



Cover Story: Queen City Terror

Cincinnati's links to the Oklahoma City bombing

BY LESLIE BLADE AND GREGORY FLANNERY · SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2004 · COVER STORY

There's something either poetic or frightening about Sgt. 1st Class Shawn Kenny of Cincinnati serving on a peacekeeping mission in Kosovo. The 1991 Oak Hills High School graduate is an admitted bank robbery conspirator, founding member of an Aryan hate group and associate of the late Timothy McVeigh.

How Kenny got into the Army in spite of his criminal history -- and his white supremacist tattoos -- is something of a puzzle. So is his promotion just months after the Army convicted him on morals charges involving an 11-year-old girl.

But what really distinguishes Kenny is his alleged relationship with the man who killed 168 people by blowing up the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995. A new book based on death row interviews with McVeigh mentions Kenny five times.

Kenny couldn't be reached for comment, of course. His wife, Tabatha Kenny of Cheviot, told a reporter she'd ask him to contact CityBeat. She also said the Army has greatly benefited her family. She means the U.S. Army. It was Kenny's membership in the other army, the Aryan Republican Army (ARA), that ties him to McVeigh.

Kenny and other ARA members met with McVeigh in Elohim City, a right-wing militia center in Oklahoma, before the Oklahoma City bombing, according to *Secrets Worth Dying For: Timothy James McVeigh and the Oklahoma City Bombing*. But the book isn't the first to raise questions about a Cincinnati link to the Oklahoma City bombing. A CityBeat investigation shows that, within days of the massacre, the FBI and the U.S. Secret Service were asking the same thing.

But perhaps most troubling of all is Kenny's own account of his mission before joining the military. In 1996 he gave secret testimony to a federal grand jury in Philadelphia detailing the ARA's violent intentions. CityBeat obtained a transcript of the testimony.

"We had planned on robbing banks and armored cars," he testified. "Proceeds were to fund the cause, the movement or whatever. Buy guns, ammo, distribute out to other people, like-mindedness groups, to further their cause."

Did the ARA fund the Oklahoma City bombing? A former Cincinnati Police officer has given new evidence in federal court that, he says, could blow apart the official version of what happened on April 19, 1995.

Nearly 10 years after the bombing, a group of convicts, police officers and defense attorneys find themselves in an unlikely alliance calling for a new investigation of the attack. A handful of active and former cops now say the FBI and the Secret Service lied to them and obstructed local investigations linked to the bombing.

Much about the federal government's conduct relative to Oklahoma City doesn't make sense -- unless its overarching goal were to cover up its own misconduct. While Congress prepares hearings on the intelligence failures that preceded the 2001 terrorist attacks, law enforcement's mistakes in the events leading up to the Oklahoma City massacre go largely unexamined.

A CityBeat investigation into the Midwest Bank Bandits -- AKA the Aryan Republican Army -- raises serious questions about the government's behavior before and after the bombing. McVeigh's guilt isn't at issue; neither is that of Terry Nichols, now serving life in prison for helping him.

The issue is whether other right-wing plotters involved in the bombing were allowed to go free -- and if so, why.

'Prepared to get robbing'

In the summer of 1993, Cincinnati Police Officer Matthew Moning, assigned to uniform patrol in District 3, responded to a domestic violence run at 3256 Montana Ave. After fleeing to her mother's house, Tabatha Kenny called police to report physical abuse by her husband. While talking to Moning, she went on to say her husband Shawn was a member of the Aryan Nations.

Mrs. Kenny complained about her husband's two friends, Richard Lee Guthrie and Peter Kevin Langan, who had been staying with the family "off and on" at Martin's Mobile Home Park in Miamitown.

"These two individuals were training her husband how to rob banks without getting caught, make fake IDs and how to scam stores with a fake UPC code maker that they had in their possession," Moning said in an affidavit recently submitted to U.S. District Court in Columbus.

Angry with her husband, Tabatha Kenny spilled her guts to Moning.

