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Soldiers from [the] ... 101st Airborne Division check a destroyed building, Tuesday, 2 April 2002 ... while participating in Operation "Mountain Lion" [a follow-on op to Operation "Anaconda."] See story on page 22



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# UNDER REVIEW

## PART I

### FBI Takes Cover Over Intel And OKC Bombing Probes

BY J.D. CASH

PHOTOS COURTESY AUTHOR

How will the FBI, our nation's premier law-enforcement organization, navigate this year's spate of congressional hearings and internal investigations? Carefully, like it's tiptoeing through a cow pasture, barefoot, on a moonless rainy night.

Consider what's underfoot: The McVeigh "missing" evidence fiasco; Top Echelon: The FBI's informant program that employed contract killers; "Spies Like Us" disasters: Wen Ho Lee and

Robert Hanssen; Osama bin Laden's Flying Circus; and, of course, the missing Anthrax-man debacle. Next, reel-off the list of some of the other criminals the Bureau can't seem to locate: Eric Robert Rudolph, John Doe 2, et al., and James "Whitey" Bulger.

But it's the MIAs on the Bureau's international "wish-list" that speaks volumes about an agency in desperate need of some high-profile arrests; combinations that have left many in Congress

grumbling that the feds high-priced globe-trotting expansion during the last decade-and-a-half, has taken a toll on overall performance.

Hoping to blunt these investigations, Robert S. Mueller III, announced a top-to-bottom overhaul of the Bureau as his first order of business as new Director. But few believe that merely drawing-up a new organizational chart will affect the deeply rooted culture inside the FBI, where paranoia reigns and agents



are hostages in an us-against-the-world high-stakes bunker-drama of political intrigues.

Institutionalized from Hoover through Freeh, the result has been a hopelessly bloated bureaucracy, enforcing a style of management that crushes all dissent. The residue is a culture of mindless cronyism that often taints heavily publicized investigations — where careers are advanced at the expense of solid cases. And so deeply entrenched is the “ol’-boy network,” not even a new Republican administration dares to lay a glove on it.

Shocked by a string of virtual “Go to hells” from President George Bush and Attorney General John Ashcroft, Congressman Dan Burton went ballistic in December over the administration’s outright stonewalling of evidence concerning the FBI’s sleazy 30-year hydra-headed relationship with group called the Winter Hill Gang, and similar scandals, inside the Boston FBI office.

For months the Indiana Republican’s Government Reform Committee has been trying to force the Department of Justice (DOJ) to cough-up paperwork about an informant program the FBI established under the code-name Top Echelon. But Ashcroft’s men haven’t budged. Inexplicably, the white knights that rode into town to clean up the Clinton-Reno mess, are themselves the guilty parties now: refusing to turn over evidence of drug- and gun-running — even contract murders — carried out by some cowboy informants working under shoddy supervision of the FBI.

Committee investigators have been told what they are looking for is sealed under a claim of Executive Privilege. The Bush Administration argues that federal prosecutors need flexibility and privacy in their dealings with hoodlums. But the stonewalling has led to suspicions that the FBI and Justice Department are hiding a lot more than corruption in just one FBI field office. According to a federal judge who has seen some of the evidence, Top Echelon is a real-life Pandora’s Box for the FBI.

### Is OKC Linked To A Top-Echelon Man?

Graduating from the Boston FBI office at the height of the Top-Echelon abuses were two men who would later get leading, but abbreviated, assign-

ments in the OKC bombing investigation — Larry Potts and Weldon Kennedy. In the last year, Congress and the DOJ’s Inspector General have investigated how and why thousands of pages of evidence in the OKC Bombing case could just vaporize for years, then some of it reappear?

Initially, the fantastic discovery of evidence hidden away caused a red-faced freshman Attorney General John Ashcroft to order a last-minute reprieve for confessed bomber Tim McVeigh.

Had the FBI and federal prosecutors “framed” a guilty man? And if so, Why? The Internet buzzed as conspiracy hysteria swept the talk shows.

