft from Luthansa; however, the reason for the purchase is not reflected in the documents.

"Sources have advised that in 1992 Elohim City had approximately 122 truck loads of concrete transported from a local concrete company. Sources have indicated the existence of 'bunkers' and weapon storage facilities at Elohim City."

In a Jan. 2, 1996 interview, Strassmeir admits to upgrading the Elohim City arsenal. '

"They're pretty fully equipped over there (Elohim City) and I can take credit for that," he said. "They never even had any real weapons there until after Waco (1993). The whole response was to Waco...they thought they were going to be targeted.

Strassmeir said young men at the compound approached him, and he suggested they replace with lever-action Winchesters with automatic, magazine-type weapons.

Carol Howe's statements following the Oklahoma City bombing seem to bolster the reports that the arsenal was fortified. She told BATF agents that Elohim City was an impenetrable camp by that time.

Reflected in government insert No. 427 and dated April 21, 1995, Howe recapped her earlier reports to Special Agents Angela Finley and James R. Blanchard, reminding them that Elohim City had 308 rifles, including fully automatic weapons such as MAC-90s.

But months prior to the bombing, allegations involving Strassmeir's reputation for converting legal semiautomatic firearms into fully automatic machine-guns, and his expertise with explosives, had already come to the attention of the Tulsa office of the BATF.

During interviews this newspaper conducted with Howe, she said Strassmeir was a principal target of the Tulsa BATF office.

"All Andy ever wanted to do was blow up federal buildings," she said. Recalling her work for SA Finley, which included the use of a hidden camera the agent had help Ms. Howe set up in her apartment, Carol said "Finley wanted me to get Strassmeir on film handling grenades. I invited him over and he brought two other guys...It was in the fall of 1994. In no time I had them all painting hand grenades in front of the camera. Later I turned the film over to Angie."

The BATF's plans for a pre-bombing arrest of Strassmeir is further evidenced in a memo signed by an investigative agent for the Dallas INS office.

"SA Angela Finley, ATF from Tulsa called regarding the attached individual. They have an on-going investigation on him which she described as 'sensitive' for an unknown reason. He's buying guns but that's all she said. I found the nonimmigrant record on him but no LPR status. She said he lives out in the boonies in eastern Oklahoma. They plan to charge him with 922(g) but needed evidence that he is here illegally. I have ordered a certificate of non-existence of lawful permanent residence from HQ which will take 6-8 weeks. I had it sent to Dallas and I'll forward it to you when I get it. Angela also wanted to know if an INS agent could go with them when they arrest him. I told her to contact you."

Responding to the memo, on Feb. 16, 1995, the Chief Records Operations officer with the INS said there was no evidence Strassmeir had been lawfully admitted to the country as an immigrant (his status at this time was an illegal non-immigrant who had overstayed his visa).

Immediately after the certificate was issued to the authorities, Finley contacted the Highway Patrol and put them on alert to pick up Strassmeir, saying the ATF would handle the matter once he was in custody.

The reason for the BATF's failure to arrest Strassmeir before the Oklahoma City bombing is not known and the agency declines comment.

However, in the hours after the bombing, Howe was debriefed by the agency and eventually agreed to return to Elohim City and locate Strassmeir and his friend, Dennis Mahon.

During this same time, an agent for the Diplomatic Security Service of the State Department began making inquiries into the subject, as well.

In a State Department cable dated April 28, 1995 sent to the Secretary of State in Washington, D.C. from the U.S. Embassy in Bonn, Germany, Strassmeir is referred to as a "subject of investigation" in the Oklahoma City bombing.

Contained within that priority cable are statements by a foreign attache acknowledging a request for information received the day prior, from Special Agent Hudspeth in Oklahoma City.

That April 28 cable provided information from several German law enforcement data bases concerning Strassmeir's travels and history and promised to obtain and transmit the subject's military records when they were received.

This evidence that Strassmeir was a subject of investigation in the bombing is clearly at odds with numerous statements made by a special prosecutor in the McVeigh case.

Beth Wilkerson has consistently told the court that Strassmeir and Mahon have never been subjects of investigation in the Oklahoma City bombing.

This is important because, for well over a year, McVeigh's attorney, Stephen Jones, has been asking Judge Matsch to get the Justice Department to turn over information on Strassmeir and Mahon which he alleges could help clear McVeigh.