"They had told Shawn to present a fake ID to police if he was ever pulled over and that if the cops started questioning him about the identification, that he was to shoot him with a gun that they carried at all times," the affidavit says.

Testifying later before a grand jury, Kenny admitted he was well versed in the art of fake identification. He described a packet of materials he'd delivered to a gang member in Pennsylvania.

"It was blank baptismal certificates, blank birth certificates, blank insurance cards -- auto and health -- and instruction booklet," Kenny testified. "It taught you how to utilize the materials that were in the packet, to go ahead and put all the information together, go ahead and get a driver's license under an alias, under a different name. ...

Most people in the right wing know the value of having fake identification, different names and whatnot."

Mrs. Kenny later contacted Moning and gave him more information.

"Tabatha passed information to me about numerous bank robberies 'all over the country' dating back to November 1993, that on one occasion Shawn came home with several bags of dye-stained money and proceeded to pour it out in the living room of the trailer they shared in Miamitown, Ohio," Moning's affidavit says.

On June 8, 1994, two armed bandits in Halloween masks robbed Society National Bank on Princeton Pike in Springdale. A total of \$11,890 was taken, but the robbers also grabbed a dye pack, which exploded in the getaway car, according to Springdale Police reports. Witnesses saw a Chevy Citation driving erratically while spewing dye-stained money out the windows. A total of \$7,820 was recovered, with \$4,070 unaccounted for.

Tabatha Kenny told Moning she and her husband got into a fight over the dye-stained money. Dye-stained money started turning up all over the Miamitown area, with dye-stained bills being passed at the BP gas station, Angelo's Pizza and Guido's restaurant.

Kenny was caught red-handed, but he wasn't charged. Instead, he turned snitch.

Tabatha Kenny, now reconciled with her husband, still is relieved by the turn of events.

"Thank God my husband was never charged," she says. "God was looking out for him, because he actually went to a couple of the robberies. They were called 'dry runs.' "

During Langan's 1997 trial for the bank robbery, Kenny testified for the government. Kenny said he'd earned \$200 for help in "dry runs" on the Springdale bank.

"We done surveillance on the bank and, you know, figured out what it would take to rob it," he said.

Kenny testified that he, Langan and Guthrie had made a previous attempt on the Springdale bank some time in late 1993.

"We were locked and loaded and prepared to get robbing the bank," he said.

The robbery was scrubbed at the last minute, according to Kenny.

Kenny was under surveillance at least as early as December 1993, according to a Secret Service report obtained by CityBeat.

"Previous information was developed to indicate Richard Lee Guthrie had stayed with Shawn Kenny, Miamitown, Ohio, when in the Cincinnati, Ohio, area," the report says. "Guthrie was last seen with Kenny in May 1993. Surveillance of Kenny's residence has failed to locate Guthrie. Case continued."

Secret Service agents were looking for Guthrie because he'd allegedly threatened former President Bush. While in Miamitown, they conducted a cursory search of Kenny's trailer with "negative results."

They didn't find Guthrie, but other interesting items turned up.

"It is noted that Kenny has a full library of survivalist and Aryan type literature and admits to being a member of Aryan Nations and the Christian Identity movement," the Secret Service report says. "Kenny advised he owned several weapons which were observed to include a high powered rifle and a 9mm semi-automatic handgun."

Curiously, no weapons charges were brought against Kenny, who had a felony record for carrying a concealed weapon. Convicted felons can't legally own guns.

'McVeigh was pissed'

The gang founded by Langan, Guthrie and Kenny -- the media dubbed them the Midwest Bank Bandits, but they preferred to be called the Aryan Republican Army -- was a group of white supremacists aimed at financing the violent overthrow of the U.S. government. In 1996, after reining in most of the bank robbers, the U.S. Justice Department considered the gang so dangerous that the director of the FBI reclassified the case "Domestic Security/Terrorism."

