

Death row inmate's book chronicles McVeigh's secrets

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Editor's note: David Paul Hammer, an inmate on federal death row, provided a manuscript to this newspaper several months ago with the agreement we would not publish excerpts from it without his permission. Last week Hammer authorized us to release details of his manuscript, saying he expects a book to be published soon and his death sentence to be carried out next year at Terre Haute, Ind.)

"I'm forgoing the rest of my appeals. They'll set my execution for sometime in February or March. I'm not mad, just tired and my health is bad. My book is finished, and soon I will be too!" David Paul Hammer

McVeigh's Secrets Revealed

A death row inmate who had extensive contacts with convicted bomber Timothy McVeigh over a 23-month period has completed a manuscript that includes details of many heretofore unpublished secrets he claims McVeigh passed to him before his death by lethal injection on June 11, 2000.

According to the author, *Secrets Worth Dying For* was written with McVeigh's explicit permission on the condition the work not be published until after McVeigh's execution was carried out.

Hammer's manuscript is completely at odds with the official version of events the FBI has put forward to explain the Oklahoma City bombing. It is also much different from the version McVeigh provided two reporters from his hometown newspaper who later wrote the book *American Terrorist*. In that book, McVeigh took credit for much of the crime.

The manuscript provided this newspaper details a wide array of conspirators who formed a cell of revolutionaries that McVeigh told Hammer helped build and deliver the truck bomb that killed 168 men, women and children in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995.

Hammer's account of McVeigh's life on death row begins with their transfer to the Terre Haute facility and continues through the execution of his confidante.

Klan rally

While waiting execution, McVeigh, Hammer and another inmate, Jeffrey William Paul, were often seen together during exercise breaks, forming what became known as "Klan rallies" – a half-joking, half-serious label given the only white inmates at the Terre Haute facility at that time.

During countless discussions McVeigh had with Hammer, America's most despised killer conceded his role in the terrorist attack.

But much more important, he also offered names and details of a much wider conspiracy of characters he says were involved in the 20th Century's most brutal act of domestic terrorism in the U.S.

Hammer told this newspaper that McVeigh hoped until the very end that members of the far-right would somehow "bust" him out of the penitentiary.

In the fresh account that Hammer provides, McVeigh says the men who assisted him in the bombing were persons with close connections to Elohim City – a Christian Identity enclave in eastern Oklahoma near Muldrow.

In a chapter titled, *Blood Makes the Grass Grow*, Hammer writes: "On October 12th 1993, McVeigh and Terry Nichols drove from Fayetteville, Arkansas to Elohim City. They were met there by (Andreas) Strassmeir, who Tim called 'Andy', or 'Andy the Krout.'

"Strassmeir, who not only ran security for the Reverend Millar but (was) also the community's firearms and paramilitary instructor, escorted Tim on a tour of the compound.

"A short time later, a meeting was convened to discuss a "direct action against the federal government." Those in attendance included McVeigh, Nichols, Strassmeir, Richard Guthrie and Pete Langan.

McVeigh and Strassmeir emerged as leaders at this meeting, where vague ideas of retaliation were discussed. McVeigh's goal was simple, to plant a seed. A mission would be developed, but for now it was left at ... "we need to raise money; select a suitable target ... plan and act."

Hammer later includes other Elohim City residents in the group's plans, including Kevin McCarthy, Scott Stedeford and Mike Brescia – young men recruited by Aryan Nations leader Mark Thomas of Penn.

While Hammer's detailed manuscript contains considerable attention to dates and locations he says McVeigh provided him, it also includes references to three men that the inmate says McVeigh told him were central to the conspiracy – men with close ties to the U.S. military.

Unfortunately, McVeigh, Hammer writes, went to his death claiming he did not know the true identities of these men – only their code names.

The role these men played, according to McVeigh's account, was the strangest and most difficult part of the tale to establish with independent evidence.

The Major

One of these men, McVeigh claims, contacted him shortly after his discharge from the army.

Referring to him only “the major,” McVeigh said he was invited to work with the shadowy figure during a meeting the two had at Camp McCall. Camp McCall is located on the grounds of Fort Bragg, N.C.

At this meeting, McVeigh –who was still smoldering after being passed over for a spot in the elite Army Special Forces – was told of an off-budget defense department project the Major wanted to invite him to join. The Major said McVeigh would be involved in gathering intelligence for the government on members of the radical rightwing in the U.S., specifically members of the KKK and Aryan Nations.

Hammer wrote that McVeigh told him he was aware of the far-right’s methods of robbing banks and armored cars for the so-called “cause” – the shorthand description of the white power agenda some in the most violent wing of the movement adhered to. It was these tactics, McVeigh said, that he was also encouraged to use.

Within a matter of months of the ‘93 Elohim City meeting, Guthrie, Langan and McVeigh were robbing banks and gathering explosives and a vast arsenal of weapons.

Facts support book

Supporting the account of the meeting at Elohim City, a highway patrolman in Arkansas ticketed McVeigh a short drive from Elohim City in October 1993.

In January 1994, a seven-state bank robbery spree was launched in Ohio by a group of neo-Nazis calling themselves the Aryan Republican Army (ARA).

