

# Strassmeir Associating With Irish Terrorists, Newspaper Says

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By Tom Cordon and Helen Curtin - Dublin Sunday Times

*Editor's Note: The following story about Andreas Strassmeir ran in the Sunday, July 13 issue of a newspaper in Ireland, the Dublin Sunday Times, where the German national was found associating with an arm of the Irish Republican Army. Strassmeir has been named, along with Dennis Mahon of Tulsa, as a ringleader in the plot to bomb the Oklahoma City building by ATF informant Carol E. Howe, who is expected to testify before an Oklahoma City grand jury. Strassmeir fled Oklahoma for his native Germany after the McCurtain Daily Gazette first linked him to convicted bomber timothy McVeigh and suggested he was a government undercover agent. The Irish paper's reference to Sinn Fein is to the political wing of the Irish Republican Army, which used violent action to seek Northern Ireland's freedom from British rule.*

A German national who has been questioned in relation to the Oklahoma bombing is living in Dublin and socializing in Sinn Fein circles.

Andreas Strassmeir, 38, is an alleged associate Timothy McVeigh, the terrorist convicted recently for the April 1995 bombing which killed 168 people. He is also linked to other far-right American extremists and has been barred from America by the State Department.

Strassmeir moved to Dublin last February and is living in an apartment in the city owned by George Maybury, general secretary of the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors. He has been working on construction sites and has attended Sinn Fein meetings and social events.

Last weekend he attended a republican function celebrating the recent election to the Daily (Irish National Assembly) of Sinn Fein's Caoimhghin O'Caulain, where he worked as a "roadie" for a ballad group. He claims to have spoken to the new (member of the assembly). O'Caulain was not available to comment.

"I don't have many Mends," Strassmeir said in an interview with The Sunday Times. "Some people I drink with, they could be Sinn Fein. I don't exclude the possibility."

It is believed that special branch (the police) has questioned him about his presence in Dublin.

Strassmeir denies allegations of being either a terrorist conspirator or a secret agent for the American government. He says he left American at the end of 1995 and after a year in Germany moved to Dublin.

Strassmeir has been the subject of intense speculation in the American and German media since it emerged that McVeigh placed a call to him two weeks before blowing up the Alfred Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City. He denies any knowledge of the bombing and says he met McVeigh once — about two years earlier at a gun fair in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

His denials have failed to suppress mounting curiosity about his role on the American far right with some theories identifying him as an alleged coconspirator with McVeigh and others, while an alternative theory — proposed by journalists and some victims' relatives — argues that Strassmeir was an undercover agent hired by the American government to infiltrate the extreme fringes of the antigovernment Christian right.

Maybury said yesterday (Saturday, July 12) that the lease on the two-bedroom apartment in which Strassmeir is living was with another tenant who made his own arrangements regarding the letting of the other room. He said he had no knowledge of Strassmeir.

Strassmeir revealed yesterday (Saturday, July 12) that he intended to remain in the republic (Ireland) for the moment but hoped to return to America. The State Department, however, has barred him from the country because of firearms violations and it lists him as a terrorist suspect.

It is alleged he was engaged in converting semi-automatic weapons into full automatic machine guns while resident in a fundamentalist Christian commune known as Elohim City.

He spent almost four years at Elohim in the backwoods of eastern Oklahoma where the community, which has strong white supremacist and anti-government tendencies, lives in seclusion. He denies reports that he was director of security operations at Elohim.

However, Michael Brescia, his roommate in the commune, is in jail in Philadelphia, having pleaded guilty to conspiring to rob banks. Brescia was a member of a neo-Nazi group who called themselves the Aryan Republican Army. In a recruitment tape seized by authorities, a member claims they modeled themselves on the IRA. Brescia is said to be cooperating with authorities investigating other conspirators in the ARA.

Asked about his association with Brescia, Strassmeir confirmed they were room-mates at Elohim City but refused to elaborate. "I consider him a friend and I'm not making any statements," he said. Another associate and frequent visitor to Elohim City was Dennis Mahon, a former imperial wizard of the Ku Klux Klan and a leader of the more militant White Aryan Resistance. "He stopped by Elohim City a few times and I talked to him," said Strassmeir, "and when I used to go to Tulsa I looked him up."

Brescia shared the virulent antigovernment sentiments at the commune. "We saw tendencies within the government," explains Strassmeir. "We figured it was going the wrong direction and our theory was that, eventually, we might reach a point, like before

in 1776, when it came to a boiling point and people just saw that the only way in defending their independence was a revolutionary war."

Members of the commune were horrified, he said, by the events at Waco, Texas, in April 1993 in which 80 members of the Branch Davidians, led by David Koresh, died after a siege lasting 51 days. Elohim City was about 500 miles away and they felt that they might be next. "I definitely see parallels with Bloody Sunday," said Strassmeir, "where demonstrators, unarmed people, apparently got gunned down by a paratroop regiment and there was never anybody actually punished for that. I think the same principle applies to Waco, where innocent people were gunned down by government forces.

"When the government investigates the government, the result is that everything is okay."

He feels like he has been on the run "not from the authorities but from the media" since the Oklahoma City bombing. "I was hoping the trial would bring out who did it and it would all be over, but apparently not. I haven't done anything illegal or bad but I've got to live with this stigma for the rest of my life, with the label that I'm associated with a convicted terrorist," he said.