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Surviving the Israeli Invasion of Ramallah

BY LORI ALLEN

RAMALLAH, PALESTINE: My neighbors, George and Mary, accepted my cups of tea and stale cigarettes as they described the geography of war that rearranged our neighborhood just a few days ago, in the Israeli onslaught on Ramallah in mid-March. As we sat sipping and puffing, Mary explained to me the location of all the Israeli snipers that had been posted near our houses. "There were two on the top floor of the Silwady Building, right over Mr. Pizza."

That's a block and a half away, on the main road into the center of town, and I don't think I'll ever be able to eat there again. "Two on every floor of that tall building over there", she pointed in another direction, about a block away. "And..." she grinned, trailing off, "Are you sure you want me to tell you what else?"

I insisted she tell me, regretting my words instantly. "You see that building over there?" She pointed out of my living room windows, through my veranda, at a five-story building just across her garden. "There were two snipers on the top floor too!" A wave of nausea and fear hit me, canceling out the bliss of my ignorance that had kept my terror focused mainly on the sounds of the tanks that had grumbled around the block during the three days of siege that started on the 12th of March.

No one knew they were there until they left, she explained. "I never would have gone outside to feed the goats!" No kidding. I chided her for being so careless, reminding her how many civilians throughout this intifada had been killed by Israeli snipers just for stepping outside their doors or passing in front of a window. I knew she was hoping I would praise her for her bravery, but I re-

fused to be sucked into what seems to be a prevailing view here, one which confuses what I consider to be pointless risk-taking with nationalist steadfastness.

"I felt sorry for the goats, stuck there with no food", she protested in self-defense. Everyone has their own priorities, I suppose. She had also felt sorry for me. On the second evening of the siege, also the second of three days of curfew, Mary had, crazily, trotted from her house to my door, carrying a mountain of homemade spinach pies she had baked to feed her family when their bread ran out. I remember being amazed at the time that, (a), she would venture outside her door, and (b), she managed to bake and take care of her family in the midst of all this. I myself hadn't strayed from my back room corner more than twice, and even then I did it crawling on the floor, still evaluating how badly I needed to use the bathroom...

After the tanks retreated to the outskirts of town, around the time my supply of left-over pizza and spinach pies ran out, I ventured outside to survey the damage. I followed the track marks in the streets left by the tanks, noting that indeed they were as close to my hovel as they had sounded. The 150 tanks were, in fact, close to a large portion of Ramallah's residences. Sidewalk edges had been crumbled into dust, street signs bent over, the occasional electricity wire still dangling ominously over roads.

I glanced up at the top-floor windows of all the buildings snipers had shot from, and scurried a bit faster. The whole of Ramallah, a small town of maybe 20,000 people, is visible from just those few five- or six-story buildings. This is not to mention the view offered by the Israeli settlement, Pisigot, located on a hill at the edge

(**Ramallah** continued on page 2)

OUR LITTLE SECRETS

of town where a military post has shot and shelled Ramallah since the beginning of the intifada in September 2000.

Closer to the city center, people were walking about, shopping, jamming up the traffic circle as usual. Young men were being boisterous, little kids were trailing behind women with much to do. One of the roads was particularly crowded, as workers were installing new windows, fixing shop signs, bits of glass on the ground the only indication that an invading army had taken over the city. The florist shop that had been partially blown away by a tank shell was already being reassembled.

I don't know why I found this resilience surprising, given what I have observed of people's abilities to endure increasing levels of military, economic, and political oppression over the last year-and-a-half. My neighbors and I had phoned each other regularly throughout this particular Israeli invasion of Ramallah which began around 1:30 a.m. on a Tuesday, assuring one another we were safe, me reminding them to stay away from windows, advice which I knew they were ignoring, given their reports of where the tanks were firing from at each moment.

