

12. Waco and Ruby Ridge: cover-ups of massacres

The populist propaganda line in the United States, pumped out of London, has been that the bloody massacre at the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas in 1993, was the personal responsibility of President Bill Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno. For many hard-core Clinton-haters, the President somehow also bears responsibility for the earlier ambush by FBI agents and U.S. Marshals against the family of Randy Weaver in Ruby Ridge, Idaho, even though the siege at Weaver's cabin began on Aug. 21, 1992, on George Bush's watch, three months before Clinton was elected President.

Putting the blame on Clinton has served to mask the fact that both the Waco and the Ruby Ridge massacres were carried out under the direction of the permanent bureaucracy centered in the Department of Justice (DOJ), which functioned as an integral part of the Bush "secret government" apparatus throughout the 1980s. The failure to clean out this corrupt, permanent bureaucracy, is evidence of the continuing cover-up perpetrated by Congressional Republicans, and tolerated by the Clinton administration itself.

The Waco showdown

The Waco tragedy began with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) raid on the Branch Davidian compound on Feb. 28, 1993, early in the Clinton Presidency. It occurred 48 hours after the World Trade Center bombing in New York City, which preoccupied the White House at the very moment that the Branch Davidian showdown began. Reno had not yet even been nominated as Attorney General. The final FBI assault upon the Branch Davidian compound, on April 19, 1993, took place during the Attorney General's first month on the job.

In both cases, the control over the crucial intelligence, the on-the-scene management, and all of the other factors that went into the decisions to needlessly use deadly force, were squarely in the hands of the permanent bureaucracy in the FBI, Treasury Department, and Justice Department, which in turn, was operating in league with, and, at times, under the domineering influence of, a number of even more corrupt outside agencies, led by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (ADL), the American Family Foundation, and the Cult Awareness Network (CAN), which did everything in their power to provoke the massacre.

The investigation of the Branch Davidians was initiated in June 1992. The first raid on the Branch Davidian compound was authorized by the Bush administration, with training of the special ATF units to be involved in the raid having begun

months before the Clinton inauguration. By Jan. 11, 1993, a permanent command post for the operation was already functioning on property adjacent to the Davidians Mount Carmel compound. By Jan. 13, 1993, authorization had been obtained for the use of National Guard forces, and orders had been cut for the use of military equipment, including seven Bradley Fighting Vehicles, in the words of the Treasury Department's official chronology, "to sustain a siege."

In the aftermath of the shootout with the ATF on Feb. 28, which left four ATF agents and a larger number of Branch Davidians dead, the FBI was placed in charge of the siege. FBI agents arrived in force, with upwards of 400 men, four Bradley tanks, the elite Hostage Rescue Team (HRT), and elements from the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime at Quantico, Virginia, including its Behavioral Sciences Unit. Also on the scene was the FBI's Special Operations and Research Unit, which became increasingly hostile toward the Branch Davidians in the ensuing 51-day siege, recommending such cheap psy-war operations as round-the-clock blaring rock music, sounds of animals being killed, etc.

The FBI also brought a number of top psychiatric "experts" to do an "offender profile" of Branch Davidian leader David Koresh. The two most important members of this team were Dr. Park Elliot Dietz and Murray Miron. Dietz particularly pushed the allegation that there was "child abuse" going on in the Branch Davidian compound, although Texas State Child Services investigators had recently closed a two-year probe of CAN-instigated child abuse allegations, concluding there was no evidence of such activities. This allegation was conduited to Attorney General Reno by Deputy Assistant Attorney General Mark Richard, and was a compelling factor in Reno's reluctant decision to go along with Richard and the FBI's push for the tear gas assault of April 19.

The FBI's actions were under the direct supervision and control of the Criminal Division of the Justice Department. The DOJ's official report on the Waco matter states: "The principal headquarters responsibility in Washington for planning and decision-making lay with the Terrorism and Violent Crimes Section of the Justice Department's Criminal Division (TVCS/CRM) . . . and Deputy Assistant Attorney General (DAAG) Mark Richard oversaw the activities of TVCS/CRM. AG Reno relied a great deal on DAAG Richard during the latter days of the crisis."

