

**ABCNEWS PRIMETIME LIVE INTERVIEW WITH CAROL HOWE**  
**"She Informed the Government Prior to the Oklahoma City Bombing"**  
**A Double Life: Carol Howe - Debutante to Racist to Informant**  
**Dec. 10, 1997**

**DIANE SAWYER** Welcome to PrimeTime. There was a buzz at the courthouse in Denver today, where Terry Nichols is on trial for the Oklahoma City bombing. As you know, Timothy McVeigh has already been convicted. (VO) The buzz came from the appearance of a mysterious young woman brought in to testify for the defense. But why? What secrets could she possibly know about the 1995 terrorist bombing of the Murrah federal building? (on camera) Well, tonight, she speaks. And this is one of the most perplexing stories we think you'll ever hear. There is a question at the center of it -- is Carol Howe a very brave informant, betrayed horribly by the US government, or is she a dangerously mixed - up young woman -- or both? As you meet her for yourself, we want to warn you this story contains offensive racist language. But we felt it was important for you to hear the reality. (Gunshots)

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** Take a look at this woman. Earlier this year, the federal government put her on trial as a terrorist planning a race war. Carol Howe baring her swastika tattoo. Carol Howe draped in a Nazi flag. And these are her words on tape--so cold, so flat, so poisonous. (Clip from audio tape)

**CAROL HOWE, FORMER GOVERNMENT INFORMANT** We are pro--Nazi. We start eliminating the Jews that have infested our government. (Clip from videotape) When all other avenues have been exhausted that we must turn to violence. It was ignorance and pain and anger and confusion.

**DIANE SAWYER (on camera)** Were you a racist?

**CAROL HOWE** At that time? Yes, I became one.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** But Carol Howe says she was also something else--a patriot who looks at Timothy McVeigh and says she tried to warn the government that violence was on the way.

**CAROL HOWE** I gave them warnings of targets, specific targets, addresses of targets, names of targets.

**DIANE SAWYER (on camera)** Do you think he did it alone?

**CAROL HOWE** No.

**DIANE SAWYER** Why?

**CAROL HOWE** Because I know of too many people that were talking about that building, talking about Oklahoma City, talking about doing something on that date using a truck bomb. It's—it cannot be coincidence to use that many specifics.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** But how did she know those things, and who is this petite young woman surrounded by so much mystery? (on camera) It was really a golden childhood?

**CAROL HOWE** Yes.

**DIANE SAWYER** Debutante?

**CAROL HOWE** Yes.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** It turns out Carol Howe is also a Tulsa, Oklahoma, society girl. A life of private schools, Friday night football. She was a champion horse rider. But all that privilege, she says, wasn't enough.

**CAROL HOWE** I needed to be a part of something where I could feel superior to others. I needed to feel a part of something, of a group, and then bolster my ego by putting others down. I needed that.

**BOB HOWE, CAROL'S FATHER** She got into some bad crowds, and this last one was probably—well, no question, was the worst.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** Carol Howe's father, Bob Howe, an oil executive, her mother Aubyn (ph), who has raised millions for Tulsa charities. She says they got Carol help when she turned to drugs and even gave her support during a brief, impulsive marriage.

**AUBYN HOWE, CAROL'S MOTHER** No matter what we did, it wasn't the right thing.

**CAROL HOWE** I was adopted and that's why, I guess, I have always been looking for my identity and who I am and where I come from and where am I going.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** Which brings us back to 1994, when Howe was recuperating from a fall, she says, provoked by a group of young black men. She says her soon-to-be ex-husband urged her to call a hotline, Dial—A - Racist.

**DIAL—A—RACIST HOTLINE** The niggers are getting off welfare, and they're trying to get disability now—any way not to have to make a living and to be accountable.

**CAROL HOWE** I somewhat got hooked on it and started to call whenever it would change, to hear and learn new and interesting things.

**DIANE SAWYER** (on camera) Interesting?

**CAROL HOWE** There are some interesting facts that come on there, statistics and ...

**DIANE SAWYER** Like?

**CAROL HOWE** How much of violent crime is committed by non—whites and sorts of things like that.

**DIAL—A—RACIST HOTLINE** The international corporations and Jews and banks control America, and they're out to enslave and destroy the white race.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** She sought a meeting with the man on the tape, Dennis Mahon, former Imperial Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan.

**DENNIS MAHON, FORMER IMPERIAL DRAGON** I wanted to make her an Aryan spokeswoman who could stand up for our blood and our race on these talk shows and so forth. But she kept talking about the violence. She kept wanting to kill all the time. "I want to go—I want to kill loads of blacks and Jews," always wanting to—she couldn't relax.

