

# Waco innocent essay



My name is Jim, just Jim its easier this way, and I was one of the nine survivors in the Waco compound standoff. Before I go into what I think went wrong to our religious sanctuary, let me tell you how I met David and a little about our great deciple.

Back in the early 90s I had been drumming in a nowhere rock band when I met and befriended David Koresh. I needed some new drum sticks, and on the way to a gig stopped in at a local music shop. Seeing the sticks in my hand the two strangers introduced themselves and asked if I was playing in a band right now. The two were David Koresh and his right man Steve Schneider. They gave their card and I promptly handed it back. The backside was full of Bible verses. You guys are a Christian rock band, and I really dont get into the whole god thing, really never have. Which was true, I had never been religious in my life, and though I sometimes found myself asking God for a little, I couldnt remember the last time I had been in a church, let alone seriously prayed. But I did have a spiritual curiosity; there were questions I had and answers that I wanted to know. Neither of them tried to push me into coming and praying with mainly they were looking for some one to beat the skins so that they could jam. Since my band was in the dumps I took back his card and said that I would call him.

Over the next couple weeks I hung out with them. I got to know Koresh and some of the other musicians in the band and all and all I was impressed. The more I hung out with them the more things I did with them I even sat in on one of their church sessions. I couldnt believe how much of the stuff that David was talking about had relevance to my life. I finally went out to their community to play a live concert; I couldnt believe my eyes. All people of all

ages were extremely enthused about the scripture. I was fascinated with their spiritual search, and I began, for the first time in my life, to really read the bible and understand the words in it. I really liked listening to Koresh's way of explaining the scriptures. He was clearly a serious religious scholar and I wanted to understand what he was saying. So I stayed.

One of the other things I loved about the community was the fact that all the people in the community came from many backgrounds. I met folks who hadn't finished high school and others with degrees from places like Harvard Law school. I spent time with African Americans, Australians, Black Britons, Mexican Americans, and many others. One irony of the Waco disaster, is that the right wing extremists and racists looked to Mount Carmel as a beacon; if they realized that so many of us were Black, Asian, and Latino, and that we despised their hateful politics and anger, they would probably feel bitterly betrayed. It was as if the community was an isolated bubble of a perfect world, where all races, colors, and creeds, lived and worshiped God together in perfect harmony, and I was glad to be a part of it.

Now that is how I met my best friend, and the man who turned my life around and directed me toward God. Many a times he told me stories of his life before, his talks with God, and before becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ. David was born in 1955 in a small town on the outskirts of Houston, Texas, to a single mother. Never knowing his father and his mother not wanting the responsibility he was mainly raised by his grandparents. He said his childhood was lonely, greatly contributed from the fact that he dropped out of high school at a very early age. Most of his days were of studying music and the Bible by himself. At the age of 20, he started going to different

<https://assignbuster.com/waco-innocent-essay/>

churches speaking his mind, which was slightly different than what these churches were used to, and was eventually asked to leave. After this he roamed, taking spot jobs for cash to get him to Hollywood so that he could become a rock star, but this also failed. He drifted back to Texas, where he became a Branch Davidian, a religious sect, which settled 10 miles outside of Waco, Texas. There, Koresh had an affair with then-prophetess Lois Roden who was in her sixties. She took him to Israel and other religious cities, teaching him the word of God. When she died the throne as head prophet became a power struggle between Koresh and Lois's son George. Koresh left with his followers but soon returned and brought with him a gunfight. Once David won the battle, a trial for attempted murder was brought up and was later acquitted to a mistrial. David told me, that George was suspected of corpse abuse, and that his shots were aimed at a tree. So of course I believed him, he could not hurt a soul; he was a kind, God-fearing man if I ever met one. David later became the leader of the Branch Davidians, and this is when he changed his name to David Koresh. Koresh is Hebrew meaning Cyrus, the name of the Persian king who allowed the Jews held captive in Babylon to return to Israel. How could you not follow this man, he made so much sense to everyday problems and he had helped me so much. Plus he was a prophet, how much plainer could it be, just compare David to Jesus.

