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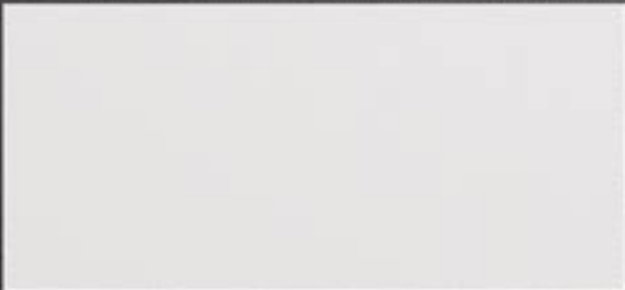
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New Evidence Trail

Prison murder leads to OKC bombing revelations



The Truth Will Out

An attorney's decade-long search for justice in his brother's murder finally yields fruit — and breaks through a mass of lies and coverup in the OKC bombing.

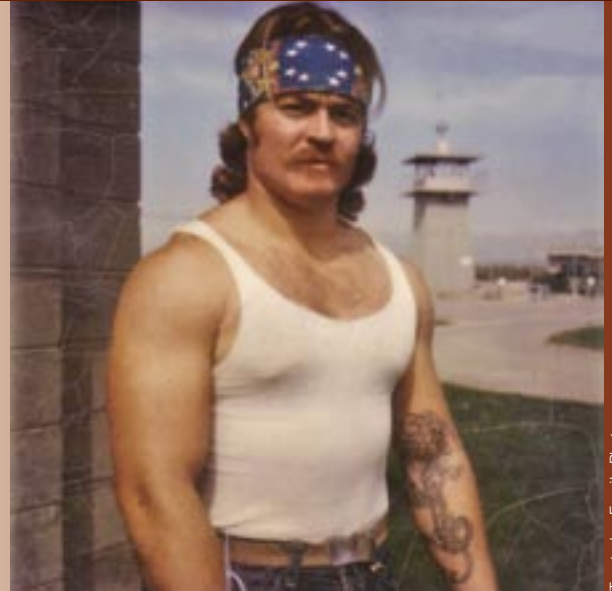
by William F. Jasper

On the grounds of Oklahoma City's Will Rogers International Airport stands an imposing high-security prison facility known as the Federal Transfer Center (FTC). On the morning of August 21, 1995, Kenneth Michael Trentadue died there in cell A-709. The alleged cause of death was suicide by hanging.

Mr. Trentadue's family disputed the suicide verdict from the start, claiming the evidence indicated that Kenny Trentadue was murdered. In 2001 the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma awarded the family a \$1.1 million judgment against the U.S. government for intentional infliction of emotional distress. The court also issued a scathing criticism of government witnesses for "serious questions as to their truthfulness" and their obvious "lack of respect for the solemnity of sworn proceedings." However, because of destruction of evidence and repeated perjury by government witnesses, the court was unable to find that Trentadue's death was a homicide.

Now, a decade after his death, explosive new evidence in the Trentadue case has come forth that may explain why the Clinton Justice Department spent millions of dollars and went to such extraordinary lengths to cover up the death of a man who had been arrested for a minor parole violation. The new evidence comes in the form of memoranda from then-FBI Director Louis Freeh. The memos concern the biggest case of terrorism in U.S. history prior to the 9/11 attacks: the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, which occurred on April 19, 1995, four months before Kenny Trentadue's death.

When the Trentadue family began digging into the circumstances surrounding Kenny's death, they had no idea that the trail would lead them directly into the heart of the OKC bombing case. The recently revealed documents provide important confirmation for a key part of this magazine's thesis regarding



Trentadue Family Photos



Trentadue Family Photos

Kenny Trentadue as he appeared in a prison photo in the late 1980s and as his battered body appeared at his funeral after his prison "suicide."

that terrorist act. One of the many troubling facets of the OKC bombing case, developed by THE NEW AMERICAN and others, concerned the Clinton administration's strange insistence that Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols were solely responsible for the attack, despite mountains of evidence to the contrary and numerous eyewitnesses who had seen McVeigh with several "John Does" immediately prior to, and at the time of, the bombing.

We have divided this story into two parts, the first dealing with Kenny Trentadue's death, and the second, beginning on page 14, concerning the Trentadue connection to the OKC bombing.

