



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on March 23, 2020

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## Suicide or Deep State Murder?

The coroner's office of the Amador County Sheriff's Department in California has done a near-180-degree turnaround on the death of Department of Homeland Security whistleblower Philip Haney. After initially stating Haney's death appeared to be "self-inflicted," the department has subsequently stated that news reports attributing his death to suicide were dispensing "misinformation." It said further that the sheriff's office is "currently in the beginning phase of our investigation and any final determination as to the cause and manner of Mr. Haney's death would be extremely premature and inappropriate."



Haney was found dead of a gunshot wound on the morning of Friday, February 21, in California. The author of *See Something, Say Nothing: A Homeland Security Officer Exposes the Government's Submission to Jihad*, Haney was an outspoken critic of the Obama administration's systematic destruction of crucial data in the DHS database concerning Islamist terrorist organizations and hundreds of individuals in the United States involved in Islamic radicalism. This scrubbing of the data, he charged, greatly crippled the ability of intelligence and law enforcement to protect America, denying them information that "could have prevented subsequent domestic Islamist attacks." Haney, a founding member of the Department of Homeland Security following the 9/11 terror attacks, testified before the U.S. Senate, and appeared on numerous radio, television, and Internet programs.

Relatives, friends, and colleagues were quick to voice doubt about the initial finding that the cause of Haney's death was a "self-inflicted" gunshot, and began posting social-media statements challenging the rush to designate his death as a suicide. This writer reached out to a number of friends and colleagues who had worked with him and spoken with him recently, including Trevor Loudon, Brannon Howse, Representative Matt Shea, Clare Lopez, Kip Webster, and others. The key points that were reiterated by one person after another were that:

- 1) Phil Haney was a devout Christian who considered suicide a sin, and therefore forbidden;
- 2) He was happy and upbeat, making plans for his forthcoming book and his book-speaking tours;
- 3) After grieving for his wife, who died of cancer, he had found love again and was looking forward to an upcoming marriage to his fiancée;
- 4) He had stated to many people that if he is ever found dead of a supposed "suicide" to "never believe it for a minute";
- 5) He was looking forward to returning to work in the DHS under President Trump;
- 6) He said he had massive, digitally archived files from DHS with damning evidence;



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7) He stated that his new book would be naming names and would blow the lid off the ongoing corruption in the DHS and the intelligence community; and,

8) There are many Deep State operatives of the “DC swamp” — both active and retired — who would have motive for stopping him.

One of the first persons *The New American* talked to about Haney’s death is Brannon Howse, one of Haney’s closest friends and colleagues. Haney had appeared as a guest on Howse’s radio and television programs and conferences many times and had launched his own program, *National Security Meltdown*, on Howse’s World View Weekend TV (WVWTV). According to Howse, Haney was planning to use *National Security Meltdown* as the title for his new book. On February 24, Howse posted clips of Haney from his documentary *Sabotage*, and asked in the title of the posting, “Is This Why Deep State Was Afraid of Phil Haney?”

When this writer asked Howse if he believed that Phil Haney had committed suicide, he immediately responded, “Nobody that knows him believes it.”

“When I talked to him two weeks ago he was excited, happy,” said Howse. “He was happy about his new fiancée, his upcoming wedding, he was taking bookings for speaking engagements, he was looking forward to the release of his book, to filming more TV shows, and to a planned trip to Israel. This was not a man contemplating suicide. And he had told me, as he had told others, that if he were ever murdered it would be made to look like a suicide.”

Howse says he was tipped off about the death by a mutual friend, Reverend Brandon Halthaus, Haney’s pastor, who was one of the first to know that Haney had died. Howse immediately called the Amador County Sheriff’s Department Friday evening, before any news accounts had been published. “I asked them, ‘Do you know who this man [Haney] is?’” he recounted. “I told them, ‘He has many friends and enemies in high places and has received many threats. If you put it out that this is a suicide, you better be able to prove it because he has many friends in government, in intelligence, in law enforcement and many friends with media platforms that are going to be all over this.’ And I strongly emphasized that they should not rush to label this a suicide before proper forensics had been done.”

*Photo: AP Images*

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What was the response? The department spokesman said they were currently working on a statement and curtly dismissed Howse’s concerns with the comment, “We’re professionals!” Howse requested that the department send him an e-mail of any press statement concerning Haney’s death as soon as one was available. “Within an hour they e-mailed me the press release stating it appeared to be a ‘self-inflicted gunshot wound,’ which to me says suicide, since it is even more unlikely that he would have accidentally shot himself.”

Below is the full text of the Amador County Sheriff-Coroner Office’s statement of Friday, February 21 (which is no longer on the county’s website):

On February 21, 2020 at approximately 1012 hours, deputies and detectives responded to the area of Highway 124 and Highway 16 in Plymouth to the report of a male subject on the ground with a gunshot wound. Upon their arrival, they located and identified 66 year old Philip Haney, who was deceased and appeared to have suffered a single, self-inflicted gunshot wound. A firearm was



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located next to Haney and his vehicle. This investigation is active and ongoing. No further details will be released at this time.