After his arrest in Columbus, Ohio in January 1996, Peter Langan told a federal magistrate at an arraignment that he was Commander Pedro, the leader of the ARA – a revolutionary cell seeking the overthrow of the U.S. government.

Soon afterwards, the media also learned that Commander Pedro had been pulled out of jail and put to work three years earlier by the Secret Service.

Langan’s job was to infiltrate the neo-Nazi movement in the United States. The Secret Service said, however, that Langan double-crossed them and threw in with the very people the agency wanted to obtain information on. Robbing 22 banks, the Secret Service said later, was not part of the plan they had in mind for Langan.

Richard Guthrie had almost as bizarre a background as Langan. Guthrie took to a life of crime after failing to be accepted in the Navy Seal program. In a rage, Guthrie painted a swastika on a Navy ship and went AWOL. The stunts put him in a Navy brig for a short time and then he was booted from the service.

From this seed stock, McVeigh told Hammer, was born the ARA – a gang hell-bent on financing the violent overthrow of the government.

As unlikely as all this may sound, McVeigh's sister Jennifer told the FBI after the bombing that her brother had told her not long after his discharge from the Army that he was part of a bank robbery group. She also admitted to agents she helped launder stolen money from one of those bank robberies

Although Ms. McVeigh said she did not have any names of her brother's cohorts to provide the FBI, she did say her brother told her he was part of a group of men with military backgrounds. He also wrote her that he was working for a group of ex-military soldiers involved in a covert operation involving drug smuggling and assassinations.

At McVeigh's bombing trial, copies of letters to his little sister were introduced that reflected oblique references to men with military backgrounds that McVeigh claimed had been working with, at the behest of the government, on secret missions.

The ARA roundup

Months after Langan and Guthrie were apprehended in January 1996, Brescia, McCarthy and Stedeford were also arrested as accomplices in the bank robbery spree.

Just prior to those arrests, Brescia, Stedeford and McCarthy produced an album featuring neo-Nazi lyrics that is now one of the nation's largest selling underground Skinhead rock albums. The money to produce the album is believed to have come from ARA bank robberies.

The late William Pierce, author of McVeigh's favorite book, *The Turner Diaries*, distributed the book through his company Resistance Records.

McVeigh's recollections of the terrorist conspiracy also includes the startling admission that Nichols did not provide meaningful assistance to the group after McVeigh says the Oklahoma City office structure was chosen as a target for bombing.

McVeigh told Hammer the final decision to bomb the federal building was made during a visit to Elohim City in mid-September 1994.

McVeigh explained to Hammer that this September '94 trip was actually his fourth visit to the compound and that Nichols was not present.

Instead, McVeigh said, he met with White Aryan Resistance leader Dennis Mahon, Elohim City paramilitary trainer Andy Strassmeir and Strassmeir's roommate, Brescia. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the bombing target and the date of its destruction.

According to the transcript, McVeigh is quoted as saying: “This target (OKC federal building) was symbolic and had a history within the patriot communities. The date for the bombing was decided ... April 19, 1995 ... the second anniversary of Waco.”

The Arkansas robbery

Another surprising element contained in the Hammer manuscript regards the so-called Roger Moore gun robbery that authorities maintain was central to the bombing conspiracy.

During the McVeigh and Nichols’ bombing trials in Denver, federal prosecutors presented evidence that Nichols robbed gun dealer Roger Moore for the purpose of raising money for the bomb plot.

However, McVeigh told Hammer, the original plot revolved around the contract killing of Moore – a killing that was to appear to be an armed robbery that got out of control.

Hammer’s book records that McVeigh told him that it was Moore’s live-in girlfriend, Karen Anderson, who wanted the wealthy retiree killed and that she was willing to pay McVeigh’s gang to perpetrate the murder-for-hire.

Hammer also writes that Anderson set up the contract hit with Strassmeir during an October 1994 meeting in a Tulsa motel room.

Anderson, the manuscript states, provided Strassmeir a set of keys to the Royal, Ark. couple’s home and to a van belonging to Moore. The book manuscript says that Anderson assured Strassmeir that, “She would be away on Nov. 5th and that she wanted the job done that day.”

McVeigh told Hammer that Strassmeir surreptitiously taped the meeting so he could blackmail Anderson later, if the need arose.

Hammer says McVeigh told him that Strassmeir opted out of the killing and instead ordered Brescia and Guthrie to tie up their victim and rob him.

On Nov. 5, 1994, about three hours after being tied up and robbed, Roger Moore was able to free himself from duct tape and plastic handcuffs to call police.

On insurance forms, Moore listed nearly \$75,000 worth of property stolen.

Hammer wrote that, “Upon learning of the change in plans, “McVeigh was livid, but later changed his mind.

“Strassmeir’s decision to double-cross Anderson and to threaten her with blackmail was what Tim had described as `a stroke of pure genius’ as the robbery would be considered an inside job or a case of insurance fraud. The heat from a robbery/murder would have been intense.”

Shedding additional light on this important event, McVeigh's sister told the FBI that her brother received a phone call shortly after the Moore robbery and became very upset.