Murder by "Suicide"

Kenny Trentadue's family learned of his death when Acting Warden Marie Carter called Kenny's mother in California to report that he had committed suicide. "We were stunned," Jesse

Trentadue, Kenny's brother, told THE NEW AMERICAN. "I had just talked with him shortly before [by telephone on the night of August 19] and he was not depressed. We talked about his upcoming parole hearing and his new son. He was upbeat, looking forward to being out [of prison] in a couple months, rejoining his family, resuming his life. Besides, suicide would be completely contrary to his nature. He was a survivor, a fighter."

There were other things about the call from the warden that aroused the Trentadue family's suspicions. "When the warden [Carter] called, she asked my mother for permission to cremate Kenny. This was odd for a number of reasons," says Jesse Trentadue, a trial lawyer in Salt Lake City, Utah. "First of all, it is expressly against Bureau of Prisons policy to cremate inmates," he told THE NEW AMERICAN. "Secondly, as my mother explained [to Carter], even if she had favored cremation (which she certainly did not), the decision was not hers to make, legally or morally. That decision would have to be made, she explained, by Kenny's wife, Carmen Trentadue. That seemed to really unnerve Carter. She said, 'What do you mean? He doesn't have a wife!' My mother responded, 'Oh yes he does, and an infant son, too! And I have another son who is a lawyer who will be contacting you, so you better not cremate Kenny.' That seemed to rattle her even more, to find out that he had a brother who is an attorney."

The family's suspicions grew when prison officials attempted to thwart their request for an autopsy. When Kenny's body finally arrived at the funeral home in California, the family was shocked, sickened, and outraged. Their worst fears were confirmed. "He was so badly bruised from head to toe, front and back, it was obvious he had been savagely beaten," says his brother, Jesse. "In fact, it was clear to me that he had been *tortured*." The family took detailed photographs of Kenny's body, documenting the extensive injuries. "Those images of my

brother's body are burned into my memory forever," says Jesse, his voice choking with emotion that still grabs his throat a decade later. On August 30, 1995, the Trentadues hand-delivered to the Bureau of Prisons Regional Office in Dallas, Texas, a letter accusing Federal Transfer Center guards of murder. Enclosed with that letter were copies of the photographs they had taken of his brutalized body.

Two days later, on September 1, the Bureau of Prisons issued a press release announcing that Trentadue's death had been "ruled a suicide by asphyxiation" and further stating that "other cuts and abrasions found on ... [Trentadue's] body would indicate persistent attempts ... to cause himself serious injury or death."

Screwing Down the Lid

The Trentadue family knew they were dealing with a major coverup of Kenny's

According to Jesse Trentadue, "I never intended to get involved in the OKC bombing issue.... I'm just a hillbilly lawyer trying to get justice for my brother who was murdered. But it seems I don't have any choice, because that's where the evidence keeps pointing."

murder and would be in for a real fight. But they didn't realize *how* serious and deadly the fight would become. In the weeks, months, and years that followed, they would have to deal with official misconduct at the highest levels of the federal government, including destruction of evidence, altering of evidence, "loss" of evidence, obstruction of justice, lying, perjury, subornation of perjury, and threats and intimidation directed at them and their witnesses. Kenny's cellmate, Alden Gillis Baker, who swore out a deposition that he



Trentadue Family Photos

Faithful crusader: Jesse Trentadue, shown here in his law office with a portrait of Kenny, has doggedly pursued truth and justice for his murdered brother for more than a decade.

The Trentadue case may end up being the case that finally breaks the logjam of lies behind the coverup that has suppressed the truth about the OKC attack for more than a decade. Already it has pried loose many long-hidden documents that belie some of the government's central claims.

had witnessed Trentadue's murder, was found hanging in his cell before he could testify in the family's civil suit against the government: another suicide. Still another inmate, Nick Arcabusso, was told he would end up the same way if he told anyone about hearing a guard boast that he "killed Trentadue."

Here is a partial list of the incredible circumstances and evidence surrounding Kenny Trentadue's "self-inflicted" injuries and "suicide":

- It is undisputed that when discovered, Kenny Trentadue's body was covered in blood with head-to-toe, front-to-back trauma. Even the bottoms of his feet were bruised. His throat had been slashed, and he had suffered three massive blows to his head that ruptured his scalp to the skull.

