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### Federal Bureau of Investigation

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

San Antonio, Texas 78296

February 23, 1993

# VERNON HOWELL, ALSO KNOWN AS (AKA) DAVID KORESH INVOLUNTARY SERVITUDE AND SLAVERY

Davidian

VERNON HOWELL is the present leader and prophet of an organization known as the Branch Dividend, 7th Day Adventists, located at Mount (Mt) Carmel, near Waco, Texas. HOWELL also uses the name DAVID KORESH and is known by that name by the individuals living at Mt. Carmel. From the mid-1950's through 1978, the group was headed by an individual by the name of BENJAMIN RHODEN and his wife, LOIS. In 1978, RHODEN died and his wife was the sole leader until 1986. In 1986, LOIS RHODEN passed away and her son, GEORGE RHODEN, and VERNON HOWELL became the coleaders of the organization.

Shortly after GEORGE RHODEN and HOWELL were appointed as the leaders, HOWELL was accused of raping RHODEN's mother. RHODEN dismissed VERNON HOWELL and several of his followers and renamed the land the organization was living on as Rhodenville. HOWELL and several of the residents that were dismissed, attempted to reclaim their land and were involved in a shoot-out with the McLennan County Sheriff's Office. Presently, GEORGE RHODEN is incarcerated for murder and HOWELL is the sole leader at Mt. Carmel.

Allegations were received by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the Spring of 1992, that HOWELL (also known as DAVID KORESH) may have been planning a mass suicide event at Mt. Carmel. Also, allegations were received that HoWELL may be holding members of the Sect under conditions which may constitute violations of the Federal laws pertaining to involuntary servitude and slavery.

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency: it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

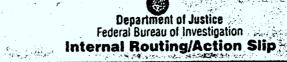
### VERNON HOWELL

On March 17, 1992, a complaint was received by the Office of the United States Representative FRED UPTON, St. Joseph, Michigan. The complaint alleged allegations similar to those previously received as well as child molestation charges regarding HOWELL. Due to the allegations made, several other agencies were advised by the FBI of the status at Mt. Carmel. These agencies included the Department of Human Services, Child Protective Services, Department of Public Safety Intelligence Division, Internal Revenue Service, McLennan County Sheriff Office, and the Department of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms

Investigative reports were received from Child Protective Services, reporting the results of unannounced visits and interviews at the Mt. Carmel compound. Investigation continued during the time frame for which the mass suicide was to take place, during the Spring of 1992. To date, no further information has been developed by the San Antonio Division of the FBI to substantiate the accuracy of the reports concerning any potential acts of violence/self-destruction by members and/or leaders of this religious sect. Those law enforcement agencies also notified of the circumstances involving Mt. Carmel have not filed charges as of February 1993. Close liaison is maintained by the FBI with each affected agency to ensure close monitoring of this situation as it may pertain to any potential federal violations of the law.

Due to the receipt of a duplicate letter forwarded to Congressman CHET EDWARDS Office, Waco, Texas, which was previously in the possession of Congressman FRED UPTON, St. Joseph, Michigan, all appropriate local and federal law enforcement agencies have been re-notified.

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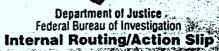




## Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigation Internal Routing/Action Slip

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# Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts

Subject: <u>DAVID KORESH / BEFORE WACO</u>

File Number: 63-0-113357X, X1, X2



Federal Bureau of Investigation

DONALD W. RIEGLE, JR.

United States Senates

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2201

COMMITTEES:

BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS: Chairme FINANCE

BUDGET

April 21, 1992

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Congressional Affairs Office
10th and Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20535
Attention:

Dear Ms

MISCELLANEOUS NON-TUB

I am writing you on behalf of my constituent,

has contacted my office with his concerns regarding the activities of a religious cult in Texas known as the activities of a religious cultivation and a religious cultivation an

as well as a statement given by

Would you please give this matter your actention and consideration and provide my regional office listed below with your findings.

Thank you for your prompt assistance in this matter

ENCLOSURE

Sincerely,

Mu V

Lansing, MI 48933

Final Copy to Fore Richards

MICHIGAN REGIONAL OFFICES

WAYNE-MONROE

1155 Browery Park Sive
Suite 343
Detroit, MI 48207

SOUTHEASTERN Century Center Bidg., 3d Floor 30800 Van Dyte Warren, MI 48093

EASTERN STATES
Suite 910 Miles
352 S. Seginow Street
First, MI 48502

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### FACSIMILE COVER SHEET

OFFICE OF UNITED STATES
SENATOR DONALD W. RIEGLE, JR.
109 WEST MICHIGAN AVENUE, SUITE 705
LANSING, MICHIGAN 48933



RE: Allegation ngainst religious culture

NUMBER OF PAGES (including cover sheet):

COMMENTS/INSTRUCTIONS:

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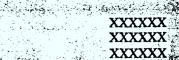
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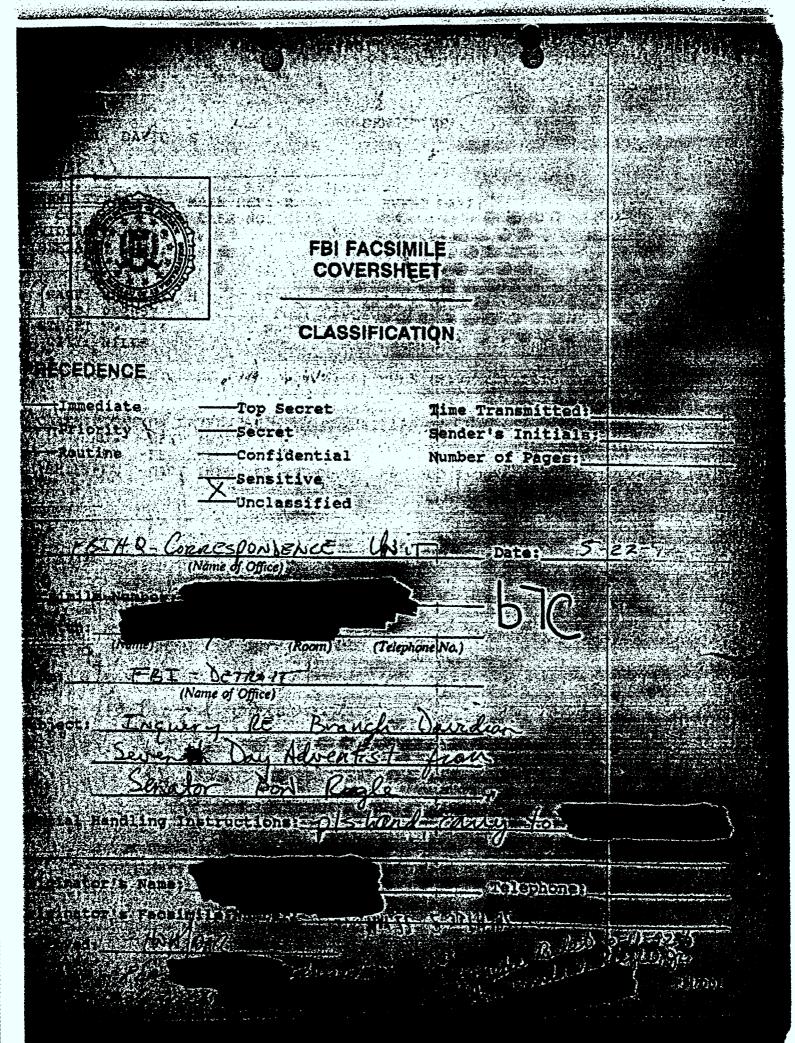
Results of this investigation, under San Antonio file \$163C-SA-37281 (initial allegation received from authorities in Australia), will be furnished to the Bureau upon completion.



# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

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The second secon June 10, 1992 Honorable Donald W. Riegle, Jr. United States Senator
705 Washington Square Building 109 West Michigan Avenue Lansing, Michigan 48933 MISCELLHIEOUS, NON MOTERIES Dear Senator Riegle: This is in further response to your April 2112 Communication on behalf of Mr. has contacted you regarding the Granch Davidian Seventh Day.
Adventists, a group he described as being a religious cult We certainly appreciate Mr. concern in furnishing a copy of the statement of a former members of this group. concern in furnishing you We have furnished this information to our San Antonio Office for appropriate law enforcement attention. FBI and Department of Justice policy precludes confirming or denying the existence of an investigation; therefore we will not be table to furnish reports on what action we might take in this matter, Thank you for your interest, and please assure that this matter will receive appropriate attention Sincerely yours, Danny, O. Coulson Deputy Assistant Director Griminal) Trues significant by significant - Detroit - Enclosures (6) Refac 5/22/92 from PLA to OPA, San Antonio (163C-SA-3728) 7 100=0=16869) = 1510 to sures (6) Reurairtel 5/12/92 and Bucal 6/5/92 from OPA, to PLA Mr. Coulson (Room 5214) - Mr. - Congressional Affairs Office SEE NOTE PAGE TWO

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Honorable Donald W. Riegle, Jr.

NOTE: Senator Riegle wrote on behalf of had sent him a copy of a statement made by former member of the BRANCH DAVIDIAN SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS recently won a child custody battle based on his former wife exposing his 11-year-old daughter to the practices of the ADVENTISTS. He stated he was concerned for the other children the group because he had heard that the group seleader VERNON HOWELL, aka DAVIDAKORESH, had announced a plant for mass self-destruction. He also indicated that he had reported this to the FBI but that "they have offered no confirmation of action." By airtel dated 5/12/92, San Antonio advised that it is currently. investigating the possibility that HOWELL may be planning a mass murder-suicide event. Also, allegations have been received that HOWELL has been holding members of the sect under conditions which may constitute violations of Federal laws pertaining to involuntary servitude or slavery. San Antonio sinvestigation is based upon a complaint received from CongressmantFred Upton, and the allegations furnished in Senator Riegle 3 communication are essentially the same as those provided by congressman Upton: Based on available information Bufiles contain no information Detroit indices regarding were also searched, and only two 502 references were found on a vernon w. Howell; however, they had been destroyed. Neither Detrois nor San Antonio has any record of having been contacted by Interim reply sent by CAO 4/29/92 Final CID. reply discussed with SSA

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