Jennifer McVeigh told the FBI: "He (Timothy McVeigh) said that 'A contract to kill had not been fulfilled.'"

Hammer also writes that McVeigh was proud of his gang of bank robbers, whom he described as revolutionary misfits.

"Those guys, even the faggot (referring to Langan) were well disciplined. Ask yourself this, how did they get that way? F _ _ _ _ practice, we drilled and we practiced in the desert just before the bombing."

John Doe 2, 3, 4, et al

McVeigh explained that the ARA went to the Arizona desert in February and March of 1995. There, McVeigh said, Langan, Guthrie, McCarthy and Stedeford spent weeks making "dry runs" and other preparations for the bombing. After the unit was honed and ready, McVeigh said one final event forecast the exact day and time for a strike.

Upon learning during a phone call with Strassmeir and Brescia that the state of Arkansas had set an execution date for right-wing symbol Richard Wayne Snell, McVeigh was certain the far right would be enraged by the decision to kill one of their patriot heroes on the anniversary of Waco. He told Hammer that it seemed the perfect time for an act of revolutionary violence to set the rightwing into a fury.

Hammer writes: "McVeigh reported his selection of Brescia to assist him in delivering the truck to the target and that Brescia, at Strassmeir's urging, readily agreed."

In remarkable detail Hammer records that McVeigh says he left Arizona on April 7 for a meeting in Tulsa, a meeting that would take place evening of the 8th with Strassmeir and Brescia.

At this meeting, Strassmeir was given \$12,000 for the purchase of a decoy truck that had already been painted to resemble a Ryder rental truck.

But this was not the only decoy truck McVeigh said the gang used to throw off the feds.

It turns out a Ryder rental truck had been acquired a few days earlier in Arizona and was being driven to Kansas by a young Skinhead with close ties to Elohim City.

After the Tulsa meeting, McVeigh went to Oklahoma City to have breakfast with Richard Guthrie. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss last-minute details and check highways leading in and out of downtown Oklahoma City.

After spending the night at the ARA's safe house in Pittsburg, Kan., on April 10, McVeigh and Guthrie met up with ARA members Scott Stedeford and Kevin McCarthy, who were waiting in the Ryder rental truck from Arizona.

The bright yellow truck was parked along a wooded point at Geary State Fishing Lake near Junction City, Kan.

According to Hammer's recollections, this truck was used to flush out any federal agents that might be privy to the ARA's plan.

This decoy truck, McVeigh said, was driven back to the lake three or four times that week, checking to see if authorities had learned of the plot.

Explaining phone calls federal agents later learned had been made from a motel room in Kingman registered to McVeigh during this period, McVeigh told Hammer that a mysterious member of the group known only as "Poindexter" made those few phone calls from his room after he'd already left for Oklahoma. The calls were made to an answering machine in order to establish an alibi.

Also contained in the manuscript is McVeigh's step-by-step account of how the group traveled from central Kansas to Oklahoma City in a caravan of vehicles that included the Ryder truck rented in Junction City on April 17 that ultimately delivered the bomb.

Also at odds with the official version of events provided by the FBI, the truck rented from Elliott's Body Shop on April 17, 1995, had not been equipped with a bomb before it left Kansas. Instead, Hammer says, McVeigh told him a 7,000-pound bomb was constructed in a warehouse in Oklahoma City, near I-40, west of downtown Oklahoma City.

Explaining the delivery of the explosives to the Murrah federal building, Hammer writes:

"At approximately 6 a.m., McVeigh was joined at the warehouse by Mike Brescia and Richard Guthrie. Pete Langan dropped them off and went back to a local motel. Guthrie, Brescia and McVeigh equipped themselves with headsets and mouthpieces for constant radio contact.

"By 8 a.m., they all left the warehouse, McVeigh driving the Ryder truck with Brescia seated in the passenger's seat. The ARA team in the tan pick-up and white Buick were already stationed at locations surrounding the Murrah federal building. Richard Guthrie tailed the Ryder truck as it made its way downtown.

"At shortly before 9 a.m. on April 19, 1995, Mike Brescia exited the Ryder truck as it idled at a stoplight near 5th street and Harvey. McVeigh then drove the truck into the handicapped zone, in front of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, where he parked it. He briskly walked away and then detonated the bomb (remotely)."

The other book

Regarding McVeigh's version of events he gave two reporters from his hometown newspaper – an account clearly at odds with this one – Hammer told this newspaper, "He (McVeigh) used them at that time, just as he did Terry Nichols. He told us he used them to advance his goals, which included protecting the identities of those who could have helped him later. Some might be able to get him out of prison. He was obsessed with being rescued. Until the end, McVeigh expected to be sprung from this place.

"Also, the government was supporting McVeigh's decisions in this regard. At no time since those interviews between the reporters and McVeigh, has the Federal Bureau of Prisons allowed any other federal death row inmate to be interviewed in an 'in person' or face-to-face interview with the media."

In other words, Hammer says, the government wanted the first version out there.

"They sure don't want this one out there."

Hammer says his book, *Secrets Worth Dying For*, will be published in the spring of 2004 – about the time when Hammer is himself scheduled to die.