- The Oklahoma State Medical Examiner, Dr. Fred B. Jordan, testified that in 37 years of practice he had never seen a hanging with so much trauma. Even the government's nationally recognized pathologist, Dr. John Smialek, described Trentadue's death as "weird" because of the extensive trauma and massive blood loss.

- Dr. Fred Jordan testified that Trentadue is the only case of an alleged hanging in which he has found a fractured hyoid bone, the small, horseshoe-shaped bone at the base of the tongue that supports the muscles of the tongue. According to Dr. Jordan, Trentadue's fractured hyoid was "more consistent with strangulation than hanging." Dr. Miles Jones, an independent forensic pathologist hired by the Trentadue family, stated

that in his professional opinion Trentadue's death was a homicide and that he died by strangulation. Dr. Carlos A. Mier, the physician's assistant at the prison who first examined the body, wrote that Trentadue's death was due to "strangulation."

- Dr. Miles Jones stated that the bruise on Trentadue's anal verge was most likely the result of Trentadue having been

kicked. Dr. John Smialek testified that this injury to Trentadue could only have occurred as the result of an "assault."

- Dr. William Gormley, of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, reviewed the autopsy of Trentadue's body and stated his belief that "the deceased was assaulted." However, because of the destruction of the crime scene, he concluded that the manner of death should be listed as "unknown."

Oklahoma law mandates that the death

scene be preserved. Federal law likewise requires that any inmate suicide be investigated and that prison authorities handle the death scene "with the same level of protection as any crime scene in which a death has occurred to insure that available evidence ... is preserved ... for subsequent investigators." In this case, federal authorities rushed to destroy the "suicide" scene evidence. When Trentadue's body was discovered, he was wearing blood-stained khaki pants and a blood-stained T-shirt. But when his body was turned over to the Oklahoma Medical Examiner at 7:00 a.m. that morning, he was wearing only blood-stained boxer shorts. An FBI *Memorandum* later revealed that FBI Agent Jeff Jenkins left the "clothing" in the trunk of his car until it putrefied and that "Jenkins took the smelly bloody clothing out of his car and now had it in the FBI office." But the clothing disappeared and has never been seen since.

By law, a "psychological reconstruct-



AP/Wide World Photos

Coverup king: Former FBI Director Louis Freeh presided over the massive coverup surrounding the Oklahoma City bombing and the apparently related murder of Kenny Trentadue. Newly discovered memos by Freeh on the OKC bombing are at the center of a major court case.

tion” must be done of every inmate suicide. This psychological reconstruction is an in-depth investigation and report on the alleged suicide, including method, means, motive, etc. This was not done in Trentadue’s case.

Aware that a Psychological Reconstruction Team was on the way to examine Trentadue’s cell, prison officials ordered inmates and staff to clean the crime scene. The prison staff members later testified that they cleaned extensive blood spattering and bloody hand prints off the cell walls, floor, and other surfaces.

Notes and Nonsense

One of the government’s main pieces of evidence supposedly indicating Trentadue’s intent to commit suicide was a “suicide note” he allegedly had scrawled on the cell wall with a pencil. However, the message makes no sense and was not signed with Kenny Trentadue’s name. Moreover, the government has offered two different versions of the note, neither of which could be called, unequivocally, a suicide note. According to the government’s first report, the note said: “My mind is no longer its friend, love Paul.” The government later claimed that that note was a suicide note written by Trentadue to his Hispanic wife, Carmen, and that it read: “My mind is no longer its friend, love Familia.” (*Familia* is Spanish for “family.”) However, Kevin Rowland, a homicide investigator for the Oklahoma Medical Examiner, says that when he saw the note on the cell wall it was signed “Tom Linx.”

Perhaps more significantly, before handwriting analysts from the FBI Crime Lab could examine the note, the cell wall was painted over. This was done despite the government’s contention that Trentadue’s cell was a “secured scene, sealed with crime tape within the custody and control of the FBI.”

What about the pencil that Kenny Trentadue supposedly used to write the note? There were no fingerprints on it. In fact, according to the government, except for Trentadue’s fingerprints on his personal papers, there were no other fingerprints in the cell. According to the government’s scenario, Trentadue, despite inflicting massive trauma upon himself, still had presence of mind (as well as some unexplained motive) to thoroughly clean all



AP/Wide World Photos

Dr. Fred B. Jordan, the Chief Medical Examiner for the State of Oklahoma, wrote in his notes that he told the Assistant U.S. Attorney in Oklahoma City, “I felt Mr. Trentadue had been abused and tortured.”

his fingerprints from his cell before hanging himself.

