

OKC Bombing: Exposing a Coverup: The New American Has Played a Lead Role in the Ongoing Efforts by Independent Investigators to Get to the Truth about the Oklahoma City Bombing



The New American

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This was a major break in the Oklahoma City Bombing case. I was in Tulsa, Oklahoma, for a meeting with the undercover operative for the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) who had penetrated a white separatist commune in rural Oklahoma known as Elohim City. The operative I was scheduled to meet was a young woman named Carol Howe, known to her ATF handlers under the code name CI-183 (Confidential Informant 183).

Miss Howe had taken on a very dangerous assignment and amassed an incredible amount of detailed information--notes, audiotapes, videotapes, drawings, diagrams, photographs, license plate numbers, names, addresses, and telephone numbers--on what would prove to be one of our country's largest known concentrations of domestic terrorists. I had obtained copies of Howe's official ATF records, which proved to be a veritable treasure trove. Besides containing a wealth of completely new data, the ATF's file on Howe corroborated important evidence and testimony THE NEW AMERICAN had received from other sources tying individuals associated with Elohim City to Timothy McVeigh and the OKC bombing.

Our meeting, on the evening of October 7, 1997, took place in a quiet Tulsa restaurant. She was the star witness scheduled to testify the next morning in Oklahoma City before a special grand jury convened to investigate the bombing. Media organizations from all over the world were trying to find her. Reporters from several major broadcast and print media had been calling me seeking information on her whereabouts. I said I didn't know, which was true; I knew only where she was to be at our appointed meeting time.

Why had Carol Howe agreed to meet only with THE NEW AMERICAN? She had explained in one of our earlier telephone conversations that she was "very impressed" with our previous coverage of the OKC bombing in general and our articles dealing with Elohim City and her undercover work in particular. Our September 15, 1997 cover story, "Undercover: The Howe Revelations," was, she said, "the most accurate and comprehensive" single report that had been written on her story.

I had first learned of Carol Howe months earlier, from Glenn and Kathy Wilburn, whose young grandsons, Chase and Colton, were among the 19 children in the Alfred R Murrah Building's day-care center who were murdered in the bombing. The Wilburns had become very concerned by what was obviously a deliberate, hurried effort on the part of federal authorities to close the case with Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols as the only conspirators in the terror attack.

"All of a sudden, Janet Reno, the Justice Department, the FBI flip the switch and deny that there is or ever was a John Doe No. 2 or any other accomplices," Glenn told me during one late-night session at the Wilburns' home. "I don't buy that for a minute. There's too much evidence, too many credible witnesses showing McVeigh and the Ryder truck with multiple suspects on the morning of April 19. I can't and won't stand idly by if some of Chase and Colton's murderers--for whatever reasons, and I don't know what they might be--are allowed to get off."

Carol Howe's ATF reports confirmed what the Wilburns and other bombing survivors and investigators had learned from multiple sources: the ATF had been forewarned about the attack, and its agents were conspicuously absent from the ATF offices at the Murrah Building on April 19.

Burning an Informant

THE NEW AMERICAN'S coverage of Carol Howe and the Elohim City connection to the OKC bombing has been repeatedly vindicated. As the 10th anniversary of the deadly attack rolled around earlier this year, important new evidence was still coming out in the form of FBI memos released under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

The FBI memos confirm that Timothy McVeigh was indeed tied to Elohim City, the Aryan Republican Army, White Aryan Resistance, Aryan Nations, and other violent neo-Nazi groups. More importantly, they show that government spokesmen knew this to be the case even while they were denying that they had any evidence of this connection. Still more important is the fact that the recently released documents, together with a number of arrests, trials, and convictions (that have been almost

completely ignored by the major media), have shown that an alarming number of Elohim City's disreputable alumni were actually working, in one form or another, for federal law enforcement agencies.