So it was a relief to have them safe and sound in my living room, laughing at our

joint fear, exchanging somewhat derisive comments about the armed Palestinians who shoot tanks that George described as being "as big as buildings". "They claim they are defending Ramallah. But what can they do to tanks, and how can they hide from the Israeli snipers?" George asked rhetorically. The answer is understood: it's a David versus Goliath show of resistance, not unlike the boys who throw rocks at the heavily protected Israeli soldiers manning checkpoints all over the West Bank and Gaza.

Just as everyone understands the children's stones barely reach the soldiers and their jeeps, let alone injure them, we also know that bullets don't make much of a dent in tanks. But they show that Palestinians have not given up their right to be free of military occupation, and some believe they may help prevent the Israeli soldiers from emerging from their metal-encrusted cocoons of safety during their excursions through city streets.

Apparently several people did not hide from those snipers well enough. Mary had phoned me on the second day of the siege to tell me a guy was wounded beside my house. It turns out that he and another man were killed by one of those many snipers, just meters away from where I had crouched on my floor in the corner of my bedroom for three days. In the midst of some of the loudest, closest shooting that first day, I had indeed heard someone cry out in pain, and another voice announced that God was great.

I knew that meant something really bad had happened. The shooting had continued sporadically, and I remember hearing the excited voices of men running around shouting to each other, asking where someone was. Guns were cocking. The cries of pain faded away. Eventually a siren blared. Those were the sounds of people trying to rescue someone, all in plain sight of the snipers' cross hairs. Some time later a third man was also shot by an Israeli sniper as he crouched behind the trash dumpster across the street from me. He lay there behind the garbage, bleeding to death for a day and a half before anyone realized he was there or could reach him. Another Palestinian hero.

George and Mary debated whether or not the PA security forces had ordered their men to shoot at the tanks. They think that men with arms made individual decisions to take part in the resistance.

"The problem is, they're not trained in

guerilla warfare," George observed. Some insist that the Palestinians' cap-gun resistance has thwarted Israeli efforts. Others concede it's all shooting in the air; sometimes it's just men showing off. The most convincing argument I've heard contends that Palestinians cannot win a conventional military battle, but they have to do what they can to show the occupiers that they will not be massacred laying down. If they are to be shot down, it's going to be from a standing position. They have no other options.

While the "give me liberty or give me death" sentiment is shared by most here, the question always returns: "How can we defend ourselves from 150 tanks, helicopter gunships (the bullets of which can, in fact, pass easily through roofs), and snipers swarming on every tall building in town?" Maybe the scores of young men, and a couple young women, who have blown themselves up in the midst of Israeli civilians and soldiers think they have the answer: the Israeli people need to understand what their occupation is doing to us, so they will put a stop to it.

U.S. General Anthony Zinni seems hopeful that he has the answer, but we don't know what it is yet. As for Sharon, his reply is clear: you can't defend yourselves, we will not let you defend yourselves, and you have no right to defend yourselves. My neighbor George, probably the most logical of the lot, declares that political negotiations are the only way. Still, he can never support surrender. "But we Palestinians can not just give up. We can't have lost over a thousand people for nothing. Those who are capable will not stop resisting, no matter how militarily futile, until we achieve our freedom from occupation."

The author, a regular contributor to CounterPunch, is a grad student in anthropology at the University of Chicago, currently conducting research on the West Bank.

THE PSYCHOPATHOLOGY OF OFFICIAL LIFE IN DC

Those who haven't visited Washington DC in recent months may not appreciate what the place is like since September 11, 2001. Here's a useful account from CounterPuncher JoAnn Wypijewski.

As a city, Washington, DC, didn't come into its own except through war, and perhaps for that reason the soldiers and concrete barricades and other insignia of high security that dominate its political precincts these days seem so disturbingly at home. I've

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never liked the city, but there used to be something touching about walking amid its neoclassical buildings, mementos of a young America's pretensions to Old World grandeur, and about contemplating its past as a swamp, a rutted wilderness, a place despised by its inhabitants until grief and fear gave it substance with the Civil War. Now there's only war, or rather its suggestion, without substance. The Capitol district has the air of an armed camp—camouflage and guns and public streets closed off by metal barriers that lower hydraulically once a driver has been cleared—and the worst thing about it is that no one seems to regard it as a fraud.