Richard personally made two trips to Waco, both of which helped clear the way for giving the FBI a freer hand. On his second trip, on April 7, 1993, he determined "that the FBI would maintain jurisdiction over resolution of the standoff. . . . Richard also heard for the first time about the FBI's proposed use of gas to end the standoff."

By April 9, Richard had returned to Washington, where, accompanied by James Reynolds, his subordinate as head of the Terrorism and Violent Crimes Section, he became the



Demonstrators in Waco, Texas, 1993. Why are the politically most sensitive aspects of the massacre at Waco still being covered up?

first to tell Attorney General Reno about the plan to use gas. According to numerous accounts, Reno was very hesitant to authorize the FBI raid plan, but was arm-twisted by Richard, backed up the FBI.

Murder at Ruby Ridge

The killings at Ruby Ridge, Idaho involved both U.S. Marshals and the FBI. In October 1989, Randy Weaver was set up by an FBI undercover “sting” agent on a trumped-up illegal weapons charge, involving the sale of two sawed-off shotguns. Soon after the sale of the shotguns to the “sting” man, Weaver was confronted by federal agents, who tried to blackmail him into becoming a government informant on the Aryan Nation, a white supremacist group headquartered in Idaho.

Weaver refused. In December 1990, a federal grand jury in Boise, Idaho indicted Weaver for making and selling the illegal weapons. When Weaver failed to appear in federal court, because of a last-minute date change by the government, a warrant was immediately issued for his arrest, and U.S. Marshals began protracted surveillance of Weaver’s cabin, which lasted for the next 18 months.

On Aug. 21, 1992, the Marshals, conducting a clumsy reconnaissance of Weaver’s cabin, provoked a shooting incident in which a Marshal was killed, as was Weaver’s 14-year-old son, Sammy. After the shooting, the FBI’s Hostage Rescue Team was deployed to the scene, and the next day an

FBI sniper shot and killed Weaver’s wife Vicki, while she was holding their infant daughter.

A subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee held hearings in 1995, and issued its report in December of that year. The report found fault with the actions of the FBI, the Treasury Department’s ATF, the U.S. Marshals Service, and the U.S. Attorney’s Office in Idaho, and with Randy Weaver himself.

But, the Senate hearings never examined the role of the Justice Department. Even though the hearings did produce some evidence indicating Justice Department involvement, this was never followed up. And the evidence that did come out in the hearings, which was extremely damaging to a couple of Bush administration Justice Department appointees, was ignored in the final Senate report. Two glaring instances were that of former Deputy Attorney General George Terwilliger, and that of former U.S. Marshals Service Director Henry Hudson.

As Deputy Attorney General from 1991 to January 1993, Terwilliger served directly under Attorney General William Barr, and he was immediately responsible for supervision of all criminal investigations conducted by the Justice Department and the FBI. Incredibly, he testified that he knew nothing about the shootout, and that he had left for vacation with his family on Aug. 22, spent the week travelling from one lodging site to another in Grand Teton and Yellowstone national parks, and never once checked in with his office, or even saw

a newspaper or heard a radio or TV broadcast about the Ruby Ridge shootout.

This was despite the fact that FBI supervisor Douglas Gow had testified that he briefed Terwilliger in Washington on Aug. 21, and that an FBI supervisor in Idaho had remarked at the time that Terwilliger was involved. There was even testimony from the FBI supervisors at Ruby Ridge who had stated at the time: "Terwilliger's involved now." But, there was no reference to any of this in the subcommittee report. Terwilliger was left unscathed in the final report. Barr was never called to testify at all.

Henry Hudson, a United States Attorney in Virginia under the Reagan and Bush administrations, and then appointed by George Bush to head the U.S. Marshals Service in 1992, also received kid-gloves treatment at the hands of the subcommittee.