Legal experts speculated the FBI had the case so fouled-up, McVeigh might even receive a new trial. And



*Just 11 days before the bombing, a surveillance camera at Lady Godiva’s records this dancer quoting one of the “weird guys” bragging to her in the club that night, “On April 19, 1995, you’re never going to forget me. You’re never going to forget me for the rest of your life.” Dancers in the strip club later picked out photos of McVeigh, Strassmeir and Brescia as the men in the popular Tulsa nightspot. This “smoking gun” effectively destroys the myth that McVeigh and Nichols acted without additional support. The FBI will “deep-six” this evidence along with thousands of pages of other eyewitnesses accounts that are at odds with the “official version” of events.*

from his lawyer’s statements on the matter it was evident the condemned killer agreed with the notion of a new trial.

Only weeks earlier, McVeigh said he was weary of prison life and wanted to stop all appeals and move forward with his execution. But the drama created by the discovery of this missing evidence caught not only the nation’s attention, but his, as well. McVeigh was center-stage and relished the attention.

A 30-day reprieve was granted but

McVeigh’s appeals were quickly batted down. Nothing in the documents, judges wrote, absolved the Desert Storm vet of guilt. On 11 June, the 34-year-old enigma met his date with destiny. Timothy McVeigh exited, just as he’d come onto the American stage: silent and stoic. He chose for his death certificate, *Occupation: Soldier*.

However, convicted co-conspirator Terry Nichols is still alive, and facing first-degree murder charges in Oklahoma for 160 of the 168 killings. Lawyers for Nichols are now examining this fresh evidence with a view to incorporating some of it in his defense.

A source familiar with what the feds belatedly handed over offered this: “Admittedly there is much here that could be called “rubbish,” but mixed in are credible witness statements and motel records that fit a pattern.”

The source disclosed that some of the witness statements tie McVeigh to a group of neo-Nazis that once operated from of a Christian Identity enclave in eastern Oklahoma, called Elohim City. Other credible witness statements are said to connect a band of bank robbers, called the Aryan Republican Army (ARA), to the bomb plot (see “Company Boy” and “OKC: From Bank Robbers To Bombers?,” Sept. ’01 and Oct. ’01).

One of the most telling documents the feds withheld from the Nichols’ defense actually places McVeigh in a motel room — less than a half-hour’s drive from Elohim City — on the very day the original OKBOMB indictments alleged the bombing conspiracy was hatched.

The owner of that Vian, Okla., motel said the FBI picked up the receipt months after the bombing. She recalled an agent from Tulsa coming by,

asking her to check old records for Tim McVeigh’s name and several of his aliases.

Days later she found one and called the FBI. Tim McVeigh had been a guest.

At the heart of the intrigue is the motel’s location and the date of McVeigh’s stay. The motel is located only minutes from Elohim City and the date of McVeigh’s check-in registration: 12 September 1994.

13 September 1994 is the day a federal grand jury determined that the

plot to bomb the federal building was formed. It is also a day Terry Nichols was working as a ranch-hand, 200 miles away in Kansas.

A source who played an important role the Nichols' federal trial, said, "Had this evidence [motel receipt] been available to us, we certainly would have used it."

A central theme of the Nichols' defense team was that McVeigh was part of a group connected to Elohim City, a gang that, lawyers argued in Denver, Nichols had nothing to do with. Obviously the Vian, Okla. motel receipt would have supported that defense — had the FBI not lost it — for longer than five years.

### More "Missing" Elohim City Evidence

Last spring, I received a call from a lawyer reviewing some materials related to the crime in OKC. She was incredulous about a letter of mine to an FBI agent regarding a lengthy interview I'd given. But where was that interview, she wondered?

A few days later the DOJ had to admit that my letter the lawyer called about led to the discovery of a 10-page 302 (report of investigation) that lawyers for McVeigh characterized in their appeals as *incontrovertible evidence of a cover-up by the FBI*.