The three began planning their capers in Cincinnati in 1991. U.S. Appeals Judge Ronald Gilman later described the ARA as a "copycat, neo-Nazi group inspired by the book *The Silent Brotherhood*, which detailed the activities of an underground guerrilla bank robbery gang known as 'The Order.' "

In phone calls from the U.S. Penitentiary in Jonesville, Va., Langan tells CityBeat that larger meetings of anti-government and white supremacist groups were held in various places in Greater Cincinnati, often above a storefront beauty shop in Cheviot and above a printing shop in Elmwood Place.

"Typically two meetings a month, varying from a half-dozen to 30 people," he says. "There were a whole bunch of people from these different groups -- anti-tax, common-law court people, people from the Posse, people from the Klan, Aryan Nations, a whole spectrum of people on the far right trying to accomplish something."

Secrets Worth Dying For, whose co-authors spent two years on death row with McVeigh, describes the ARA's early days -- information they say they obtained from the Oklahoma City bomber.

"In early 1992 Langan joined the Ohio chapter of the Aryan Nation," the book says. "His racist views had been strengthened by his attendance at the Covington Identity Church and by his association with an 18-year-old skinhead named Shawn Kenny, who shared similar beliefs and regularly held meetings for Bible study and Aryan Nations teachings."

Responding to a request for more information, co-author David Paul Hammer wrote CityBeat July 13 from death row in Lewisburg, Va.

"All information I have about Kenny came directly from Tim McVeigh," Hammer writes. "I have pages of notes about Kenny."

In a second letter, he directly accuses Kenny of involvement in the plot to blow up the Murrah Federal Building.

"I can tell you also that he was very involved in planning the OKC bombing and that McVeigh was really pissed when Kenny 'flaked out,' " the letter says.

Hammer had been expected to testify for the defense in Terry Nichols' recent state trial on charges of murder. So was Langan.

"Our interest in Peter Langan was that he could tie some of his cohorts potentially to McVeigh," says Nichols' attorney, Mark Earnest.

But the judge barred both witnesses from taking the stand.

"We tried to put the Midwest Bank Robbery group before the jury, but we had to show an overt act on the part of the witnesses," says Brian Hermanson, another Nichols attorney.

It wasn't a conspiracy theorist who first floated the idea that McVeigh and Nichols were funded by ARA bank jobs. It was the FBI. A May 30, 1995 memo from the FBI in Washington reported to the Cincinnati FBI office on a fingerprint analysis from the Society Bank robbery in Springdale.

"The latent palm print is not a palm print of Timothy McVeigh, Terry Nichols or James Douglas Nichols," the memo says.

Within six weeks of the Murrah Building's destruction, the FBI was investigating a link between BOMBROB, its code for the ARA gang, and OKBOMB, its name for the Oklahoma City bombing.

The ARA gang had a definite sense of flair. The bank robbers sometimes dressed as federal agents, sometimes as Santa Claus. In March 1995, after robbing a bank in Iowa, they left behind a gold-painted pipe bomb in an Easter basket. The explosive device, like all of the ARA's "bombs," was a fake.

The ARA was eventually credited by law enforcement with 22 bank robberies, including one on Dec. 9, 1994, near Cleveland. A report by the FBI Laboratory in Washington, D.C., reports on videotape images from the scene.

"These images were then compared to known photographs of Timothy McVeigh and (name omitted by the FBI) to determine if they were identical," the lab report says.

The result came back "no meaningful conclusion," due to lack of image detail and resolution.

'It was a lie'

Eleven years ago Moning, then a Cincinnati Police officer, and Langan were adversaries. In January 1996, with Moning's help, the FBI busted the ARA bank robbers.

Police Chief Mike Snowden wrote a letter of commendation for Moning's exemplary performance in "gathering intelligence information regarding Shawn Kenny and his associates, Richard Lee Guthrie Jr. and Peter Kevin Langan. Officer Moning is deserving of my commendation for his skillful interview techniques, informant management and tenacious investigative skills."

