

# Informant Could Find John Doe 2, Agent Testifies

Diana Baldwin | The Oklahoman | August 1st, 1997

TULSA - A federal agent testified Thursday that defendant Carol Howe thought she could identify Oklahoma City bombing suspect John Doe 2 the day after an explosion destroyed the Oklahoma City federal building.

Angela Graham, a U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agent, was called as a defense witness. She told jurors that Howe, a former ATF informant, believed the man depicted in a sketch was associated with Elohim City, a white separatist community in eastern Oklahoma.

Howe is on trial in federal court, charged with conspiracy, willfully making a bomb threat and possessing materials to make a pipe bomb. Today is the fifth day of Howe's trial.

Her former fiance, James Viefhaus Jr., was convicted last week on the three counts.

The government claims Howe, 26, and Viefhaus, 28, were involved in the white supremacist movement. The pair co-founded the National Socialist Alliance of Oklahoma and operated a racist hot line from their Tulsa home as part of the Aryan Intelligence Network.

The message on their hot line about a war against the government said if white warriors did not act by Dec. 15, bombs would be activated in 15 cities.

Prosecutors called Howe the "poster girl" for conspiracy theorists who believe the government had prior knowledge of the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

Howe is expected to testify before an Oklahoma County grand jury investigating alternate theories about who bombed the building. The bombing resulted in the deaths of 168 people.

In the fall of 1994, Graham said, Howe reported there was talk at Elohim City about blowing up federal buildings and going to Oklahoma City. Graham said Howe later made a trip to Oklahoma City with people from Elohim City.

In February 1995, the agent said, she and Howe went to Oklahoma City to see where Howe earlier had been taken by the anti-government advocates.

The agent said there were discussions about an ATF-FBI meeting to discuss Elohim City activities four weeks before the Oklahoma City bombing, but the meeting never happened.

Howe became an informant after she reported being harassed by Tulsan Dennis Mahon, the Oklahoma leader of the White Aryan Resistance, Graham said. In March 1995, Howe was removed as an informant.

The investigation spread from Mahon's neo-Nazi, anti-government group to Elohim City where Howe would visit and report to the ATF, the agent said.

In March 1995, Howe was removed as an informant after Tulsa police reported Howe was "out of control and suicidal." Howe was hospitalized following the incident.

Graham told the seven-man, five-woman jury that Howe's association with a Tulsa group of skinheads contributed to her decision to release her. Graham said Howe's information was never enough to obtain "a criminal conviction or that could lead to a criminal conviction."

After the bombing, however, Howe was reactivated as an informant when the FBI wanted her to visit Elohim City to see if she could identify the highly sought "John Doe 2."

Graham said Howe is the only informant she is aware of who has been reactivated after being removed from the informant list.

The agent testified it took an extreme case like the Oklahoma City bombing before a former informant was put back to work.

Graham said that after the bombing "federal, state and local law enforcement were working together to come up with leads to solve the case."

Before too long, Howe became afraid her cover had been blown and refused to return to Elohim City, Graham said.

Graham said nothing resulted from Howe's information from Elohim City.

The agent testified she never received any information from Howe after June 1995.

Records show Howe remained on a list of active informants until December 1996. Graham said the government was reluctant to discard anything relating to the Oklahoma City bombing investigation.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Neal Kirkpatrick and Kevin Leitch rested their case Thursday without additional testimony.

Defense attorney Clark Brewster told the jurors that Howe was involved with Mahon for six or seven weeks before she decided to get out of the movement. But Mahon began harassing her, forcing her to get a restraining order, make a report to Tulsa police and eventually entered into a contract with ATF as an informant.

"Mr. Mahon said Elohim City is where they train terrorists and detonate explosives," Brewster told the jurors. "Ms. Graham was delighted.

"They let this young girl with no training and no experience go out there. This was sticky stuff, and she does it."

Brewster claims Howe had more than 50 meetings with the ATF and made 47 audio recordings for the agent. Brewster said Howe purchased 25 hits of the drug LSD, at Graham's direction, in what he described as a "loyalty test."

"They sent her every week, and then they asked her to stay a month," Brewster said of the Elohim City visits. "She is afraid. Mahon runs hot and cold."

Her biggest fear, Brewster said, was that her targets would figure out she worked for the government.

"She said, 'I hope they don't find out about me. If they can take out 168 people, they can certainly take care of a snitch or informant,'" Brewster said.

Once her identity was public, the defense attorney said, "They said, 'Do whatever you need to do to protect yourself.' What she decides to do is at least to have the appearance she is one of them. She is walking the walk."

Brewster questioned why the government waited until March to indict Howe when the FBI executed the search warrant at her home in Dec. 13. Vieghaus was arrested that day.

He contends the government wanted to keep Howe quiet until after Timothy McVeigh's trial.

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