In New York the soldiers departed months ago. They've stopped the military surveillance flights. Flowers and purple-black bunting still adorn firehouses, but there's the sense that people have grown a little sick of 9/11, or at least have "moved on". Newspaper writers like to credit this to the city's storied toughness, but a better explanation is probably that, although Ground Zero has become its Number 1 tourist attraction, New York doesn't need 9/11—Washington, political Washington, does.

It needs the grief and fear. But because, in their genuine form, these have largely dissipated (at least judging from the rest of the country), here they are manufactured. In a recent speech, circulated over the Internet as a prayer for sanity and restraint, Representative Dennis Kucinich of Ohio mentioned the siege mentality under which Congress operates. Every day's mail brings the reminder of anthrax. The Capitol grounds are fenced and under construction. Where there aren't soldiers there are police or private security. Kucinich told me he and other members have been stopped, questioned suspiciously by guards, "and they're supposed to know us!" That is either disorienting or absurd, like the soldier scrutinizing drivers while bicyclists with large packs whizz by checkpoints. In either case it announces, "This is the new normal". Every vote in Congress, every debate and appropriation occurs amid the martial beat. Its cunning is that people no longer hear it.

The first day here my eye seemed to catch every swatch of camo and police blue, every overzealous wrist-flick of the hand rifling through my bag. On the streets I noticed people glowering at the little peace sign button on my coat. Unlike New Yorkers, no one thanked me for wearing it. In the subway, whose designers seem to have been guided by the principle that architecture should reduce humans to the condition of

ants with vertigo, it seemed I couldn't exit without catching a military ad. At the South Capitol station, Boeing touts the Apache helicopter: "We Keep the Peace"—in a dominating, intimidating sort of way. How do people bear this daily cocktail of hubris and paranoia? I thought. But sipping from the cocktail each day, I noticed less.

I wonder if there was a time when Washington, white Washington, was a real town with real energy. A building here, a sculpture there suggests maybe so, but more than ever these appear as relics. In front the Library of Congress I took a long look at Hinton Perry's waterless bronze fountain, "The Court of Neptune". In the center is the water god, naked but for a fig leaf more suggestive than modest; at either side luscious nymphs cleave to beasts half horse-half whale, the girls with expressions of such wild bliss that Neptune doesn't stand a chance. I expect that soon enough someone will enshroud the lot of them in surplices and armor.

BILLY WILDER, COUNTERPUNCH HERO

The savage knowing charm of Mittel Europa flourished in Billy Wilder's vision. On

As for Ariel Sharon, his reply is clear: you can't defend yourselves, we will not let you defend yourselves, and you have no right to defend yourselves.

news of his death we asked Dave Marsh, CounterPuncher and coeditor of Rock 'n Rap Confidential to memorialize his passing.

"Everyone tonight seems to be thanking God," said director Fernando Trueba, accepting the 1993 Best Foreign Film Oscar for *Belle Époque*. "But I do not believe in God, so I will thank Billy Wilder." A perfect tribute to the director who once told his cameraman, "Shoot a few scenes out of focus. I want to win the foreign film award."

Wilder, who died in March at 95, came to Hollywood from Vienna, but he was no foreigner. He might have been the greatest non-native speaker to tackle English since Conrad. He was a cosmopolitan middle European who always looked ready for a day at the race track. He made great films for four decades, from his 1939 script for *Ninotchka* to his 1974 adaptation of *The Front Page*. He made almost every style of film old Hollywood knew, except a musical: comedies, noirs, social problem films,

dramas, romances, buddy films, mysteries, war films. *Stalag 17* serves as a comic social problem war film with buddy subplot and a noir ending.

