

► Federal prosecutor Larry Mackey, right, speaks as defense attorney Michael Tigar, center, objects for his client, Terry Nichols, Wednesday on in this drawing.

(AP)



Informant says McVeigh visited supremacists

The Associated Press

DENVER — Terry Nichols' lawyers tried to shift blame to others in the Oklahoma City bombing plot, calling a federal informant Wednesday who said Timothy McVeigh visited a white supremacist compound before the blast.

Carol Howe, who infiltrated the group at the government's request, testified that she saw McVeigh with Andreas Strassmeier, a German who was head of security for the heavily fortified compound in Elohim City, Okla.

Howe contradicted Joan Millar, daughter of founder Robert Millar, who testified that Elohim City was a religious village made up of about 70 people who opposed violence and believed whites were the chosen people of God.

"Some of us may not be happy with what the government is doing, but there's not a mandate to go out and attack the government," Millar said.

But Howe said she heard the group's leaders preach "that the federal government was an evil entity," adding that residents talked frequently about "destroying the government."

Howe, who was acquitted this summer on unrelated conspiracy and bomb threat charges, was barred from testifying at McVeigh's trial after U.S. District Judge Richard Matsch deemed what she would say to be irrelevant.

Howe's testimony was allowed in the Nichols trial, but restricted. According to her lawyer, the judge barred her from telling jurors she overheard white supremacist Dennis Mahon and Strassmeier discuss blowing up federal buildings before the bombing. Neither man was named as a suspect.

"It will be another occasion before the public really is able to be informed about what she knew," said her attorney, Clark Brewster.