Both had fathers who were carpenters, both had fathers who left at very early stages in their lives, both showed remarkable knowledge of the scriptures at a very early age. Both preached their messages in an area called Palestine, both had their messages rejected by religious leaders of the

day. Also they both were betrayed by Judas; prosecuted, imprisoned, and killed. Both had authorities come to arrest them, and they both were wounded in the hands and the side. Both were 33 when they died, and both believed in coming back. Maybe Jesus could not come back but God sent us David, the second prophet, a god within himself. And I loved spending everyday with him and our community. I have read the justice department reports of what happened in Waco, and this is what they say, and I quote, At about 9: 30 a. m. agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms attempt to execute, arrest, and search warrants against David Koresh and the Branch Davidian compound. Gunfire erupts. Four ATF agents are killed and 16 are wounded. An undetermined number of Davidians are killed and injured. Within a few hours the FBI becomes the lead agency for resolving the standoff. Jeff Jamar is named the on site commander. By the afternoon, advance units of the FBI's hostage rescue team(HRT) arrive, and telephone conversations are under way between Koresh, Steve Schneider, and Wayne Martin on one side, and the ATFs Jim Savanaugh and Waco police Lt. Larry Lynch on the other. Koresh disclose that he has been wounded in the hip and left wrist, Koresh is allowed to broadcast his religious teachings on Dallas radio, KLRD, and does a CNN telephone interview. Michael Schroeder, a Branch Davidian, is killed while he tries to return to the main building. Texas rangers begin an investigation but are barred by the FBI from continuing. At about 5: 30 p. m. Jamar arrives at Waco and chooses Byron Sage of the FBI as chief negotiator.(WGBH/Frontline/Author Unknown)This was the initial blow of the first day of fire. In between the time of the first quote, much is going on, a lot of mass confusion. They have cut our power and our phone lines and we are down to eating MREs(Meals Ready to Eat), which David had

<https://assignbuster.com/waco-innocent-essay/>

bought for us in case something like this would ever happen. Also David is talking to the FBI and a lot of the children have been let out of the compound and we were told if we want to go then go, it was our choice. But I would never leave David, look how much he has helped me. I will not be a Judas and turn my back on David because he is in his hour of need. We did nothing wrong, we just prepared ourselves for the second coming, the final fight, it is our constitutional right of freedom of religion and freedom to bear arms. Through all this we are doing a lot of praying and a lot of scripture. It helps keep our minds off the crisis at hand and puts our minds at ease. This next quote is from the same text which is another misleading, false statement, trust me I was there.

At 5: 59 a. m. the chief person in charge telephones the Davidians, notifying them of an imminent tear-gas assault. He reads a message over the loudspeaker, advising the Davidians that they are under arrest and should come out. At 6: 02 a. m., two FBI combat engineering vehicles, or CEVs begin inserting gas into the compound through spray nozzles attached to a boom. At 6: 04 a. m., the Davidians start shooting, and the FBI begins deploying Bradley vehicles to insert ferret rounds through the windows. At 6: 31, the HRT reports that the entire building is being gassed. At about 7 a. m., the senior advisors go to the FBI situation room. At 7: 30 a. m. a CEV breaches the front side of the building on the first floor as it injects gas, and at 8: 00, gas is inserted into the second floor of the back-right corner of the building. The FGI calls for more gas from outside Waco, and at 9: 20 a. m., 48 more ferret rounds arrive from Houston. At about 9: 30 a. m. with the supply of ferret rounds dwindling, one CEV is having mechanical troubles, and high

winds are blowing the gas away. Another CEV begins enlarging the opening in the middle-front of the building from which the Davidians could escape and a third CEV with a boom but lacking a gas delivery system breaches the rear side of the building to create openings near the gymnasium. At about 11: 00 the chief of operations talks to Clinton, saying everything seems to be going well, and he leaves for a judicial conference in Baltimore at 11: 30 a. m.. The CEV without a gas delivery system breaches the backside of the compound near the warehouse-gymnasium. At 11: 40 a. m., the last ferret rounds are delivered. At 11: 45 a. m., a wall on the right -rear side of the building collapses. At 12: 07 p. m., the Davidians start simultaneous fires at three or more different locations within the compound. An HRT observer reports seeing a male starting a fire in the front of the building. At about 12: 25 p. m. the FBI hears systematic gunfire coming from the compound, leaving several agents the impression that the Davidians are either killing themselves or each other. At 12: 41, fire-fighting efforts begin. HRT agents enter tunnels to search for survivors, especially children.