Today, directors speak with reverence about Wilder's work, then violate every nuance of its spirit. Today, most of his films are virtually impossible to imagine: totally engrossing through nothing but smart storytelling, great characters, and confident direction. (Other than maybe in *Lost Weekend*, who remembers Wilder's camera angles, or needs to?) Wilder did use film technique—to blow wind up Marilyn Monroe's skirt and turn Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis into just the right kind of unconvincing transvestites. Just as characteristically, in *Double Indemnity*, Edgar G. Robinson begins unravelling the mystery by reciting categories from an actuarial manual; it's one of the most riveting scenes in a riveting picture.

A contemporary director who took Wilder seriously would be stymied at the start by the old man's unyielding respect for his audience: "I never overestimate the audience, nor do I underestimate them. I just have a very rational idea as to who we're dealing with...we're making a picture for middle-class people, the people that you see

on the subway, or the people that you see in a restaurant. Just normal people."

Wilder's characters are often depraved (whether in the deep sense of *Double Indemnity* or the banal one of *The Apartment*) but those who aren't redeemed become pitiable. The signature of today's Hollywood—contempt for the characters which stands in for contempt for the audience—is the one thing missing from Wilder's cynical vision.

This cynicism was partly a mask to conceal intelligence and protect pride ("Trust your own instinct. Your mistakes might as well be your own, instead of someone else's.") and partly protective cover for someone who eluded the Nazis and wound up in another world of coldness and brutality.

"You have to have a dream so you can get up in the morning," he said, and spent his life sharing his. That's why all of us owe him thanks. Or at least a rental of *Witness for the Prosecution*, to fatten his estate and see if the twists at the end can finally be anticipated. CP

America's Answer to Genet

The Case of the Cross-Dressing Aryan

BY JAMES MURRAY

Few people have heard of the Aryan Republican Army, which is an undeserved obscurity. Not only did they rob at least 22 banks before their demise in 1996, but there is a mountain of circumstantial evidence which points to the ARA (collectively) being the infamous "John Doe #2" of the Oklahoma City bombing conspiracy. In his new book "In Bad Company: America's Terrorist Underground" (Northeastern University Press 2002) Mark Hamm explores this underground milieu of Phineas Priests, Constitutional terrorists and cross-dressing Christian Identity armed robbers.

Hamm focuses on the extraordinary character of Pete Langan. The son of a CIA man, the five-year old Langan stood by his father's side as the old man snapped pictures of Buddhist monk Quang Duc immolating himself near the U. S. Embassy in Saigon. The sound of artillery and the smell of tear gas was the seasoning in Langan's childhood. His mother was traumatized by an NLF bombing at the embassy annex. When President Johnson ordered the evacuation of all civilian personnel from Saigon the Langans settled in suburban Maryland.

Young Pete was immediately an outcast in America. His classmates taunted him and when his father retired, the heat and stress of Vietnam had broken his health. Soon he was dead from a heart attack and Pete turned against authority. He began smoking marijuana and adopted "freak" clothing and styles. His patriotic mother was horrified and sent him to a Virginian military academy. But he ran off and was expelled from a series of schools. Inspired by Abbie Hoffman's *Steal This Book* Langan taught himself street skills and was soon a petty criminal. His first brush with law-enforcement came in 1974. A sheriff's deputy interrupted Langan and an associate casing a car to steal. When he confronted the pair Langan pulled a gun and told the deputy, "You're under arrest!" He took the deputy's own gun and cruiser for a night of joyriding.

Langan made crime his career, moving through juvenile courts and county jails and graduating to the Florida prison system by the time he was eighteen. Years later Langan

still cringed at remembering his time in a Florida prison, "It was like being parachuted behind enemy lines. And I experienced brutality. I was assaulted because of my race...I was never a citizen after that...I grew a strong dislike for blacks."