A Cincinnati Police intelligence report in February 1996 mentioned "Investigator Matt Moning ... who assisted federal authorities in developing the initial leads in this investigation."

After the robbers' convictions in early 1997, the FBI wrote the police chief expressing appreciation for Moning's acquiring information relevant to the Springdale bank robbery, resulting in the arrests of Guthrie, Langan and other white supremacists.

Surprisingly, Moning was never called to testify in Langan's case.

"The commendations were nice, but I had apparently stepped on some big toes by monitoring the group," Moning tells CityBeat. "I thought busting the likes of Richard Lee Guthrie would help further my career."

But a review of Moning's personnel file shows that the stream of accolades seems to stop in 1997.

Prior to Langan's sentencing in 1998, Moning was asked to sign an affidavit for the government, but he refused.

"It was more than just an inaccurate accounting of what happened," Moning says. "It was a lie. The government was trying to arrange the dates and minimize my involvement to fit their scenario of the crime."

Frustrated federal officials told Moning to send the affidavit back. He never heard from them again, but he kept a copy.

In June of this year, Moning and Langan became allies of sorts after Moning prepared his own affidavit summarizing his involvement in the investigation. Langan has filed the affidavit as part of his most recent motion asking for an evidentiary hearing, part of his effort to have his sentence thrown out. Langan is serving life in prison without parole plus 35 years.

Langan and Moning hope to get a judge to listen to claims they have information the government has withheld about the ARA and its ties to the Oklahoma City bombing. But it won't be easy. Moning and Langan have something else in common -- they're both convicted felons.

In 2001, Officer Moning was indicted and convicted of unauthorized use of a police computer. In the first five years of his career, he had received 16 letters of commendation and no disciplinary action or citizen complaints. But after clashing with federal authorities over the ARA case, his career began to slide.

Assigned to the Cincinnati Police impound lot, he ran a computer check on a suspected drug dealer. The indictment said he "knowingly gained access to, or caused access to be gained to a computer or computer system without consent of the owner." The charge was a fifth (lowest) level felony, just enough to ruin a successful career in public service.

The latest effort to link OKBOMB to BOMBROB failed earlier this year. Judge Steven Taylor, who heard Nichols' state murder trial, rejected the argument that the two are connected.

"As to the BOMBROB case, this is a dry hole," Taylor said. "There is absolutely no evidence of any overt act by the bank robbers in bombing the Murrah Building, nothing at all to link the bank robbers to the crime that is being tried before this court."

The government's position remains the same: There is no connection between the Aryan Republican Army and the Oklahoma City bombing. Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols pulled off the worst act of domestic terrorism in the 20th century without help from others.

'Visions of prosecutors'

But the feds have botched this case before. In September 1993, Secret Service agents got Langan released from a Georgia jail and put him on a bus to Cincinnati so he could help catch Guthrie. Local agents picked him up at the downtown Greyhound station.

Within two months, they'd lost him. His bank robbery spree continued for another two years.

McVeigh's execution was stayed for a month in 2001 until the FBI turned over more than 4,000 documents it had withheld from his lawyers.

Documents obtained by CityBeat show that federal investigators have repeatedly gotten the facts embarrassingly wrong. A September 1994 report by the Secret Service, for instance, concluded that the ARA gang wasn't responsible for the Springdale bank robbery.

"Investigation has determined Richard Lee Guthrie and Peter Langan were not responsible for the robbery of Society Bank, Springdale, Ohio," the report says.

Langan, however, is serving a prison term for that very robbery. Guthrie agreed to plead guilty, but he never went to prison for the heist. He was found dead, hanging from his bed sheet, on July 12, 1996, in the Kenton County Jail.

Moning says a Secret Service agent told him Guthrie had been given a straight deal of 30 years. But officials supposedly told him later that the deal was off and he was going to get the death sentence for Oklahoma City. Shortly afterward, Guthrie hanged himself.