(WGBH/FRONTLINE). All I can recollect that happened at this point in time is that I could see red, from the fires of course, I lost sight of David and the smoke was so black and thick I could barely breathe. There were endless bodies lying lifeless on the ground, blood splattered on the floor and it crept upwards toward the walls. You could hear and almost feel the bullets piercing the wooden walls and shattering the glass windows, it was as if the devil himself was there breathing down my neck. I couldn't take it any more the smoke and the gas was choking me and my eyes burn, plus the fact I had fallen wounded to a stray bullet. There was so much blood on me I could not tell where I was hit in the leg but I knew I had to get out soon

before I passed out. I saw a door way to the outside so I ran for it. Once outside I was tackled by ATF agents and rushed to a near by hospital, for I was almost dead. I eventually passed out and awoke in a cold steel cage. I knew that the police had placed me in jail, but I was still woozy and couldnt make out what was going on but I could hear voices, police officers talking, almost bragging about how many freaks that they had killed, and then they starting laughing about. A couple of days later the police took me to a courtroom, it seemed to last for days, going over all the information, but I had done nothing wrong. I was having my constitutional rights stripped of me and these people wanted me locked away? I later found out 8 more escaped other than myself, the rest were dead nearly 80 of my family, or the closest thing I had to one, the people I worshiped with and watched their kids grow up were gone. I couldnt ever fathom the thought. Where would I go, what would I do, well lets try prison for now. I was charged with many state and federal arms violations along with murder, using and carrying a firearm during and in direct relation to the commission of an offense, Im still appealing. What I cant understand is we werent to start a war but the FBI and ATF brought this on themselves. They fired the first starting the initial slaughtering of close to eighty good, honest, god fearing men, women and children. No one is putting them on trial, or putting state, government and military officials in jail. When you look at the offenses that we had done and what the government had done. They had hundreds of more offenses then what they were trying to arrest us for. Put they have money, power, and politions on their side thats the American justice system for you. Over the last several months I have compiled several things that the government and the military had done wrong in their actions to bring down the Waco



compound. How the ATF and FBI did things illegally and immorally. Some of the following quotes and things I have heard and have read might disgust you but they are all true, and remember this is your government were talking about.

Much of the time spent in our so-called compound I listened and talked with David. Never once was there ever a talk about a mass suicide or that we would start a fight. I listened to David talk on the phone with a the FBI, one phone call I remember hearing David say and I quote, I will come out and my flock will follow me out, I want you to have a fair chance to judge me. This set my mind at ease, at the time, that no harm would come to any of the children or the families in the compound. Why did they make such a big deal over this, if they wanted to arrest David they could of done it while he was jogging in the mornings then they could of search the compound later. But instead they caused standoff that left over eighty dead. Next I read a lot of things that really disturbed me. The Dallas News quoted former CIA officer Gene Cullen as saying three or four commandos of the Delta Force had told him that they were present, up front and close, during the operation. In a sworn affidavit, a former sergeant first class in the army special forces said a Noncommissioned officer told him that the Delta Forces B squadron had been ordered to take down the branch davidians at Mt. Carmel. Along with them were personnel of the Department of Defense. Thats funny, not only is the Department of Defense forbidden by law from actively participating in police or law enforcement operations. But the fact that if a black ops unit like Delta Force is to be used weather foreign or domestic it has to be signed off by none other than you guessed it, the President. No, Clinton in yet another

