

## **Suspect's Attorneys Ask To Be Removed**

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OKLAHOMA CITY -- Citing the "enormous impact" of the Oklahoma City explosion on their personal lives, the two attorneys appointed to represent the man charged in the bombing have asked to be dismissed from the case

John W. Coyle III and Susan M. Otto, who were appointed to represent Timothy James McVeigh, filed motions Monday asking a federal judge to release them from the case and to move future court proceedings outside the state of Oklahoma.

"The gravity and nature of the crime is unsurpassed. The extent of the pretrial publicity only days after the crime is unparalleled in Oklahoma history and rivals any other crime committed in the United States except, perhaps, the assassination of President Kennedy," Coyle and Otto say in a brief filed in U.S. District Court.

Because the bombing of the federal building destroyed or damaged so many federal facilities in the area, the brief says, "Every federal judicial officer in the Western District of Oklahoma has been affected by these events. Most of the judicial officers were witnesses to the event."

Indeed, both Coyle and Otto were within two blocks of the federal building at the time of the bombing. Coyle, who has been a private criminal defense attorney in Oklahoma City for 21 years, was at a nearby courthouse at the time and had friends killed and injured by the bombing.

Otto, a federal public defender, was in her office at the Old Post Office less than a block from the federal building when the bomb went off, seriously damaging her offices.

Otto described the bombing as "a terrifying experience" and said the impact on her personal and professional life is "inestimable."

To ensure that McVeigh receives a fair trial, both attorneys said he must be represented by attorneys who are not directly affected by the bombing.

In an interview Monday afternoon, Coyle said a close friend, whom he met in law school more than 20 years ago, was killed in the bombing. He also said he fears for his family's safety.

"Everyone in Oklahoma was fouched personally by this tragedy in some way," Coyle said. "I'm very concerned about objectivity and fairness to someone accused."