The presence of another person’s blood in Trentadue’s cell is another undisputed physical fact for which there has been no accounting. FBI Agent Tom Linn testified that “we found two blood types” in Trentadue’s cell. According to Linn, one of the blood types was Trentadue’s and the other belonged to an unknown person. When asked why no effort was made to identify the other person whose blood was found in the cell, Linn responded that “we did not have a suspect to take a sample from.” No suspect? That excuse is patently ludicrous, of course. The FBI didn’t need to put out an APB or troll the Oklahoma

highways and byways for suspects. The obvious suspects were the very small cohort of prison staff and inmates who had access to Trentadue’s cellblock during the very limited time period when he died.

Federal Perjury

In 1997, as the Trentadue case was going before a federal grand jury, officials of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and FBI determined to take serious measures to discredit Jesse Trentadue, who was serving as counsel for the Trentadue family in their civil case against the government. The government enlisted the aid of James Hauser, a prison inmate, to help them *indict* Jesse Trentadue. Hauser promised the Depart-

ment of Justice that he would place a “yoke of silence” around Jesse Trentadue’s neck by testifying that the family lawyer had paid inmates to perjure themselves. Hauser was polygraphed by the FBI. He failed that polygraph, but was nevertheless presented to the grand jury to give perjured testimony.

“It was just incredible the lengths to which they were going to stop us,” Jesse Trentadue told *THE NEW AMERICAN*. “As we started out on this case, I was kind of naively trusting the FBI and DOJ to get to the bottom of this and help bring those responsible for my brother’s murder to justice. But it got weirder and weirder as we went along. I mean, here are these government officials committing very serious crimes, the kind that can send you to prison. Why?”

Why? That was the big question that had been haunting him and other family members from the very beginning of this harrowing ordeal. The evidence keeps sending him back to the Oklahoma City bombing for answers to that question.

“I never intended to get involved in the OKC bombing issue and really don’t want to go there,” Jesse Trentadue told *THE NEW AMERICAN*. “I don’t have a dog in that fight. I’m just a hill-billy lawyer trying to get justice for my brother who was murdered. But it seems I don’t have any choice, because that’s where the evidence keeps pointing.”

The Trentadue case may end up being the case that finally breaks the logjam of lies behind the coverup that has suppressed the truth about that deadly terrorist attack for more than a decade. Already it has pried loose many long-hidden documents that belie some of the government’s central claims about the bombing. Over the past year, Mr. Trentadue has won key court decisions ordering the FBI and Justice Department to turn over dozens of documents he has requested. The government has repeatedly stalled and appealed the decisions. But the government is running out of stalling options, and a court decision expected in November may finally break loose documents that have been protecting the guilty for far too long. ■

Terror, Lies & Memos

Recently uncovered FBI documents expose official lies and complicity in one of our nation’s most deadly terror attacks.

by William F. Jasper

Several months after his brother’s death, Jesse Trentadue received an anonymous telephone call. The caller claimed to work in the federal prison facility in Oklahoma City where Trentadue’s brother, Kenny Trentadue, had died under very troubling circumstances. “The FBI killed your brother,” said the voice on the other end of the line. “It was a case of mistaken identity. They thought he was one of the Midwest Bank Robbers.”

Jesse Trentadue says he initially dismissed the call as a crank call. “I’d never heard of any Midwest Bank Robbers and couldn’t see how that would have anything to do with Kenny’s death anyway,” he told *THE NEW AMERICAN*. “It just didn’t make any sense.”

Several months later, however, he read something that gave him a jolt and caused him to wonder if maybe that “crank” call had been legitimate. The jolt came in the form of an article in the *Los Angeles Times* about a federal inmate who was found

Timothy McVeigh is surrounded by law enforcement officials as he is led from the Noble County Courthouse in Perry, Oklahoma, on April 21, 1995, two days after the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City.



AP/Wide World Photos

hanging in his cell, much like his brother Kenny. What got his attention was the fact that the man was identified as a member of a group calling themselves the Aryan Republican Army (ARA). Following a spree of bank robberies, the ARA bandits had been dubbed by the media as the Midwest Bank Robbers. The ARA bank robber who had “committed suicide” was Richard Lee Guthrie.