**DIANE SAWYER** (on camera) You had an AK—47?

**CAROL HOWE** It's a MAC—90 (ph). It's a civilian model of an AK—47. And a 12 - gauge shotgun and a couple of handguns and another rifle.

**DIANE SAWYER** He thought of you as his Aryan goddess.

**CAROL HOWE** That's a nickname that he dubbed me, yes.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** So Howe began to live a double life. Mahon took her on training exercises with live bullets. They drew up racist leaflets and networked in the militant underground, even appeared on film together as a kind of racist Sonny and Cher. (Clip from videotape)

**CAROL HOWE** I believe when all the other avenues have been exhausted that we must turn to violence.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** This is a German television interview in 1994. After they had been together four months, Howe says Mahon became violent with her, even sexually assaulted her, which Mahon denies. But Howe got a Tulsa court to issue a protective order against Mahon and turned to her parents. (on camera) What was your parents' reaction when they heard about this other life you had been living?

**CAROL HOWE** Shock, disbelief. I was a—humiliated to have to tell my parents. I was ashamed.

**AUBYN HOWE** I just cried, because she wasn't brought up that way.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** But Howe swears she was finished with racism when she got a call from this woman, a recruiting agent for the US government.

**CAROL HOWE** And she said she was with the ATF. I had to look that up in a phone book because I wasn't sure. I knew it was government, but I didn't know what it stood for.

**DIANE SAWYER (on camera)** Bureau of ...

**CAROL HOWE** ... Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. I didn't know what they would want with me. Then eventually it came around to the fact that she wanted me to go in and be an informant. I thought I was doing a very important thing. I had been so honored that the ATF would come to me and ask me to work for them as an informant.

**DIANE SAWYER** So you would come here and get wired?

**CAROL HOWE** Yes.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** After the ATF trained her, even wired her for secret taping, she told Mahon she was sorry. And he not only welcomed her back but took her to a remote armed camp called Elohim City, a gathering place for some of the most violent anti—government extremists in the country. Once there, she started filing reports as Confidential Informant 183. In the reports, she told how everyone at the compound, including the children, attended daily meetings which were a frenzy of anti - government invective. She said she also saw a large cache of weapons, including explosives. And she identified a cast of characters, a dangerous group called "the bachelors." Two brothers from the group were caught here on videotape. One of them would later be indicted for murder in other case. (Screaming) (Gunshots)

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** Some of the bachelors would be convicted for taking part in 22 bank robberies in the Midwest. Howe says the money went to buy weapons. And one of them, who calls himself Commandante Pedro, here urges a right—wing revolution against the federal government.

**COMMANDANTE PEDRO** Go take what you need from hymie. He took it from your father and your father's father.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** And Agent 183 also reported that the head of Elohim City, Reverend Robert Millar (ph), urged the violent reaction, though Millar denies it.

**REV ROBERT MILLAR** This is maybe what Ms Howe heard. I have said that if the US government or any other group of people should violently attack us like they did at Waco, that we should be prepared to defend ourselves.

**CAROL HOWE** I heard him talk about striking the government first before the government struck him, and heard him preaching about a holy war that they were going to incite.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** Dennis Mahon says Carol Howe has their trips to Elohim City all wrong.

**DENNIS MAHON** I took her to Elohim City for two reasons. Number one, to find her a boyfriend because I knew we weren't going to make it—no, seriously. No, she wanted to—she wanted to meet some—some guys out there. And number two, she told me this. She said—you know, that look you're giving me, hope you—hope that's the same look you give her. Because—because I'm telling you something, she's a habitual little liar, a spoiled little brat.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** In other reports from Elohim City, Howe singled out a man she called the most violent on the compound, the security chief, a German national named Andy Strassmeier (ph), seen here on a surveillance tape at Howe's house. She says in the months before the Oklahoma City bombing, Strassmeier talked to her about truck bombs and targets like Tulsa, Oklahoma City and Dallas. And she says once she saw Strassmeier with a man she believes to have been Timothy McVeigh. (on camera) And doing what? What was he doing?

**CAROL HOWE** He was walking with Andy Strassmeier, and they were walking and talking.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** Strassmeier, in an ABC interview in Germany last year, said he may have met McVeigh, but his role at Elohim City was misunderstood.

**ANDY STRASSMEIER, ELOHIM CITY SECURITY CHIEF** I was teaching in Sunday school, and I was an adviser to some of the people who wanted advice as it comes to security matters.

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Page 6

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** He also said he had no role in the bombing. But consider this phone records show two weeks before the blast, McVeigh called Elohim City, and the woman who answered the phone says he asked for "Andy," who wasn't around. PrimeTime has discovered one month before the Oklahoma City tragedy, in the midst of agency feuding, the government planned but then scuttled a raid on Elohim City. (on camera) But again, you took these people seriously. You thought they meant what they were saying.