scandal? These next few articles have been found in various newspapers that people have sent me while in prison. They basically said whether federal officials used a 1990 change in the Posse Comitatus act allowing the use of military in anti-drug operations to assist the ATF and or the FBI. When the ATF asked the military for help in staging its initial raid of the compound in February. The military said the ATF would have to totally reimburse the army for any assistance because there was no known drug nexus according to Lt. Col. Lon Walker, an army liaison to the ATF. No less than a month later the ATF added drug activity to the matters it was investigating in regard to the Branch Davidians, a move that even congress called deliberately misleading. Along with this wrongful act, its possible that the ATF and FBI violated Texas and Alabama state laws prohibiting the use of National Guard personnel and equipment against the branch davidians. Texas law prohibits the use of the Texas National Guard in civilian law enforcement unless there is a clear drug connection. And Alabama law says its National Guard force has no authority outside state boundaries. So why were they there, National Guard from both states along with their equipment were used at Mt. Carmel. Both states guardsmen, in a congressional report, have been said that their actions were taken without proper authority. If all this is true then the military personnel may have violated the Posse Comitatus Act, which forbids use of military personnel in civilian law enforcement operations except in special cases approved by congress. Along with other offenses like the use of Alabama National Guard, they may also have violated the U. S. Constitution, the congressional report said, although that issue was outside the scope of the congressional investigation. The Constitution specifically prohibits states from entering into treaties without congressional consent. The National

Guard Bureau takes the position that use of the National Guard for law enforcement purposes acrossed state lines is therefore strictly prohibited. Thus it appears that the Alabama National Guard entered and conducted military operations in Texas without the proper authority to do so. Nest I was sent this alarming clip from a newspaper about the bogus drug charges on the Davidians. The Posse Comitatus act does not prohibit use of state guardsmen for local law enforcement, but Texas law does. State law allows use of its National Guards for law enforcement only if there is evidence of drug violations for observations purposes only. Lt. Col. William Pettit, Texas National Guard coordinator of the Texas Counterdrug Task Force, signed off on the request. The ATF fax made no reference to suspected drug violations in the compound, casting Pettits approval in doubt, according to the congressional report. It was written as part of the warrant saying that 11 sect members had some prior drug involvement, some with arrests for possession and trafficking. How ever, when ATF agents were interviewed by Treasury Department officials in a post-siege review, they said that only one Branch Davidian had ever had a drug conviction. And whether drug related or not according to Texas law, the National Guard from another state cannot be used without approval of the Texas governor. Alabama state law says that its National Guard has no authority to conduct operations outside the state lines. These blatant lies just about make me sick along with the fact they none of these allegations went to court. This last newspaper article takes the cake. This is the reason of the fires we didnt start them. A former senior FBI official has said that the agency fired two pyrotechnic tear gas grenades on the last day of the 1993 Branch Davidian siege, a day on which federal authorities have long inisted they used nothing capable of starting a fire. The

<https://assignbuster.com/waco-innocent-essay/>

former official, Danny O. Coulson, said in an interview that two devices known as M651 CS gas grenades were fired from FBI grenade launchers hours before the compound erupted in flames April 1993. He said that they played no role in starting the fire. The federal government has consistently disputed accusations that the FBI started the fire that consumed the Branch Davidians compound with David Koresh and more than 80 followers inside. Government officials have maintained that the FBI used only nonburning devices to insert tear gas into the compound on April 19 because of fears that pyrotechnic tear gas might spark a fire in the flimsy wooden structure. As you can see all of the evidence is here or at least enough to spark an investigation. But I think that the stink start to far up the hill, and nothing will be done to these people so they will just sweep it under the rug and forget about it. Every time someone starts to come forward about accusations like this or other things that the government has covered up they either quit talking or end up dead. I was always told to believe in few things, my god and my country. But yet we live in a society that lets things like this happen. I was so lost for so long, and then I found a place where I belong. We get along like society should with no races, no colors, and no sexes and we lived in perfect harmony with god, and because we were different it scared people and they feel that your doing something wrong. We were not doing anything wrong, we werent building a militia to take over the world, we were not brainwashing little children and we definitely were not using the Waco compound as a drug drop zone for the Mafia. So to make false allegations just to get their way the government was illegally wrong in doing so. How can a group of people be stripped of their constitutional rights by a lynch mob of government and military officials with no conscience of law and get