Indeed, someone inside the FBI placed my interview in a file where it never belonged. A criminal investigation file that defense attorneys for McVeigh and Nichols would not see — until the eve of the execution of Tim McVeigh.

Contained in that 302 were sworn statements regarding contacts I'd made inside the neo-Nazi movement; personal dealings I'd had with Timothy McVeigh after the bombing; and high-points of my many trips to Elohim City where I posed as a right-wing journalist for an Identity publication in California.

For anyone interested in solving the crime, much of it was right there: names, dates and linkages — a solid beginning for an agent to follow-up with interviews. And for defense attorneys looking to point the finger at others: There was plenty of material available for them, too.

A day or so after the lawyer's call, I

turned on my television and there were four FBI agents corroborating this tactic — telling Dan Rather they saw important OKBOMB evidence ignored or flat disappear. One of those agents was Rick Ojeda, the agent who'd earlier sought my help and created the "smoking gun interview" as it was being referred to in the media.

Now the poor man was sitting front and center in the *60 Minutes II* interview, complaining bitterly that he'd been fired because he may have asked too many questions about what hap-



*ATF informant, Carol Howe, (left) playing the acting role of her career at Elohim City. Howe reported regularly to the Tulsa ATF office about plans at the eastern Oklahoma, Christian Identity compound to attack federal facilities and start a race war. (below) Bundeswehr Lieutenant Andreas Strassmeir working the crowd of radicals and other federal informants at KKK synod, Robert Miles' farm in Michigan. Months later, Miles and over a dozen of other members of the far-right will be rounded up by authorities conducting Operation "Clean Sweep" and charged with Sedition and other crimes. Miles and most of the others will later be found innocent and released.*



bookends to the OKBOMB saga. The BATF had a snitch inside the gang and the gang was financed by bank jobs. The key players operated out of Elohim City and various safe-houses in the Midwest. McVeigh was a mule. The key men were radical revolutionaries, experienced with explosives, and had been casing the OKC target for months.

I'd long ago written of the connections between Elohim City and Wayne Snell — the Identity

group's patriot icon — executed by the

State of Arkansas on 19 April '95, the same day as the bombing. So with Carol and Jennifer's information, my two-year cross-country investigation finally yielded the  *motive, opportunity and means* — the basic ingredients to understanding and solving the crime. And yet none of the bad guys at Elohim City had been charged in the bombing.

At the center of this puzzle was the inexplicable character, Andreas "Andy the German" Strassmeir. From the beginning I'd suspected he was no legitimate terrorist. But I wasn't able

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to catch up with him before he hit the Mexican border.

Once back in Berlin, Strassmeir ducked difficult interviews — hiding behind North Carolinian friend and lawyer, Kirk Lyons, who pooh-poohed any connections his client might have to McVeigh or the bombing. But Andy the German had a history.

While in the United States, Strassmeir became a mythical figure in the neo-Nazi movement.

Andy arrived in the United States directly from Germany with some important people's help. The Strassmeir family was politically connected to the highest levels — his father was Secretary of State to Berlin and a confidante of then-Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

The younger Strassmeir's military records reflected he was as a lieutenant, serving in the *Bundeswehr*, when his frequent trips to the states, began. Also, his English was solid and his INS file reflected that he enjoyed diplomatic immunity. In fact, on the day of the bombing, Strassmeir still maintained an account at his military credit union, *Postbank Hannover*, where deposits were regular and his VISA card was debited. In three words, Andy was "special to somebody." In my opinion, he was *Top Echelon* material.

### The Untouchables

While in America, Andy the German was able to slide into the neo-Nazi movement and was rubbing elbows with the likes of Louis Beam and Robert Millar in no time. A member of the ARA with two-dozen bank jobs under his belt called Andy, "A warrior-god!"