Under federal rules in a criminal case, the government is responsible for handing over to the defense any evidence it has which might tend to prove the innocence or mitigate the guilt of the defendant. Should evidence be discovered after a conviction of the defendant that Strassmeir or Mahon were government informants monitoring the conspiracy, or were involved in the bombing, then a new trial might be ordered as a result of such information being withheld.

In McVeigh's case, such a ruling could amount to millions of dollars in expense to the taxpayers and added misery to the large number of survivors and victims of the bombing that are seeking closure in the tragedy.

Indicating concern with such an eventuality, Jones sought a stay in the trial until the government produces evidence that he believes is being hidden. In that document, Jones alleges that Carol Howe, a BATF informant, warned that "Strassmeir talked frequently about direct action against the U.S. government, he trained in weaponry, and he discussed assassinations, bombings and mass shootings."

Jones claims that based on that and other evidence, "The defense has made a sufficient showing thqt there is a high probability, certainly at least a high possibility that Mahojt and Strassmeir are part of a conspiracy that planned to bomb federal buildings, and may in fact been part of the conspiracy to bomb the Murrah Building."

Calling allegations that there could be others involved in the bombing outrageous and unsupportable, Special Prosecutor, Beth Wilkerson, defended Strassmeir and even described the man listed by the State Department as an armed and dangerous terrorist as "A mere wisp of wind." Wilkerson also told Judge Matsch that Howe's information about Strassmeir was "unreliable" and that she had to be fired by the BATF because she was "mentally unstable."

However, a May '95 BATF report is clearly at odds with Wilkerson's statements.

The Big Secret

A May 31, 1995 BATF status report marked "SENSITIVE", TERRORIST - EXTREMISTS, prepared for the Special Agent in charge of the Dallas field division, refers to an ongoing probe into firearms and explosives violations by a group called White Aryan Resistance (W.A.R.), (Mahon heads the group in Oklahoma, which Strassmeir trained at Elohim City).

The body of the BATF status report focuses on Howe's progress in the bombing investigation.

"Confidential Informant (CI) and Mahon met on April 29th and discussed alibis for April 19, 1995 and the components of the explosives."

"CI says that Mahon said a man familiar with explosives was in Illinois. Mahon mentions the man's name as Pierson.

However, the CI says Mahon was not sure — he has trouble remembering names and that Mahon could have been referring to Paulson (A person whose name was on a business* card in McVeigh's possession when he was arrested)."

Referring to a May 3 debriefing of Howe, the report states:

"CI stated that while she was inside Elohim City for three days (immediately prior to debriefing) she spoke with an individual who said, "There is a big secret out here."

"CI described meetings she had with persons at Elohim City and said they were 'supportive of the bombing.'¹

Noted in the report is a subsequent meeting with Howe on May 13, where agent Finley asks Howe to return to Elohim City to find out "What the big secret is and determine the identity of Suspect No. 2."

However, on May 22, Howe contacted Finley and said she had just been warned by a subject, "That she had better not return to Elohim City, again."

"On May 24, this agent was informed by RAC David Roberts (Tulsa BATF office supervisor) that Rev. Millar suspected CI of being a confidential informant. It was determined that CI would not be sent to Elohim City at this time or in the future.

There's No Place Like Home

By May 24, 1995, Strassmeir had returned to Elohim City and was caught on film by television crews. The press had descended in mass because of a leak that the FBI had learned of a phone call made by McVeigh to Elohim City — just days before the bombing.

In a fantastic defense of his ignorance of the whole situation, Rev. Millar promised the world that McVeigh had never called the compound. And certainly no one at the compound knew Tim McVeigh.

With a shrug, the press wandered away satisfied.

Later, Millar told the Gazette and the FBI that certain folks' memories began to improve once an investigator working for McVeigh showed up at Elohim City, in August of 1995.

And it was also about this time that the population of the compound began to shrink.

Noted in a confidential FBI report, a law-enforcement source told the Bureau that on or about August 27, 1995, Strassmeir and his sidekick, Pete Ward, took off for southwest Missouri.

The government also alleges in a federal indictment that three other ARA members from Elohim City - Kevin McCarthy and Michael Brescia, Mark Stedeford — made a foray up to Madison, Wis. and robbed a bank there on Aug. 30, 1995.

Shortly afterwards, McCarthy and Stedeford moved to Pennsylvania and Brescia followed after a brief stay with a friend near Ft. Smith, Ark. In December 1995, an investigator { working for the McVeigh defense team contacted Kirk Lyons at his North Carolina law office and set up an interview with his client.