In 1998, Moning saw retired Secret Service Agent Larry Haas at a retirement party for another Cincinnati Police officer. Haas said he was sorry the feds gave Moning a hard time, according to Moning. But what astounded Moning was when Haas allegedly told him that proceeds from the Midwest bank robberies were, in fact, funneled into the Oklahoma City bombing.

Haas declined to comment to CityBeat.

"No, I'm not going to talk to you about anybody," he says.

At times federal agents have tripped over one another on simple matters of evidence. Secret Service File 1B3484, for example, consists of 1,354 pages of documents relating to McVeigh and Nichols.

"A witness to the explosion named Grossman claimed to have seen a pale yellow Mercury car with a Ryder truck behind it pulling up to the federal building," the file says. "Mr. Grossman further claimed to have seen a woman on the corner waving to the truck. (Agent) McNally noted that this fact is significant due to the fact that the security video shows the Ryder truck pulling up to the federal building and then pausing (7-10 seconds) before resuming into a slot in front of the building. It is speculated that the woman was signaling the truck when a slot became available."

The same file contains the following entry: "Security videotapes from the area show the truck detonation three minutes and six seconds after the suspects (emphasis added) exited the truck."

Nichols' lawyers argued that these documents proved that the federal government and state prosecutors concealed critical videotapes of the bombing. But the judge in Nichols' trial scoffed at the idea and found that no such videotapes exist.

"This would only conjure up visions of the prosecutors sitting across the street in their office at night watching a videotape of the Ryder truck pulling up in front of the Murrah Building and people getting out of it and the building blowing up, and the prosecutors watching the videotape and not telling anybody about it," Judge Taylor said.

At times federal agents went to absurd lengths to avoid catching the ARA bank robbers. The day after Tabatha Kenny made her complaint against her husband in August 1993, Moning contacted the FBI with information on Guthrie's location.

"The FBI told me they didn't know who I was talking about," Moning says.

Yet federal authorities had been actively looking for Guthrie for 10 months when Moning contacted them. Moning wasn't an anonymous citizen with a hunch -- he was

a police officer. But it took another four months of phone calls and visits to the federal building in Cincinnati to get their attention.

"I would call the FBI on a weekly basis because Tabatha would contact me to tell me where they were," Moning says. "They continued to pretend they didn't know who I was talking about."

In December 1993, Moning called the sheriff in Franklin County, Ga., where Guthrie and Langan were wanted for a Pizza Hut robbery. The sheriff faxed Moning a "wanted" poster of Guthrie. Moning then walked to the federal building downtown and showed the agents the poster, which says, "Wanted by the Secret Service."

"I was really on their nerves," he says.

Disappearing warrants

The irritation posed by Moning's role became clear a few months later. In a June 1994 report, Secret Service Agent Haas said Cincinnati Police Sgt. Lucian Guy had contacted him because Tabatha Kenny had told Moning about the Springdale bank robbery.

A June 17, 1994 meeting was held at Hamilton County Sheriff Simon Leis' office.

"The purpose of the meeting was to coordinate efforts to solve the Springdale bank robbery as well as assist this service in our attempts to locate and arrest Peter Langan and Richard Lee Guthrie," the report says.

Moning says that after the meeting Sgt. Guy told him in no uncertain terms to back off the investigation. A warrant for Langan was issued, but it didn't stay long on the Regional Computer Information Center (RCIC) database.

"It was magically removed about six weeks later," Moning says.

It wasn't the only time persons involved in this case had criminal records altered, according to Moning. His affidavit describes another unusual situation involving Shawn Kenny.

In early 1994, Tabatha Kenny called Moning to say Shawn was returning home after being gone for a few days and that he had a black bag full of black clothes, guns and several sets of false identification in his truck. Tabatha said her husband would drive State Route 128 to their trailer in Miamitown.

