

The Weaver Atrocity

Ten Years Later

It's fashionable these days to commemorate certain dates that crop up as anniversaries of famous – or infamous – events. Oftentimes, it's the federal government that leads the observances; usually, this is to remind us of terrible incidents that have occurred in the past, the repetition of which they will surely protect us from.

I doubt, though, that the Feds – specifically, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) and the FBI – will want to do much “commemorating” this month.

It was 10 years ago late this August when a horrifying drama played out in the beautiful mountains of Northern Idaho and, for many, made time stand still for nearly two weeks. Those of us who were there in observance or protest (or both) will never forget the incredible force arrayed by the U.S. government against an American family. We'll never forget the evening that former Green Beret Colonel “Bo” Gritz broke the sickening news to us that Vicki Weaver had been killed by an FBI sharpshooter. We'll never forget many things about that time too numerous to mention. Some you already know about; some you don't (though below I feel compelled to tell one sad story).

Months after the siege of Randy Weaver's family had ended, I was privileged to be able to sit in a Boise, Idaho, courtroom for much of the trial of Weaver and his friend Kevin Harris. A small measure of justice was obtained for those men by an outstanding effort on the part of their lawyers, led by Wyoming's Gerry Spence and previously underrated Boise criminal attorney, David Nevin. Just as important, a courageous jury of their peers overcame some of the most intense pressure surrounding any trial in history, and denied the government any vindication for their terrible acts.

Later, of course, the sanctimonious U.S. Senate got into the act (though to be

fair, some individual members were sincere in their efforts to want to get to the bottom of what came to be known as “Ruby Ridge”). After some hand-wringing and posturing, most members agreed that the goons they appropriate money for each year had blown a gasket. During the whole process, the government even conferred cash settlements on the Weaver family; though no amount of money can bring back Vicki and Samuel Weaver.

Today, Randy Weaver and his new wife live in Iowa. Oldest daughter Sarah and her husband still live in the Pacific Northwest and, a bit over a year ago, welcomed their own son into the world. Together with surviving daughters Rachel and Elisheba (the latter of whom was held in her Mother's arms at the moment the dastardly sniper struck his target) they have gone on with life as best they can. As has the killer Lon Horiuchi of the FBI's so-called Hostage Rescue Team who – rather than suffering from his act – was instead decorated.

Remembering Lorenz Caduff

Most Americans – particularly informed patriots such as those of you reading this magazine – know that three people lost their lives at Ruby Ridge. In addition to Vicki and Sammy Weaver, Deputy U.S. Marshal William Degan was killed; he most likely lost his life to an errant bullet from one of his fellow government employees. However, unless you happened to read one of my many articles at the time in *The Jubilee* newspaper, you may not know that a fourth life was lost due to the attack on the Weaver family.

That life belonged to a man by the name of Lorenz Caduff. And to this day, the loss of that life makes me equally ashamed of our government's actions as did the loss of the other three.

Lorenz Caduff had been in the United States mere weeks when Hell on Earth



Randy Weaver is captured on film with a smirk on his face with freedom fighter June Wisniewski in this 1996 photo.

came to Naples, Idaho. Tired of intrusive government regulation, high taxes and all the rest even in Switzerland (from whence he hailed), Lorenz decided it was time to move with his wife and young child to the United States; a land, he felt, that was the freest on Earth. And Lorenz didn't want to settle just anywhere. He wanted to find a place whose scenery was as beautiful as that which he left behind, and whose people, relatively speaking, were independent-minded and who believed in “live and let live.” He could hardly have been faulted for choosing Northern Idaho as his family's new home.

Specifically, he became the new owner and proprietor of the Deep Creek Inn near the small town of Naples, just off State Route 95, the main north/south corridor between (at that point) Sandpoint and Bonners Ferry. More specifically, the business (comprised of a cozy bar, above-average restaurant and some cabins) was located a mere half a mile from the bridge crossing Deep Creek; the bridge which was soon to be road-blocked by hundreds of federal

agents as they laid siege to the Weavers.

Of course, we all met quite by accident as a result of the Feds' actions. Caduff was stunned by the events, as were all of us. During some 11 days, those of us keeping vigil frequented the Deep Creek Inn; many of us ate there, drank there, some slept there. Lorenz, under the circumstances, was a cheerful, gregarious host – to everyone except government agents, that is, who quickly realized they were not welcome.

On more than one occasion, Lorenz would personally come down to the bridge with pots of coffee for the many of us there. If anyone needed anything – a phone, fax machine, shower, whatever – it was available to them. Far from being a convenient way to woo business from people he wouldn't see if not for the unfolding tragedy, Caduff's concern and good will were heartfelt. He quickly endeared himself to many, including to me.

As time went on and the events sank in, however, Caduff became increasingly troubled. The dreamland he'd sought in a "free country" had been shattered. In addition, those claiming to stand up for "human rights" badgered Caduff and his family with never-ending threats and harassment for committing the terrible crime of serving those of us who supported the Weavers and were, by extension, "haters." These and many related events too numerous to mention drove Lorenz Caduff into a deep depression; so deep that he took his own life.

These days, illegal aliens from Mexico, cheap technology industry laborers from India and would-be terrorists from the Middle East are all welcomed with open arms by the same government who destroyed the hopes and life of this one European-born immigrant. I hope that, somewhere, there are officials with enough conscience to still be as troubled by the welcome they gave this man as I am. Further, I hope that some of the sanctimonious do-gooders supposedly standing up for human rights in northern Idaho are proud of how *their hatred* helped drive a man to suicide; a kind, giving man who thought he would enjoy the American Dream.

Editor's Note: Depending upon the cooperation we are able to get from the Weaver family, we hope to bring our readers a look at the Weaver family 10 years later, with current photos and statements from the family.