However, after a weekend of being besieged by members of the public and alternative media journalists, the coroner's office changed its tune. On Monday, February 24, Amador County Sheriff Martin A. Ryan, who also doubles as coroner, issued a new press release indicating that Haney's death is not now an open-and-shut "self-inflicted" case, but is an investigation that "is still active and will be ongoing." The press statement says Haney was found deceased "in a park and ride open area adjacent to State Highway 16 near State Highway 124 ... less than three miles from where he was living," in a Plymouth, California, RV park.

"Unfortunately, there was misinformation immediately being put out that we have determined Mr. Haney's death to be a suicide. That is not the case," Ryan's statement says. According to the release, a forensic autopsy will be performed by pathologists from the Sacramento County Coroner's Office, and the FBI has been asked to assist. "We are currently in possession of his vehicle, the firearm located at the scene, and his RV and we will be requesting evidence processing assistance from the FBI on those items as well," the press release states. "No determination will be made until all evidence is examined and analyzed," it continues.

In a second interview subsequent to the revised release, Brannon Howse told The New American that this abrupt about-face by the sheriff-coroner was almost certainly the result of public pressure, as well as "high-level pressure" from a number of people in government who recognized Haney's value to national security. "What was so incredible," he says, "was that he says 'unfortunately, there was misinformation,' as if someone other than he had put it out! If there was misinformation, it's because the sheriff-coroner's office put it out!"

Author-researcher and national security expert Trevor Loudon had worked closely with Phil Haney, and featured interviews with Haney in his documentary *The Enemies Within*. While saying he doesn't categorically reject the suicide verdict as a possibility, Loudon (who has written articles for this magazine) told The New American that there are several factors that are hard to overcome in order to support that finding in Haney's case: "First of all, he's a very devout Christian and would know that suicide is wrong; secondly, he told many people that if he ever turns up dead, don't believe it's a 'suicide'; third, when I talked with him a month ago, he was happy and upbeat, which is what everyone else close to him reports; and fourth, he was an expert in firearms, making it highly unlikely he would have accidentally shot himself; and fifth, if he wanted to commit suicide, it's unlikely he would have shot himself in the chest."

Washington State Representative Matt Shea, who hosts a radio show on the American Christian Network out of Spokane, had featured Haney as a guest and was scheduling a speaking tour of the Pacific Northwest with Haney for this coming April. "I had him on my program by phone three weeks ago," he told The New American. "After the show, we prayed together and he was very happy, looking forward to getting married, looking forward to our 'Reach Out Northwest' speaking tour together.... I can't believe that he would ever commit suicide."

Kip Webster, a professional field coordinator for The John Birch Society, sponsored Haney for speaking engagements in 2018 in Connecticut and New Jersey. He told this writer that Haney, a member of the Society, was "a very impressive man, extremely intelligent and obviously very brave," because he not



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only put his career on the line but also risked his life with the terrorists and high-level government types he was exposing. “We played phone tag a couple weeks ago but didn’t connect,” he said. “But I had no indication he was depressed, suicidal, or anything out of the ordinary.”

This seems to be the response from virtually everybody who knew him, including members of his family. “No one in the family believes this is a suicide,” Judith Haney, Phil’s stepmother, told True Pundit. “I mean he was enjoying doing talk radio and was working on another book and was excited about that,” she said. “With his history with the government and everything, it is very, very suspicious but with this kind of situation we realize we may never know the truth about what happened. That’s something we all know and live with but it is still early.”

Many others who knew Haney have weighed in on the matter to express suspicion or disbelief concerning the instant suicide verdict, including:

- Leo Hohmann, journalist, author, blogger;
- Sara A. Carter, investigative journalist, Fox News commentator;
- Paul Sperry, investigative journalist, author of *Infiltration*;
- Clare Lopez, former CIA operations officer;
- Brigitte Gabriel, survivor of terrorism, Islamic terrorism expert;
- David Baldwin, former FBI agent;
- John Guandolo, author, speaker, former FBI counterterrorism expert;
- Jan Markell, author, radio show host, speaker;
- Shahram Hadian, Christian pastor, former Muslim, former police officer;
- Pastor Greg Young, radio show host; and
- Tom Trento, radio talk-show host.

### **Where’s Phil Haney’s Data?**

Of great concern to many of Haney’s friends and admirers is the fate of his vast trove of data, as well as the status of his much-anticipated forthcoming book. On February 22, Kerry Pickett of the *Washington Examiner* reported that Haney had sent the *Examiner* a text on November 11, 2019 concerning plans for his new book and speaking tours in the months ahead. “I have a severely hyper-organized archive of everything that’s happened since *See Something, Say Nothing* (SSSN) was published in May of 2016,” Haney’s text said. “The *National Security Meltdown* sequel will pick up right where SSSN left off. My intention is to have it ready by early-to mid-Spring of 2020 (just before the political sound wave hits), then ride that wave all the way to the Nov. elections.”

Representative Steve King (R-Iowa) made reference to Haney’s archive “insurance” in a February 23 tweet, in which he also discounted the early reports of suicide: “Phil Haney was a friend & patriot. He was a target because of all he knew of Islamic terrorist coverups. He insured his life by archiving data that incriminated the highest levels of the Obama administration. Phil Haney didn’t kill himself. RIP, Phil.”

Several of Haney’s friends told this reporter they are confident that he got copies of his documents and



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hard drives to key members of Congress and other friends who will make sure that his information will be put to good use. However, the death of Phil Haney leaves a tragic hole that will be difficult to fill in any future attempts to bring the criminals of the Deep State to justice.

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