Suddenly, the anonymous telephone call began to trouble Trentadue. While not necessarily buying the “mistaken identity” story, he had to admit that Guthrie was a very close match for his brother: age, size, weight, height, body build, facial characteristics, mustache, tattoo, former convict. Both men even drove similar-looking pickup trucks. But what did all of this add up to? He didn’t know, but of this much he was certain, Kenny had not committed suicide, as prison officials claimed. He had been murdered, savagely beaten and strangled to death. And federal officials were going to great lengths to cover up or

destroy all evidence that might finger who was responsible for his death.

Hidden Bombshell Documents

It was not until this year, when Trentadue obtained copies of FBI memos concerning the April 19, 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, that he had the clues he needed to begin putting the pieces of the puzzle together. An August 1996 memo from FBI Director Louis Freeh tied Richard Lee Guthrie and other ARA bank robbers to Timothy McVeigh, who was convicted of carrying out the bombing and was executed in 2001. The memo noted that Guthrie and his fellow robbers frequented a rural Aryan redoubt in eastern Oklahoma known as Elohim City, which this magazine has covered extensively over the past decade. Freeh’s memo specifically mentions “Timothy McVeigh” by name and mentions one of McVeigh’s telephone calls to Elohim City. It also notes that at the time of the memo, Guthrie was in FBI custody and states that “much of the information provided by Guthrie has been corroborated” by “a source” inside Elohim City. (We will come back to that very interesting source later on.)

The FBI memo mentioned above continues with a sentence in which two words are blacked out, or “redacted,” as the government puts it. The sentence reads:

GUTHRIE BOTH ADMITTED TO PAYING [word redacted] MONEY DERIVED FROM BANK ROBBERIES AND IDENTIFIED [word redacted] AS AN ACCOMPLICE IN CERTAIN BANK ROBBERIES.

Jesse Trentadue believes the redaction in each case conceals the word “MCVEIGH.” This writer agrees with that assessment, based on my own knowledge of the case.

McVeigh’s name fits the size of the redacted space in the memo, but more importantly, it also fits as the most logical word for the context of the memo and the evidence in the case. FBI records show that Timothy McVeigh’s sister, Jennifer McVeigh, told federal investigators that her brother was involved in bank robberies and that she had helped launder proceeds from one of those robberies. This and a superabundance of additional evidence redundantly tie McVeigh, the ARA, and Elohim City together.

The government could easily solve this mystery by simply releasing an unredacted copy of the August 1996 memo, along with any other related memos and documents. FBI and Department of Justice (DOJ) officials, of course, have refused to do this. Which is why Jesse Trentadue is suing to have these documents released, under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Elohim City Contact

An earlier memo from the FBI’s Louis Freeh, in January 1996, states:

PRIOR OKBOMB INVESTIGATION DETERMINED THAT MCVEIGH HAD PLACED A TELEPHONE CALL TO ELOHIM CITY ON 4/5/95, A DAY THAT HE WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN ATTEMPTING TO RECRUIT A SECOND CONSPIRATOR TO ASSIST IN THE OKBOMB ATTACK. THE OKBOMB COMMAND POST IS ATTEMPTING TO VERIFY THE VERSION OF EVENTS AS SET FORTH BY THE SOURCE AND TO DEVELOP FURTHER INFORMATION.

Who did McVeigh call at Elohim City? THE NEW AMERICAN was the first national media organization to obtain copies of the McVeigh/Nichols telephone records and to report (in 1996) on Timothy McVeigh’s calls to Elohim City: to one Andreas Karl Strassmeir, a German soldier who trained the Elohim City residents in terror tactics and the use of firearms and explosives. The McVeigh calls have since been confirmed by Strassmeir himself, as well as by other Elohim City residents.

Louis Freeh’s January 1996 memo also has strategic words redacted, and it



The conspicuous aversion by top federal officials to follow the obvious leads pointing to OKC bombing suspects with ties to Elohim City has always been one of the most disturbing features of the OKC “investigation.”

appears the redactions were made specifically to obscure the name of Andreas “Andi” Strassmeir. The memo notes that the individual in question “allegedly has had a lengthy relationship with Timothy McVeigh,” is living (at that time) in North Carolina, “and plans to leave the U.S. via Mexico, in the near future.” At the time the memo was written, Strassmeir had fled Elohim City and was living with radical attorney Kirk Lyons in North Carolina. Lyons helped Strassmeir “leave the U.S.

via Mexico” shortly thereafter.