Several years later Langan met a small group of older white racists who conducted classes for their fellow inmates. It was here that Langan first heard of Christian Identity and the white-supremacist movement. After his parole Langan worked as a laborer and night watchman and fell in with the outlaw biker subculture. Among this group of "beautiful losers" was a young man preparing to join the Navy named Richard Guthrie. Guthrie's background was more common than Langan's. He grew up in the working-class suburbs of Maryland. A twenty-one year old when he met the recent parolee, Guthrie had by that fall of 1979 "developed three traits that would ultimately define his identity as a political extremist. The first was

Between bank jobs Langan experimented with cross-dressing, and he began yet another alternative lifestyle in the transvestite clubs of Kansas City.

considerable intelligence... The second was exceptional eccentricity. And the third was an unbridled appetite for destruction."

Guthrie received training in nuclear, biological and chemical weapons in the navy but he quickly washed out of SEAL school and was sent to Europe to join the fleet. There he read the novel, *The Turner Diaries* and became an avowed racist. After painting a swastika on a ship he was dishonorably discharged. These were the years of Reaganomics, and when Guthrie returned to Maryland he again fell in with Pete Langan, now married with a son and trying to escape chronic poverty. The two men became friends; both read widely, both had a history of violent crime, and both shared extreme anti-government and racist beliefs.

Throughout the 80s Langan and Guthrie grew closer, collaborating on scams, rip-offs and robberies. By the late 1980s both were gravitating to the world of Christian Identity survivalism. They found acceptance

there, a sense of community, and Identity's antinomian beliefs allowed them to engage in their professions of crime. Identity beliefs encouraged weapon ownership and hostility towards government. Pete Langan drank deeply from this well. Guthrie although more secular, was attracted to the Apocalyptic visions Identity offered. Both men were in and out of jail on mostly minor charges. Langan divorced, remarried and divorced once more.

By 1990 Langan and Guthrie had mostly severed their links to the mainstream world. Neither worked, and they supported themselves wholly through crime and fraud. They made pilgrimages to Aryan Nations in Idaho and survivalist camps in Arizona. They were on the road, doing Kmart scams through the northwest when the Ruby Ridge drama began unfolding in Idaho. They visited Aryan Nations headquarters during this time and were let down by what they found there. "Losers", Langan described them, "more security leaks than just about

anything." Pete Langan and Richard Guthrie "were more serious than that. They were beginning to see 'the movement' not in terms of living in a public compound...but as a true call to revolutionary action that demanded anonymity and mobility. By the time he left Aryan Nations compound in August, 1992 Pete had become an ordained minister of the Christian Identity Church and an Aryan warrior armed to the teeth."

Somewhere in this period Langan and Guthrie first read the "true crime" book, *Silent Brotherhood*, (by Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt), which tells the story of Bob Matthews and his gang the Order during its "War of 84". The Order had assassinated talk-show host Alan Berg and staged the then largest ever armored car heist before falling prey to the FBI. Matthews himself burned to death on Whidbey Island, Washington in late 1984. "Learn from Bob," became Langan's new motto and he and Guthrie spent many hours discussing the Order's

crimes and how they had gone wrong. It was probably in those months that they began talking of forming a revolutionary army, using the Silent Brotherhood as a guide. Langan and Guthrie were particularly well-situated for such an attempt. Langan had spent part of his youth amidst an actual revolutionary war and must have inherited some of his father's covert action genes. Guthrie was an intellectual, a skilled con-man with the possibility of violence never far from him.

In the months after the bloody finale of the Ruby Ridge standoff, the radical right was abuzz with paranoia and many elements of the movement began tilting toward paramilitarism. Somewhere in this milieu Langan and Guthrie first encountered Louis Beam's seminal essay "Leaderless Resistance". In this text they found the answers to the questions about the Order's failings.

As Hamm describes Beam's prescriptions, "freedom fighters would operate in phantom cells, without any central control or direction; hence a person active in one cell would have almost no knowledge of individuals who were acting in other cells. 'It is sure,' said Beam, 'that for the most part [our] struggle is rapidly becoming a matter of individual action, each of its participants making a private decision in the quietness of his heart to resist...by any means necessary.'"