<https://assignbuster.com/waco-innocent-essay/>

away with it. No investigations, any court case it just seems to disappear and no one wants to bring it up. What I still can't understand is how blatant the law breaking was, and how the government just let it happen. I would think that if the government was going to come after David Koresh and couldn't do it legally that they would have done a better job of hiding their mistakes. But they don't even care that everyone knows of the scandals. I mean it was in every newspaper and on every news show. They are basically sending out a message to the world to say that you can't trust your government, our military or our president. It makes it hard to believe anything that our government says. Even if what they say is right, how do we know they're not lying and covering up something they did wrong. When you have former FBI, CIA, and military officials agreeing with the fact that the use of Alabama and Texas National Guardsmen were in the wrong along with the fact of having sworn statements that Squadron B of the Delta Force had an active role in the siege. Not to mention the fact that there are people quoted as saying that there were gas grenades used that could have easily started fires in the wooden compound it really makes you wonder. But nothing is done about it, even though Congress even agrees that the siege on Waco was done illegally and unprofessionally. This makes me wonder if we are actually free or if we are just another Russia only hearing what the government wants us to hear and only justice being served when they feel it's necessary. So I sit in my cell wondering what is next, should I appeal or try to bring down the government by myself, or even where will I go when this is all over. Maybe I will start up my own religion with people who are fed up with our corrupt government and live together in a small community of our own. Well Don, I was trying to show you how I think some people think

these days, and I hope that you like it. You know it is sad to see that our government is so corrupt and that they can get away with all of the state, and federal law breaking acts that they did. Do not get me wrong, I do not believe that Koresh was right in doing what he did. Yes, he and his followers were wrong in their actions, yes he did deserve to go to jail and the compound should have been seized in order to take out all the contraband. But doing it like a modern day lynch mob with no consideration of the law does not deserve to go unpunished itself. So what do we do, even if we would fire all the people involved in the Waco siege, along with the president, who I know had a part in it, we both know the next people who step up to the positions would lie, cheat, and cover things up to make their way up the political scale. So we just go on, and let people abuse the law and get away with whatever they want. It is like a bad movie with crooked politicians, paid of cops, and corrupt judges. But like all good movies, I am waiting for the good guy to come out and save the world, but I know it will never happen. Maybe I am from the backwoods, but sometimes I just do not understand why people act like this. I believe in hard work, believing in a mans word, and having someone believe in mine. No one believes in these things anymore, it is all about me, what people can do for me, and it does not matter what it takes to get it. Now about the people that lived in the Waco compound, this I do not understand either. I have always believed in freedom to bear arms, freedom of speech, and the freedom of religion. I also believe in God, and if the next man has other views, who am I to push my religion on him. When you start stocking up on weapons and doing illegal things, then it is not safe for people to be in this situation and legal actions must be taken. It is hard to understand why people would act in this way

over religion, even die for it, and holding up their compound under any circumstances. If you think you are safe, since the Waco siege is over you are dead wrong. There are thousands of religious cults around the United States who are involved in everything from molestation, embezzling, drug trafficking, and even murder. They too could start a small vigilante war over their religion. If you do not believe this, take a ride out towards Route 250, we almost had the same thing happen in our own backyard. McCombs  
6Works CitedAs Reno opens new Waco probe, Military defends roll. News Tribune CO.. April 3, 2000.

Meyers Peter. Serendipity. Waco Massacre 1996 April 4, 2000.

The Rules of Engagement. Waco: The Rules of Engagement 1996 April 1, 2000.

Thibodeau, David and Leon Whiteson. A Place Called Waco. Public Affairs Books April 2, 2000.

Reavis, Dick J.. The Ashes of Waco. The Ashes of Waco April, 1998 April 4, 2000.