After fleeing back to Germany, Strassmeir admitted in several interviews — one with *THE NEW AMERICAN* — to having met McVeigh, but insisted his connection to McVeigh was simply a onetime, chance meeting at a Tulsa gun show. He also acknowledged that McVeigh had called for him at Elohim City before the OKC bombing,

but claimed that he had not been around to receive the call. The FBI memo acknowledges what the phone records also show: McVeigh called Elohim City at least twice, on April 5 and April 17. The April 5 call was especially noteworthy in that McVeigh made the call only two minutes after having called Ryder Truck Rental for his initial inquiry about the vehicle he would use for the ammonium nitrate truck bomb. So, the very first person McVeigh calls immediately after initiating plans for

the truck bomb is Strassmeir. Surely anyone who has been through “Police Detective 101” would recognize this as a clue and see Strassmeir as a prime suspect. But even though Louis Freeh notes in his memo Strassmeir’s location and his intention to flee the country, he dispatches no agents to arrest Strassmeir.

Even more telling, as reported by this magazine nine years ago, Strassmeir’s pal and attorney, Kirk Lyons, admitted that McVeigh had called his law office in Black Mountain, North Carolina, on April 17, 1995, *two days before the bombing, and had talked for 20 minutes!*

What was discussed? Incredibly, federal authorities pretended to be completely disinterested in learning the answer to that question. Mr. Lyons was notorious for representing violent and virulently racist organizations, from the Aryan Nations to the KKK. His law office received one of McVeigh’s last and most lengthy phone calls before the bombing, and he was representing and housing a foreign fugitive (i.e., Strassmeir) who was tied to McVeigh, the FBI’s lead suspect. Instead of swarming all over Lyons and his associates, Louis Freeh and Attorney General Janet Reno gave them a pass while sending hundreds of FBI agents on dead-end “leads” to produce mountains of paper, which would later be cited as evidence of a thorough investigation. Clinton, Reno, Freeh, and their faithful minions insisted there was nothing worthy of investigation at Elohim City.

However, a recently discovered FBI document dated February 24-25, 1997, proves there was *plenty* to investigate. The three-page document is a “302” (FBI report) on Kirk Lyons’ assistant, David Hollaway. In it, Hollaway confirms to an FBI source, whose name is redacted, what we had learned years ago from other sources: it was he — David Hollaway — with whom McVeigh had talked in the 20-minute mystery call less than 48 hours before the bombing.

The 302 notes that Hollaway spent eight years in the U.S. Army Special Forces and was a pilot for the CIA for two years. More ominously, it reports that Hollaway “was able to provide technical details concerning [McVeigh’s] truck bomb and ANFO (ammonium nitrate/fuel oil) ... with *an alarming degree of specificity.*” (Empha-



The New American

Andreas Strassmeir, a German soldier, provided terrorist training to neo-Nazis in Oklahoma and is a prime suspect as one of McVeigh’s accomplices. FBI memos indicate FBI officials purposely allowed him to flee back to Germany.

sis added.) The FBI source reported that Hollaway's information and cagey demeanor "provided the indication that Hollaway was attempting to communicate an involvement on his part in that bombing without verbally acknowledging participation." The FBI source in the 302 was clearly alarmed by Hollaway's knowledge and behavior and believed him to be involved in the OKC bombing.

The FBI 302 also reports that "Hollaway did admit to currently being in possession of an M-203 granade [sic] launcher ... and an extensive array of other weapons which he keeps in his home." But, curiously, the top FBI and Department of Justice brass seemed indifferent. Imagine how many *minutes* it would take before the whole alphabet soup of federal SWAT teams landed on *your* or *my* roof if we happened to mention to a federal agent that we had a grenade launcher under the bed! But Hollaway, Lyons, Strassmeir, and the rest of the Elohim City gang led charmed lives.

It gets worse. Mr. Hollaway was the one who transported Andreas Strassmeir to the Mexican border, smuggled him across into Mexico, and then accompanied him to Germany. Was he doing this on assignment for the CIA, the FBI, or a secret joint CIA/FBI operation? That is an obvious question that the lapdogs of the "mainstream" media seem to be incapable of asking.