Langan and Guthrie took these precepts to heart. They robbed a Pizza Hut with a confederate and attempted to burn down a Masonic Lodge. Their cohort in the Pizza Hut robbery was soon arrested and confessed to authorities that Guthrie was planning to assassinate then-outgoing President Bush. Guthrie had already disappeared and agents went looking for his known associate, Pete Langan.

In short order Langan was arrested for the Pizza Hut robbery. As a repeat offender he faced life in prison if convicted. The Secret Service wanted Langan's help to locate Guthrie, whom they believed to be a most definite threat to the President, but Langan refused their offers of immunity. For months he rotted in jail, and then characteristically he thought up a scam. He told the Secret Service he thought he could find Guthrie if released to move in their old circles.

Langan had come to the crucial fork in the road. He could turn Guthrie over to the Secret Service, or he could renege on his deal, and pick up the threads of the agenda he and Guthrie had drawn up ten months earlier. Neither man wavered. Langan joined

Guthrie in the underground and the pair drove west to the Arkansas-Oklahoma border region to organize an Aryan Republican Army. Their plan was to pick up where the Order left off.

In the years since the "War of 84" the federal government had somewhat replaced minorities as the focal point of radical right concern. Thus the founders of the ARA sought to make war on the federal government. They envisioned bombings and assassinations as an entry point to guerrilla war, the overall campaign to be financed by bank robberies and armored car heists. They needed foot soldiers, and these they found with remarkable speed. Mark Thomas, a Pennsylvania Identity minister, sent them several of his most advanced students, big-city skinheads eager for action. Langan and Guthrie also found support in the racist survivalist communities of Arkansas and Oklahoma.

No direct evidence, no eyewitness can ever place Langan and Guthrie in direct connection with Tim McVeigh, but the known movement of the three show so many similarities as to tax beyond breaking any belief in the purely coincidental.

The pattern begins on October 11, 1993. That evening McVeigh and Terry Nichols, Langan and Guthrie, were staying in pairs at different motels in Fayetteville, AR. The next morning McVeigh received a traffic ticket in the isolated backwoods just a few miles from an Oklahoma Identity community where Guthrie had connections. Hamm conjectures the Oklahoma City bombing conspiracy began at this time. McVeigh and his cell acted as semiautonomous subcontractors with financing, support, and criminal expertise provided by the newly formed Aryan Republican Army.

The first order of business was raising money, and around the first of the year 1994 ARA embarked on the first of at least 22 successful bank robberies. For the next year the ARA robbed banks throughout the midwest while McVeigh shuttled between Kansas and Arizona acquiring and assembling bomb components. Occasionally the faint trails would converge, leading to the theory that McVeigh participated in at least a few bank jobs. McVeigh would drop hints of such activity in letters to his sister.

Langan assumed the leadership role in the ARA with Guthrie handling the technical and tactical end. Guthrie would later write that they were doing jobs in "The Jesse James way - to plunder with extreme prejudice." That Guthrie would invoke the James

Gang was natural. As Identity adherents he and Langan considered themselves Phineas Priests, a mystical order dedicated to white justice. In Identity belief the Phineas Priesthood stretched back through Bob Matthews, to Jesse James, to John Wilkes Booth and on all the way back to Rob Roy and Robin Hood.

As 1994 ran on, the younger skinheads recruited into the ARA became more competent criminals and began to handle more gang-related responsibility. Between bank jobs Langan experimented with cross-dressing, and he began yet another alternative lifestyle in the transvestite clubs of Kansas City. As he later explained, "After I went underground I had very little to lose but my life. It was then that I found the courage and freedom to explore my inner self...I found ways to overcome my shyness, and even though my life was made even more complex and secretive, I was truly happy."