**CAROL HOWE** Oh, they did mean what they were saying. They meant it. (Explosion) I was driving on the highway when I heard it on the radio. The first thing I thought is, "They did it. This is it. This is the war." (Sirens)

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** 9:02 am April 19, 1995. 168 men, women and children died. To date, only Timothy McVeigh has been convicted.

**DENNIS MAHON** He's my hero. I'm not going to say I agree with everything that he did. But he took action.

**DIANE SAWYER (on camera)** You said we need more like him?

**DENNIS MAHON** We sure do. Wish we had a thousand more like him.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** But the strange story of Carol Howe doesn't end with the Oklahoma City bombing. In some ways, the mystery about her only deepens. After the bombing, the government that had employed her turned on her. She was terminated as an agent, documents say, because of a bout with suicidal depression. (on camera) Were you unstable?

**CAROL HOWE** Unstable? I was depressed. I felt like I needed to go somewhere where no one had any expectations of me.

**DIANE SAWYER** You were not trying to kill yourself?

**CAROL HOWE** No, I would never attempt suicide.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** But Dennis Mahon had told us he'd once seen old scars on her wrists. We asked to look. (on camera) Could I see it? (VO) Within months, the government also released her name as an informant, putting her life in danger, and then raided her house, where they said they found bomb parts. Clark Brewster (ph), who represented Howe, says her indictment was clearly designed to shut her up. Howe had just been subpoenaed to testify in McVeigh's defense.

**CLARK BREWSTER, HOWE'S ATTORNEY** When the government learned that, they realized that Carol's testimony might be inconsistent with their tidy theory that it was only McVeigh and Nichols. Thereafter, Carol was charged.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** Brewster convinced the jury that those bomb parts in Howe's house had been collected at the direction of the government, when Howe was an informant. But what about something else found at Howe's home? (Clip from audio tape)

**CAROL HOWE** We are pro—Nazi, pro—national Socialism and pro—Aryan.

**DIANE SAWYER (VO)** Tapes on which Howe was spewing the old racist venom again. She was even living with a racist skinhead. Her explanation? Her life was in danger, and she needed the camouflage, the protection. (on camera) But you're saying this was purely and only for cover?

**CAROL HOWE** Yes.

**DIANE SAWYER** That it was repellent to you otherwise?

**CAROL HOWE** Absolutely, yes.

**DIANE SAWYER** It's just hard for people to imagine that you can do this, if you're not doing it with some secret relish yourself.

**CAROL HOWE** No.

**DIANE SAWYER** What do you think about black people?

**CAROL HOWE** I think that there's good and bad in every race.

**DIANE SAWYER** Do you think there are too many Jews in controlling positions in the government?

**CAROL HOWE** I don't know. I haven't met all the people. I mean, I don't know. But I don't see why too many of any one race would matter. (Clip from tape) You'd better pick up your weapons and start eliminating the Jews that have infested our government. (VO) When I heard that in the courtroom, they played all of my tapes, I was cringing. It was never designed to be heard by a respectable human being. It was designed to be heard by the people who call such hotlines, which are pretty much the racists. Those are the ones that I needed to convince of who I was. They're mortifying to me, those statements.

**DIANE SAWYER** (on camera) There's something I can't quite resolve. You keep getting drawn back to it that, it seems, making people wonder if that's who you really are.

**CAROL HOWE** No. I know who I am now. I have a much better picture of who I am today. I've resolved a lot of issues in my life that were outstanding, such as I am reunited with my birth mother, and that gives me the identity that I've been craving. I have had, during my trial, tremendous support—absolutely tremendous support from the Jewish community. And they're hearing those tapes, you know, that was really awful. But how kind that they were to me after the things that I said and the things I had to do touched me tremendously. And that's when I knew for sure that racism is not right.

**DIANE SAWYER** (VO) After just five hours of deliberation, last August the jury acquitted Carol Howe on all counts, though she says she still receives death threats from Mahon's allies. Mahon says he's a target, too.

**DENNIS MAHON** They want to kill her, of course, for being an informant. And I just hope they get her first.

**DIANE SAWYER** (VO) Last week, Howe changed her name and moved to an undisclosed location. And one more thing—she has already begun laser treatments to burn the swastika tattoo off her arm. (on camera) We contacted a number of government agencies, including the FBI and the ATF, to ask about their treatment of Carol Howe. Since, after all, they had used her information to plan a raid on Elohim City. They completely refused to talk to us. And a couple of other footnotes—the head of Elohim City, Robert Millar, continues to deny any connection to the bombing. And while Carol Howe was allowed to testify today about some of the things you heard in our story tonight, she was not allowed to tell the jury that she heard Andy Strassmeier talk about blowing up government buildings.

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