Why won't they go there? After all, as we reported in 1996, Strassmeir admitted to first coming to the U.S. with the help of an old "family friend," Vincent Petruskie, reportedly a "retired" CIA operative. Petruskie and Strassmeir were putting together deals to buy Boeing 747 jetliners. Mr. Petruskie admitted to THE NEW AMERICAN that Strassmeir had expressed the desire to work undercover in the U.S. and that he, Petruskie, had helped the Strassmeir make contact with federal agencies.

What's clear is that *Strassmeir and Hollaway were working together and that McVeigh called both of them on the same day — less than 48 hours before the bombing*. It's also clear that powers within the federal government have taken extreme measures to protect Strassmeir, Hollaway, Lyons, and many other individuals connected to the OKC bombing, keeping them from exposure.

This conspicuous aversion by top federal officials to follow the obvious leads

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Leaked FBI memos have exposed official lies and deception in the OKC bombing case. U.S. District Judge Dale Kimball has ordered the FBI to turn over unredacted copies of the memos.

pointing to OKC bombing suspects with ties to Elohim City has always been one of the most disturbing features of the official OKC "investigation." Extensive investigation by THE NEW AMERICAN, which included exclusive interviews with eyewitnesses, federal law enforcement officers, and the critically important federal undercover informant, Carol Howe, pointed toward several Elohim City regulars as top suspects in the OKC bombing conspiracy. One of the most important suspects of that group was Andreas Strassmeir, aka "Andi the German," who was in the U.S. illegally on an expired visa and was an inherent flight risk.

Defying rationality, the FBI sent agents all over the U.S. and around the world to arrest and/or question suspects, but refused to question the most obvious suspects in their own backyard. It was much like scenes from *Casablanca*, in which the police inspector played by actor Claude Rains tells his men to "round up the usual suspects," to give the appearance of a rigorous investigation — while intentionally letting the guilty escape. For the past decade, the FBI and Department of Justice have insisted that there never was any connection between Strassmeir, the Elohim bank robbers, and McVeigh. However, the FBI memos show that the FBI defi-

Thanks to the perseverance of the Trentadue family, the government's own hidden documents are providing further evidence and exposing the criminality and conspiracy that have shielded those who aided the terrorists and/or covered up for them after the fact.

nately were aware of connections between McVeigh and Strassmeir and that they also were aware that Strassmeir was preparing to flee back to Germany. Yet, while *THE NEW AMERICAN* and other private investigators were zeroing in on Strassmeir, the FBI did nothing and allowed him to exit the country secretly through Mexico.

Odd Bedfellows

Federal authorities are also protecting some other very interesting "assets." Some of the most significant references in Louis

Freeh's secret January 1996 FBI memo pertain to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), which evidently had at least one informant inside Elohim City *prior* to the OKC bombing.

The SPLC, led by attorney Morris Dees, has raised millions of dollars with its high-profile attacks on "hate groups," and admits to being closely intertwined with the FBI and the Department of Justice. The

Freeh memo refers to the SPLC as one source for the information that McVeigh had called Elohim City seeking Strassmeir and that Strassmeir was planning to flee the United States.

Any reasonable reader of the FBI memo would deduce that the SPLC was smack-dab in the middle of the Elohim City rat nest around the time of the bombing. But for reasons about which we can only speculate, they have refused to discuss the matter, insisting that the SPLC had no connection whatsoever to Strassmeir or any-

one else at Elohim City. In fact, for the past decade, Mr. Dees and the SPLC have steadfastly supported the official Louis Freeh/Janet Reno line that there was no Strassmeir/Elohim City connection to the OKC bombing.

If that is true, then these references in the aforementioned FBI memo do not make sense: "Information has also been received through the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)"; "Two days prior to the OKBOMB attack, when [name redacted] of the SPLC, was in the white supremacist compound."

Mr. Trentadue says that when he filed a Freedom of Information Act request with the FBI seeking all documents relating to Morris Dees, the SPLC, and Elohim City, he was informed by the FBI that they could not release such information unless he first obtained a privacy waiver from Mr. Dees. This, says Trentadue, is a specious claim, since Dees and the SPLC are not exempt under any privacy provisions of the law. Nevertheless, he says he has repeatedly sought such a waiver from Dees, but the SPLC leader has refused to grant one.