Joyful criminality ran through the ARA in those late months of 1994. Guthrie's life's ambition had been paramilitary warfare and now he felt the gang had achieved "fame and fortune". The younger men also experienced this freedom through transgression. Acquaintances recall they repeated the message of Bob Matthews, "Once you've overcome fear of death and jail, then you're a real soldier. Then you can do it." In the months that had passed since the Waco holocaust, citizen militias were springing up all

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over the country. In these heady days the ARA decided it needed a public statement so they produced a recruitment video, entitled, 'The Aryan Republican Army Presents: The Armed Struggle Underground.'

The video opens with a masked Langan flanked by his soldiers. He explains that the ARA is, "the provisional wing of the Aryan Republic." Declaring that they are at war with the federal government he threatens the use of weapons of mass destruction and ethnic cleansing. He explains that the ARA is

to the tune of thousands of dollars. McVeigh and his cell had stolen or purchased the bomb components and stored them in a Kansas storage unit. He had cultivated either multiple or singular bomb makers. He had enlisted Terry Nichols and Michael and Lori Fortier into his plan. In February, 1995, the ARA drove en masse to the Phoenix area. That they were in the planning stages of a major armored car heist is well documented, and Hamm conjectures that this time spent in Arizona also had another purpose - to allow McVeigh to demonstrate that his cell was

dependent on alcohol and Langan was becoming more and more interested in living as a woman. Both were experiencing burnout and were contemplating "retirement from the revolution". By early fall of 1995 the torch had mostly been passed to the younger skinheads. While the youths went off to rob and bomb on their own, the older men had come to loggerheads, mostly because of Guthrie's refusal to accept Langan's crossdressing.

The split was acrimonious and Guthrie began to recruit a new gang. His first con-

Guthrie says he's a "revolutionary burnout" and tells his audience, "I'm just an evil, hate-mongering, psychopathic terrorist."

being built along the line of the Irish Republican Army and discusses the "phantom cell" model. Then Guthrie talks to the camera. He taunts law-enforcement officers with an assault rifle, plus an injunction "to go out and kill the bastards". He offers a review of his favorite books, going directly from the Bible to the Blaster's Handbook, which is needed Guthrie says, when there is a "federal courthouse that needs to be demolished".

Langan reappears for more ideological talk. He praises the testosterone levels of his soldiers and scorns the militias and patriot communities for their moderation. Next Guthrie takes a moment for self-reflection. He admits to suffering "revolutionary burnout," and tells his audience, "I'm just an evil, hate-mongering, psychopathic terrorist."

As 1995 dawned Hamm speculates that ARA had financed McVeigh's bomb plot

fully functional and able to handle and detonate explosives. The armored car heist was eventually scrubbed but it appears McVeigh's cell passed the test.

The ARA journeyed back to their midwest safehouse after the Arizona sojourn and did a couple of hurried bank jobs. By April 1, 1995 they were scattering, staying underground, what Guthrie called "going to ether". Hamm does a fascinating job at reconstructing that fateful month of April, 1995. He goes through the month day by day, attempting to unravel the bewildering assortment of clues, statements and motivations. Hamm's theories about the bombing conspiracy are certainly more plausible than the official explanation of events.

McVeigh was quickly apprehended for the bombing and he kept his mouth shut. The ARA went on robbing banks, but rifts were widening in the gang. Guthrie had become

tact was a soon-to-be U.S. Army sergeant and Aryan Nations leader from New Jersey. This young man's wife was a racist skinhead herself but she didn't like the menacing Guthrie. She gabbed expansively to the FBI and soon Guthrie was in jail. The investigation was hampered since, other than the old friends Langan and Guthrie, none of the ARA's members knew each other's last name. Those foot soldiers who were identified and convicted were sentenced to between 3 and 25 years in prison. Guthrie confessed to (some of) his crimes, authored his memoirs, 'The Taunting Bandits' (of which Hamm makes extensive use) and killed himself in jail. The FBI attempted to gun down Langan yet he managed to survive the 48 bullets fired at him and now resides in McVeigh's old haunt, the federal supermax prison in Colorado. CP

James Murray lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

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Langan's Aryan Trip: From Saigon to Supermax