On a number of occasions, Hudson was caught lying during his testimony in the hearings. On Sept. 12, Hudson gave testimony that directly contradicted a contemporaneous FBI report summarizing what Hudson had once told FBI investigators—that he and the Marshals knew that Randy Weaver's teenage son Sammy had been shot and killed. When Hudson was confronted with the FBI report, Hudson claimed that it was "inaccurate."

Hudson lied a second time, when Sen. Larry Craig (R-Idaho) asked him if, in his years of experience in law enforcement, "were you or your service ever involved in a situation or an incident in which in total people deployed, you arrived at the number of 400?" Hudson denied it, twice.

What Hudson omitted was the raid in Leesburg, Virginia on Oct. 6-7, 1986, directed against Lyndon LaRouche and his associates, which, by all official accounts, involved well in excess of 400 law enforcement personnel. Hudson, as the U.S. Attorney, was in charge. The Leesburg raid, like the Weaver raid, also involved the FBI's Hostage Rescue Team, and, with all of Hudson's publicity-hogging at the time, it is not something he would have forgotten.

Hudson was also criticized a number of times during the hearing for the inflated and exaggerated briefing which he gave to top FBI officials on Aug. 21, 1992, after the first shooting at Ruby Ridge. FBI officials Larry Potts and Danny Coulson both blamed Hudson for giving a false picture to the FBI regarding what had happened. Coulson told the subcommittee hearings that they had been told that Weaver was a Special Forces-trained soldier, and that Weaver had pursued, chased, and routed six heavily armed, well-trained U.S. Marshals, and that they were kept pinned down on the mountain 10 to 12 hours. Potts defended the FBI's initial response, saying that the FBI was relying on information from Hudson, an experienced law enforcement official.

While the subcommittee report concluded that the FBI had been misbriefed about the situation, contributing to its exaggerated response, the report inexplicably failed to lay the blame for this at Hudson's doorstep.

13. The Oklahoma bombing and its cover-up

The April 19, 1995 bombing of the Oklahoma City, Oklahoma federal building has been characterized, by government prosecutors, and the national media, as the work of two enraged ex-soldiers who were driven to carry out the biggest terrorist atrocity in American history by their anger over the federal government actions in Waco, Texas and Ruby Ridge, Idaho. The two men charged in the bombing, Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, have been described as fellow-travellers of the militia movement, and have been indirectly linked to Christian Identity Church and Aryan Nation circles operating in the Texas-Oklahoma-Arkansas border area. Their trials are scheduled to take place in Denver, later this year.

From the very outset, *EIR* exposed the fraud of the "lone bomber" theory of the Oklahoma City atrocity. Based on interviews with several high-ranking federal law enforcement and military intelligence officials, *EIR* detailed, within a week of the bombing, the fact that the truck bomb that leveled the Murrah Federal Building was a highly sophisticated "shaped-charge" that literally lifted the entire building off of its foundation, causing the devastating structural damage and loss of life. According to military experts who participated in the probe of the backgrounds of McVeigh, Nichols, and their circle of friends and associates in the U.S. Army, and following their retirement from military service, no one associated with the two men had the technical training to assemble and deploy such a device. Even if there were other explosives planted inside the building to augment the impact of the truck-bomb, the level of sophistication required to cause such damage was well beyond their capabilities.

Even as prosecutors were constructing a profile of McVeigh and Nichols as the sole perpetrators of the terrorist attack, other federal agencies were looking abroad for leads on the higher-level individuals and agencies responsible for the bombing. Leading British intelligence opponents of President Clinton, such as Lord William Rees-Mogg of the *Times* of London, and the Hollinger Corporation's Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, were complicit, before the fact, in building up a drumbeat in the media about the terrorist potential of the various homegrown militia movements.

When the Oklahoma City bombing case went before a federal grand jury, prosecutors were unable to convince the jurors to hand down an indictment that merely named McVeigh and Nichols. Instead, they added a number of "John Doe's," signifying their belief that the two men did not act alone. Subsequent testimony by Nichols's first wife, links him to networks active in the Philippines that may have been linked to the Afghansi mujahideen, and, possibly, to Afghansi terrorist Ramzi Yousef.