Trentadue has provided *THE NEW AMERICAN* with copies of e-mail correspondence on the matter with the SPLC's intelligence director, Mark Potok, that confirm SPLC's unwillingness to grant a privacy waiver. In a January 4, 2005 e-mail response, SPLC's Mark Potok told Mr. Trentadue that comments made by Morris Dees in 2003 at Southeastern Oklahoma University are not "an admission or boast that we had informants at Elohim City, or that Strassmeir worked for us. Because, one more time, we didn't, and he didn't." Concerning Elohim City, he insists "our involvement is and was nil." Trentadue has challenged the FBI's privacy waiver claim and hopes to soon have a court decision that will force the government to turn over the documents he is requesting.

The FBI's responses to Trentadue's requests do little to inspire confidence in its institutional veracity. Trentadue had requested documents referencing Morris Dees and/or SPLC to Timothy McVeigh,



AP/Wide World Photos

Morris Dees has won fame and fortune as founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). Despite SPLC denials, FBI documents show the SPLC had an informant inside Elohim City.

Richard Guthrie, Andreas Strassmeir, and a number of other names associated with Elohim City. The FBI responded that their search failed to disclose any “records responsive to the Plaintiff’s request.” However, the FBI was caught flat-footed when Trentadue produced the redacted version of the August 1996 memo, proving that FBI “records responsive to the Plaintiff’s request” *obviously* existed.

How did the FBI defendants respond to this embarrassing revelation? FBI officials said they had never claimed that the documents don’t exist, only that their “search” failed to disclose them. How had they searched? According to FBI official David Hardy, the agency had conducted a computer search of the “record indices” of its Automated Case Support (ACS) system; there had been no actual search of the physical files. It was a “search” designed to fail, since the FBI intentionally holds files

outside of its ACS, does not enter certain names into its record indices, or — as past cases have shown — sometimes intentionally misspells names so that a computer search will come up empty.

Coverup and Murder

For the past 10 years, the FBI and Department of Justice have been insisting that Timothy McVeigh, except for some assistance from Terry Nichols, acted alone, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary; that there is/was no John Doe No. 2, even though multiple credible witnesses saw McVeigh with several John Does on the day of the bombing and in the days immediately before the bombing; and that there is no connection whatsoever between Timothy McVeigh and Andreas Strassmeir, Elohim City, or the Midwest Bank Robbers.

All of those assertions were shown to be not only false but *ridiculously* false years ago by the weight of overwhelming evidence. Now, thanks to the perseverance of the Trentadue family, the government’s own hidden documents are providing further evidence and exposing the criminality and conspiracy that have shielded those who aided the terrorists and/or cov-



AP/Wide World Photos

Expert help? FBI documents say David Hollaway, an alleged former Green Beret and CIA operative with ties to McVeigh, Strassmeir, and Elohim City, had “alarming” specific knowledge about the explosives used in the bombing of the OKC federal building.

ered up for them after the fact.

A sober assessment of the available evidence makes it very difficult to avoid this very disturbing conclusion: high officials of the Clinton Justice Department and FBI committed murder (possibly several murders) to hide details of the OKC bombing from the American public. They also committed perjury, falsified and hid documents, and kept the guilty from being punished. How safe is anyone in America if the guilty aren’t held accountable for these heinous crimes? The succeeding Bush administration has not only continued the Clinton coverup but has *promoted* many of the guilty.

Unquestionably, the Department of Justice and FBI include many thousands of dedicated professionals completely committed to their oaths to defend the Constitution and our system of justice. They, like the rest of the American people, are being betrayed by those in positions of power who are using their offices to commit crimes, obstruct justice, and undermine the rule of law.

Resolving the Oklahoma City bombing is vitally important not only in order to obtain justice for the victims of that decade-old terrorist attack, but to safeguard our national security in the war on terror. As we have noted in previous articles, the three major terrorist attacks on U.S. soil — the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the 1995 OKC bombing, and the 2001 9/11 attacks — are all directly connected, both in terms of the terrorist perpetrators involved and the government officials who have “fumbled” intelligence and informants alerting them to the attacks beforehand. And in each case they have allowed perpetrators to escape and have covered up evidence of government duplicity and/or complicity. ■

For more articles about TNA’s OKC bombing investigation, see www.thenewamerican.com/focus/okc/



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