During the interview, Strassmeir said only that he had met McVeigh once at a gun show in Tulsa, in 1993. He couldn't explain why McVeigh might have called looking for him two years later.

Strassmeir did admit though that he had McVeigh's Desert Storm uniforms, but had torn the name tags off and shredded them after learning of the bombing suspect's arrest.

"I traded a navy knife for them," claimed Strassmeir.

Freelance reporter Richard Sherrow was the next person to catch up with Strassmeir and establish an interview. The date was Jan. 2, and Strassmeir had traveled with an employee of Kirk Lyons to Houston.

After a brief tape-recorded session, the pair told Sherrow that they were preparing to leave the United States.

On January 11, 1996, FBI Special Agent, John Hippard issued the following alert to the INS.

"Strassmeir, Andreas Carl. Subject is wanted for questioning by FBI, Oklahoma City. DETAIN AND NOTIFY FBI AGENT JOHN R. HIPPARD OR SUPERVISORY SPECIAL AGENT RICHARD BAKER AT ... AND REFER TO FBI CASE NO. 174A-OC-56120 (OKC BOMBING). Subject is possibly armed and dangerous."

Immediately, INS placed Strassmeir on their Lookout Update.

After listing his physical description and passport number in the system, border agents were notified that Strassmeir was wanted for questioning in Oklahoma City by the FBI and further warned, "subject may be armed and dangerous ... Detail until arrival of FBI team."

But it was too late. Strassmeir had already vanished across the border. On Feb. 4, 1996 the Gazette broke a story it had been holding for several weeks.

The central figure was, of course, the mysterious German tourist that McVeigh was trying to reach by telephone at Elohim City. The story detailed Strassmeir's unique family and the evidence that led to speculation that the former German officer might have been a government agent working in cooperation with top Justice Department officials.

Shortly after the newspaper hit the stands, an FBI agent from Oklahoma City arrived and asked for any back issues the Gazette had published on the bombing. Once those were received, he paid cash for a subscription, then left.

That same week, the INS was notified by an FBI agent in Oklahoma City to cancel Strassmeir's detention notice. Recording the discussion in a Feb. 8 memorandum, the INS supervisory agent noted that he had been informed that SA Hippard was no longer the point of contact on Strassmeir's case and that the subject was now out of the country and recently spotted in Berlin.

The INS official then noted for his supervisors, "We inquired about whether the INS lookout should remain active and (Special Agent) Sandstrom indicated that the INS lookout should be cancelled."

Following that first story on Strassmeir, Lyons responded to media inquiries and his supporters in a letter.

"Strassmeir had to be spirited out of the country (through Mexico) before Jones (attorney for McVeigh) and company could get their hands on him," Lyons wrote. "Also, there was some danger that the FBI might take Jones seriously and it would be much easier to defend Strassmeir from Germany."

Adding, "At one point, the Kriminal Polizei and GSG-9 were involved because of death threats against Strassmeir and his family, passed to them through Interpol by the FBI."

Shortly after Strassmeir's departure, a special intelligence bulletin was issued by the Diplomatic Security Division, Counter Terrorism Unit of the Department of State. After noting that Strassmeir had been the principal "militia trainer" for a group called W.A.R. the March 18, 1996 cable says, "He (Strassmeir) has been the subject of several investigations for purchasing weapons and making the weapons fire on full automatic. Strassmeir should not be allowed to return to the U.S."

Gone, But Not Forgotten

On Jan. 30, 1997, the government filed indictments in Philadelphia against several men - including Strassmeir's former Elohim City roommate Michael Brescia - that a grand jury found were involved in a plot to rob banks on behalf of the Aryan Republican Army.

Sprinkled throughout the 21-page indictment are references to Elohim City and its crucial role as a gathering place for the ARA.

Three of the men indicted actually lived at Elohim City, forming a band called, "The Iron Cross."

The person who provided a home, terrorist training and who traveled extensively with these men was "Andy the German."

With the bank robbery trial expected to begin in Philadelphia later this year, naturally the FBI now wants to interview Strassmeir about his potential knowledge of the ARA's criminal activities. But there has been a snag: the State Department has been unwilling or unable to obtain permission from German authorities to allow the FBI to interview Strassmeir. Despite a whole host of international treaties and conventions establishing procedures for transatlantic cooperation between the two governments in criminal investigations, once again it seems Strassmeir is immune to such inconveniences.

The BATF's own informant, Carol Howe, may have said it best: "There's something wrong about Andy."