"She wanted me to have him arrested in the hopes that it would straighten him out," Moning's affidavit says. "I called my friend with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department, Deputy Steve Minnich, and passed on the information to him. He stated that he had arrested Shawn and everything was as I had stated to him. He thanked me for the great arrest several months later at the Hamilton County Courthouse. Later when I went to check on this information, it wasn't in the R.C.I.C systems.

"Deputy Minnich stated that he had taken two guns, six to seven complete sets of fake IDs and the black bag containing a white hockey mask from Shawn's truck. When I later contacted Deputy Minnich about why there was no record of this arrest in the computer, he stated he did not know why."

Sometimes the handling and analysis of evidence in the BOMBROB and OKBOMB cases was inane. Within two weeks of the bombing, Jennifer McVeigh, Timothy's sister, provided the FBI with information that her brother was involved with some bank robbers. She said her brother had given her money he told her was the proceeds from a bank robbery.

But in Nichols' trial, FBI Agent John Hersley dismissed the tip.

"I have never thought that McVeigh was involved in bank robberies," he testified.

Asked if the FBI ever compared the unidentified prints in the bombing to prints of Langan, Guthrie and others, Hersley said, "No. We didn't have any reason to do that."

It would have been too time consuming.

Perhaps the most intriguing evidence that could link the ARA bank robbers to the Oklahoma City bombing no longer exists.

At Nichols' trial, FBI Agent William Davitch was questioned about videotapes, phone records and blasting caps in the BOMBROB case involving the ARA bank robbers. Davitch is an explosives expert; before becoming a special agent in 1992 he was assigned to the laboratory explosives unit at FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Davitch was assigned to accumulating the physical evidence in Langan's case, including six blasting caps found at Langan's and Guthrie's safe house. Earnest, Nichols' lawyer, asked him about the discovery.

"Do you know whether or not in any way that those electric blasting caps were compared with blasting caps that had anything to do with Oklahoma City?," Earnest asked.

"The blasting caps were destroyed by the Columbus Fire Department bomb squad," Davitch replied.

That not only didn't answer the question, it also revealed an astounding breach of procedure: deliberate destruction of evidence.

"The evidence issue is a real circus," says Columbus defense attorney Kevin Durkin, who represented Langan in the bank robbery charges. "One of the controversies up here has been that blasting caps were destroyed before they were properly accounted for and documented. Certain FBI procedures weren't followed. So it was difficult to see if there was a link between those blasting caps and McVeigh, because they blew them up."

Dan Defenbaugh, now retired, was the FBI agent in charge of the Oklahoma City Bombing Task Force. He was assigned to compare the OKBOMB and BOMBROB cases. He's furious about discoveries turned up by the CityBeat investigation.

"It was obvious that I was definitely lied to," Defenbaugh says. "It is obvious that some of that evidence did not get to us. Shame on them."

Defenbaugh says he would like to ask his former FBI colleagues, "Why did you destroy those blasting caps?"

The officer and the bandit

More than nine years have passed since a truck bomb destroyed the Alfred P. Murrah Building killing 168 people, including 19 children, and injuring 500.

Questions about Timothy McVeigh's links to the ARA and other right-wing hate groups haven't gone away.

"There are incredible coincidences with these cases," Durkin says. "They were allowed to simply walk away."

Charles Key, former Republican whip in the Oklahoma House of Representatives, believes federal authorities have more information than they've disclosed, let alone acted on.

"I think this is an opportunity for more of the truth about Oklahoma City to come to light," he says. "The 9/11 congressional hearings need to be expanded a few years backward to Oklahoma City. That is where the failures really started."

Key also wants to know why Kenny was never charged. Is he protecting federal officials from charges of incompetence, or worse?

"It screams that he is working for them," Key says. "There's something going on. They were working for the government, and they're being protected. My opinion is that some things just speak for themselves."

Shawn Kenny was sworn into the U.S. Army on Feb. 3, 1995. The rest of the gang continued their crime spree through 1995.