AP Photo/Kenneth Lambert

*On Capitol Hill, Rep. Dan Burton, left, R-Ind., chairman of the House Committee on Government Reform, makes pointed remarks to Carl Thorsen, right, deputy assistant attorney general for legislative affairs, about President Bush's claim of executive privilege to block release of information Burton's committee had requested for a hearing investigating the handling of confidential informants in Boston, Thursday, Dec. 13, 2001, in Washington. An irate Burton compared the blockage by fellow Republicans at the White House and Justice Department to the actions of a monarchy, and threatened to hold a series of hearings on presidential executive privilege.*

While Strassmeir lived at Elohim City, he was surrounded by a growing number of skinheads who drifted to the compound for paramilitary training. The *bachelors*, as they were called, became the subject of numerous official undercover reports. It seemed every agency had a "asset" inside the camp.

In the months before the bombing, the reports noted that the skinheads

were learning how to make explosive devices and convert weapons to full-auto. Their rhetoric was becoming just as lethal.

It was all in the government reports: Mass-shootings and bombings were on the horizon. 1995: All hell would break loose! Carol's BATF file noted Strassmeir's men had conducted three surveillance operations in OKC. The second anniversary of Waco would be an important day: Wayne Snell was to be executed.

But in between beers and a few tokes on a meth-pipe, the skinheads carried on as usual. Regularly, they fanned out across the Midwest and robbed banks and unsuspecting gun dealers. The money was spread around the *Movement* to finance the overthrow of the government. And when the hard work was done, some of the gang would return to the woods around Elohim City to play with their toys and chase the healthy flock of young girls at the camp. For two years, leading up to the bombing in Oklahoma City, the bachelors seemed untouchable.

Regardless of neighbors' complaints about the machine-gun fire and

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FINDINGS OF INSPECTOR GENERAL GLENN FINE IN THE OKBOMB MISSING EVIDENCE "SNAFU"

1. DOJ Inspector General found NO evidence of a computer problem that could have caused the widespread withholding of OKBOMB evidence.
2. Nine field offices of the FBI were found to have destroyed evidence that should have been turned over to attorneys for McVeigh and Nichols.
3. Investigators discovered "widespread confusion" by FBI agents as to what evidence to turn over to defense lawyers.
4. The OIG determined that the FBI agent who headed the OKBOMB investigation, Dallas FBI SAC Danny Defenbaugh, and one of his assistants, SA Mark White, were guilty of "significant neglect of duty," in failing to notify superiors of the discovery of the missing documents for several months. Disciplinary action was recommended for both men.
5. The OIG found no evidence of criminal wrongdoing by any agents of the FBI.
6. On 16 April 2002, Defenbaugh E-Mails colleagues and announces his decision to leave the Bureau.

—J.D.C.

*Continued on page 75*

base at Clark Field, accommodated U.S. service personnel's sexual demands. Cullen's problems were hardly over after the U.S. military departed in 1992, however, as Filipino pimps turned Angeles and Olongapo into two of the Pacific region's most "rancid fleshpots."

The 10-year war in Vietnam contributed to the explosion of a sex industry outside the bases. Bangkok became a major center for Rest and Recreation (R & R) leave, commonly known the by GIs as I & I (Intoxication and Intercourse). Authorities passed legislation to aid the sex business and "support the boys," such as the Entertainment Act, which included a policy called "Hired Wife Services." By the mid-70s there were 800,000 prostituted Thai women. When the war ended, the Thai government, accustomed to the high profits, promoted sex-tour travel agencies established by a group of high-ranking Thai military generals' wives. From 1965 to 1993, the number of tourists grew from 250,000 to over 5 million.

And, adds Sister Sol Perpinan of Third World Movement Against Exploitation of Women, it is estimated that by the mid-80s the sex industries around the bases in the Philippines had generated more than \$500 million. At the end of the war in Vietnam, Saigon had 500,000 prostituted women — equal to the population of Saigon before the war.

### The Myth Of The Virgin

As Interpol's Agnes Fournier de Saint Maur, who tracks global child sex trends, says, the demand comes not only from pedophiles but from individuals "eager to push the envelope of carnal exploration."