When it became obvious that news of Carol Howe's explosive findings might leak out and expose the Clinton Justice Department's false claim that McVeigh was a lone bomber (co-conspirator Nichols was not in Oklahoma City the day of the bombing), retaliation was swift and vicious. The FBI exposed her identity, putting her in mortal danger. Then, both the FBI and ATF refused to bring her in or give her protection, in violation of the terms of her confidential informant agreement (not to mention every moral standard). Amazingly, she survived.

Obsessed with shutting Howe up, the Justice Department then arrested her and put her on trial for the very same undercover activities they had recruited her to perform! In the course of her trial, however, top Justice, FBI, and ATF officials were publicly exposed in flagrante--lying, falsifying, and withholding documents; "losing" documents; and consorting with the enemy.

One of the most stunning revelations to come out of the Howe trial was that Robert Millar, the elderly founder and leader of Elohim City (who, according to the ATF's own records, was urging his followers to engage in violent insurrection against the federal government), was himself a longtime informant for the FBI. But in view of his activities and those he was presiding over at the rural redoubt, it would seem he was more accurately an agent provocateur than an "informant." No wonder Clinton, Reno, and company were pushing so furiously to cover this mess up. At the very least, it provided shocking evidence of incompetence or criminal negligence and malfeasance so egregious and extensive that public exposure could very well cause a wave of outrage that would cause the lopping off of heads all the way up to, and including, the top occupant of the White House.

And Millar was not alone. More and more evidence indicated that some of Elohim City's most notorious frequenters were working for the federal government, including Richard Guthrie, Kevin McCarthy, Shawn Kenny, Dennis Mahon, and German national Andreas Strassmeir. Carol Howe testified that she had seen McVeigh with Strassmeir at Elohim City. FBI phone records show that McVeigh had called the rural compound seeking Strassmeir immediately after placing a call to the Ryder truck rental agency. Oklahoma police records showed that McVeigh had received a traffic ticket very near Elohim City on a back-country road leading to the Aryan community.

Why were the revelations that should have set off alarms and started a media frenzy

instead greeted with deafening silence? The Clinton administration and its allies in the Establishment press quickly branded any who challenged the official "McVeigh and Nichols only" scenario as "anti-government fanatics" and "conspiracy wackos" who were trying to exculpate McVeigh.

As in the case of so many other important revelations concerning what was--until 9/11--the deadliest terrorist attack on American soil, the heavy lifting would have to be done not by the Big Media stars, but by a small band of dedicated independent investigators. Perhaps most notable of these were Glenn and Kathy Wilburn, who devoted themselves full-time in pursuit of the truth, pushing tirelessly, relentlessly onward, amassing enormous files and important contacts covering all aspects of the bombing.

I worked with the Wilburns and others too numerous to mention who contributed in countless ways to advance an enormously heroic effort that was fraught with many obstacles. While the Big Media "watchdogs" performed as obedient lapdogs for the Clinton administration's coverup, a small band of resolute truth seekers broke loose one major story after another.

Media Blackout

However, it soon became obvious that no matter how many "smoking guns" we turned up, in the form of eyewitnesses, physical evidence or government documents, ultimately we would have little impact unless we could break through the media blackout and get the facts to a larger American audience. The hostility of the liberal-left Big Media was not the only problem; the cowardice of the "conservatives" was equally, if not more, harmful to our effort to breach the wall of silence.

All too often, I heard from editors and reporters of conservative print and broadcast media, as well as conservative national radio talk-show hosts, words to this effect: "Terrific stuff you're doing on OKC, keep up the good work." However, they were unwilling to risk the wrath of the White House or the Big Media insiders by tackling the issue themselves. Some of them admitted this explicitly, others merely inferred. Even spunky Internet news sites that promote themselves as fearless investigative sources maintained the proverbial "10 foot pole" length from the real Oklahoma bombing story.

This was especially frustrating because, in the effort to get more media firepower directed at the OKC coverup, I did what is unheard of in journalism: I offered editors and reporters who were willing to tackle the issue full access to my documents, as well as to all of my sources and witnesses who were willing to speak to other media.