On Jan. 15, 1996, the first of the gang was busted. A car chase through Green Township ended with Guthrie being apprehended by the FBI just off Race Road.

A Cincinnati Police Intelligence report dated Feb. 2, 1996, states, "In late 1995, the FBI began working with an informant in an attempt to locate either or both of these subjects."

Kenny was the informant. The FBI claimed he "voluntarily" assisted the investigation.

In his grand jury testimony, Kenny said he agreed to cooperate with agents "just to, I don't know, get this chapter of my life closed and get it behind me."

A different version of events is depicted in a letter of commendation for Officer Moning from Police Chief Snowden.

"Kenny was arrested on weapons charges in October 1995 and assisted the FBI by arranging to meet with Guthrie, which resulted in Guthrie's arrest," Snowden wrote.

Durkin pointed out the stark contrast between Kenny's newfound patriotism and his anti-government activity in the ARA.

"It seemed to defy his desire to serve in the U.S. Army," Durkin says.

But Kenny's enlistment wasn't only uncharacteristic -- it also seemed to defy the realm of possibility. He had a 1990 felony weapons conviction and a long history of subversive anti-government activities -- to such an extent that the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) in Montgomery, Ala., had been tracking him since 1988. The organization keeps tabs on hate groups across the country.

Mark Potok, editor of SPLC's quarterly Intelligence Report magazine, tells CityBeat that white supremacist groups have urged members to enter the military for training. Interestingly, the last entry for Kenny in the SPLC computer database was in 1997. The group had tracked him to Killeen, Texas, near Fort Hood, where he was on active duty.

FBI records show Guthrie had given Kenny two communications devices in late 1993, "when he, Guthrie and Langan visited Christ of the Ozarks, an area in Northern Arkansas, where they were planning to rob an armored car carrier."

Kenny didn't surrender the two devices -- a cell phone and a pager -- until Aug. 6, 1996, a full 18 months after entering the Army.

His right-wing political views were even visible. Kenny described his tattoos in court: Pointing to his arms, he called one tattoo a "crucified skinhead;" the second is a "Toten Kopf," German for "death head." Under the skull is "SS," the initials for Hitler's storm troopers.

U.S. Military regulations bar recruits who have visible swastikas or other racist tattoos. But that didn't keep Kenny out of the Army.

"He's like Teflon," attorney Durkin says. "Nothing seemed to touch him. Things that would derail other people were just speed bumps to him."

What really confounded Durkin was the military charge against Kenny. He was formally charged with violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, Article 128, assault; and Article 134, indecent acts and liberties with a child. He had provided alcohol to and inappropriately touched and kissed his 11-year-old niece.

These acts took place in March 1996, a few months after Private Kenny started working with federal authorities and prior to his grand jury testimony. After serving a

minimal administrative suspension and sentence in an Article 15 proceeding, Kenny received a promotion.

"The Army has made a point of getting rid of people like him," Durkin says. "Even when they had the perfect reason to, not him! I don't know what it is."

Instead the Army continued to promote Kenny at rocket speed. After completing a stint on active duty, he entered the Ohio Army National Guard in October 2002, according to Sgt. Stephen Sharp at the Reading Road Armory.

Kenny was recently promoted to sergeant first class or E-7, after a little more than nine years of service. Sgt. Sharp also is an E-7. He has 22 years of service.

Today Kenny is a mortar section sergeant. The U.S. government, in all of its wisdom, trained him to blow things up.

His unit was recently mobilized and sent to Germany for training, then on to Kosovo for nine months. Kenny will be eligible to become an E-8 master sergeant in May 2005. Sharp says he's confident Sgt. Kenny will be promoted.

Others haven't fared as well. McVeigh and Guthrie are dead. Nichols has been sentenced to life imprisonment by both state and federal courts. Langan is trying to overturn his life-plus-35 sentence for a crime the feds say he didn't commit.

And the cop who broke up the gang finally finished probation last week for using a police computer without permission. He hasn't worked as a police officer since.