Virgins are in great demand among Chinese from Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong, Michael Satchell writes in an extensive article on the topic in *Preda*. Chinese men prize sexual intercourse with young girls for the rejuvenating properties they believe to be associated with the act. According to O'Grady, "there are surprisingly large numbers of aging and wealthy Chinese businessmen who believe that they must deflower a virgin at least once a year to gain the energy needed to be successful in their business enterprise and have a long life".

In India, *Devadasis*, (handmaidens of God), are dedicated to the goddess Yelamma in secret ceremonies. Most of the girls brought into the Devadasi system will become human cargo in the sex traffic in cities like Bombay, where sex can be bought for less than the price of a bottle of beer. Hunger, poverty and superstition are the root causes of a practice which sees parents or relatives sell a daughter to a pimp or brothel for \$150 to \$200. The cult also entraps a handful of boys, known as *Jogappas*, who are made to become transvestite prostitutes.

UNICEF reports that there are 200,000 child prostitutes in Thailand, 400,000 in India, between 244,000 and 325,000 in the U.S. and 100,000 in the Philippines, Taiwan and Brazil and 35,000 in West Africa.

*Next: The scourge of AIDS abetted by the sex slave trade, the big business of sex tours, and sex slavery in the Central Europe, the Americas, Israel and Saudi Arabia.*

A frequent contributor to SOF, Dr. Martin Brass is an international lawyer. ✕

bombs exploding in the hills around Elohim City, *no one* from the FBI or State of Oklahoma showed-up to make arrests. Overhead, their agents just circled the camp in fixed-wing aircraft, snapping pictures and making notes.

### The Lady Godiva Sighting

Ojeda knew much of this from my articles and also had first-hand knowledge of a favor I did the Bureau when I tossed them a videotape of some naked girls in their dressing room at a gentleman's club in Tulsa.

Beyond the considerable "artistic worth" of 20, or so, attractive young girls changing g-strings for eight-hours straight, the tape had real crime-solving value, as well.

Captured for all the world to enjoy, the Lady Godiva security camera footage preserved an unbelievable event dancers witnessed in the club — 11 days before the bombing.

The action started when a raven-haired beauty sauntered into the dressing room with a miffed expression. Shaking her head, Tara relayed comments from one of the "weird guys" buying her drinks that night.

"And he said, 'You know, I'm a very smart man. And someday you'll find a lover that'll really hurt ya, and on April 19, 1995, you're gonna remember me — you're gonna remember me for the rest of your life.'"

After getting my hands on the tape and collecting interviews from the girls working that shift, I gave the FBI a copy so they could conduct their own interviews.

The dancers told the FBI the same thing they told me. From a photo array, they identified the men in the club bragging that night, as: Timothy McVeigh, Andy Strassmeir and another Elohim City radical and ARA member, Michael Brescia. (Brescia would later plead guilty and go to federal prison for his role in the ARA's conspiracy to overthrow the government and rob banks in seven Midwestern states)

Ojeda figured I was on a roll. Through an intermediary, he pushed hard for an interview before I left for Denver to cover the McVeigh trial. But at the time, I doubted his sincerity and begged-off.

Admittedly, I'd lost a lot of confidence in our G-men. They had to know much more than I did about this crime. The whole thing seemed like a way to learn who my sources were and then screw with them.

Unfazed by the rebuffs, Ojeda pressed harder. On 14 April 1997, I relented and sat down with the him and state man, Chris Dill, of the Oklahoma Bureau of Investigation. And today, I must admit, both men surprised me with their keen interest and honest desire to solve the crime. If there was a cover-up, they'd been left out. Hours later they folded their notebooks and shook the blood back in their fingers.

Ojeda nodded as he spoke, "Elohim City and Strassmeir are the keys ... There's no doubt." Turning to Dill, the frustration pored out, "Why in the hell is the FBI ignoring all this?"

*In the next SOF: The case for a blown "counter-terrorism operation." Did the FBI's best "get bested" on that horrific day in Oklahoma City? You will learn about the most shocking evidence yet to surface.*

J.D. Cash, who has investigated the Oklahoma City Bombing case from Day 1, is widely considered to be one of its true experts. ✕