This was no small matter, since quite frequently I was the only one with access to highly coveted documents, sources, and witnesses, many of which were the result of lengthy, laborious, and expensive effort. Moreover, I offered to walk willing reporters through much of the complex, labyrinthine detail in the case. This was like opening up the vault and even helping them load the gold into their vans. It was a can't-resist no-brainer for any serious journalist.

Many responded to a limited extent, cherry-picking irresistible morsels, especially if they tied into an OKC story that was currently hot with the Big Media. But almost no one seemed willing to take up the daunting challenge. One of the most important exceptions to this otherwise dismal response from typical journalists was Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, one of Britain's top reporters and the Washington bureau chief for The Sunday Telegraph.

Mr. Evans-Pritchard contacted me by phone in 1996 during one of my trips to Oklahoma City. He complimented me on my series of articles on the bombing and asked if I'd mind if he jumped into the OKC story. Specifically, he was hoping to contact some of my witnesses. Mind? I was thrilled, I said, noting that I greatly admired the investigative work he was doing on the Vince Foster "suicide," and other scandals that had earned him the ire of the Clinton administration. "I think you're showing that Oklahoma City is a much bigger and more important story than Vince Foster," he said. "Well, welcome aboard," I responded.

Evans-Pritchard's OKC stories in the Telegraph in 1996 and 1997 were picked up by many U.S. media organizations and did much to break down the walls of fear that kept many other reporters from challenging the official lies and coverup about the bombing. His book, *The Secret Life of Bill Clinton: The Unreported Stories* (1997), which devoted the first seven chapters to Oklahoma City, also provided a tremendous boost to our overall efforts.

He began Chapter 1 with this sentence: "Relaxing on Air Force One after the 1996 elections, Bill Clinton told a pool of reporters that he owed his political revival to the Oklahoma bombing." Evans-Pritchard recounted that Clinton reflected on the country's backlash to his first term, which resulted in the Republican conquest of Congress in 1994. But when the bomb went off, Clinton told the press pool, "It broke a spell in the country as people began searching for our common ground again." In truth, the deadly explosion enabled the president--with the invaluable help of the Establishment press--to skillfully exploit the tragedy to demonize critics of his policies as fellow-travelers with terrorists.

Unfortunately, Evans-Pritchard was transferred back to England in 1997, and no one

in the major media of his stature, ability, and fortitude stepped in to continue his important reporting.

Untold Stories

Over the past decade, THE NEW AMERICAN has published scores of stories on the Oklahoma City bombing, many of them major, groundbreaking reports. I think it is not an exaggeration to say that those stories played a significant role in foiling the plans of the Clinton cabal to not only demonize, but actually to criminalize, conservatives and constitutionalists who opposed their police-state agenda. Although virtually all of those stories carry my byline, they were truly collaborative efforts, reflecting the input of many others whom I will never be able adequately to thank.

The Oklahoma City bombing investigation has been the most extensive and expensive effort of this type ever undertaken by THE NEW AMERICAN or its predecessors, American Opinion and The Review of the News. It would not have been possible without the volunteer assistance of bombing survivors, law enforcement personnel, witnesses, and experts in many fields. It also would not have been possible without the security assistance provided by many good friends or the special financial assistance from several major donors, which enabled us to cover the enormous expenses involved in travel, security, copying documents and tapes, and paying for analysis by engineers, laboratories, forensic scientists, and other experts.

Many people are under the mistaken impression that more information about the Oklahoma City bombing serves little purpose, since it has been eclipsed in magnitude, importance and currency by the 9/11 terror attacks. But as we have shown, the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center, the 1995 attack on OKC, and the 9/11 attack are all directly connected. * Understanding the Oklahoma City attack is critical to understanding the others and to strengthening our nation's security in the global war on terror.

Many important stories about the Oklahoma City bombing and 9/11 remain to be told, including several that we have never mentioned but have been investigating and developing for years--and that we hope to soon be able to publish.

* See, for instance, "Al-Qaeda's OKC-9/11 Ties" in our July 26, 2004 issue. This and over 35 other TNA articles on the OKC bombing are available at thenewamerican.com/focus/okc/.

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