

DEA Head 'Amazed' Other Bomb Suspect Is Still Free

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The head of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency said Thursday that he is surprised investigators have not yet arrested a second suspect in the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building.

Five DEA employees were killed in the April 19 explosion.

"I'm amazed that they haven't been able to put that together yet," said Thomas A. Constantine, before addressing the Buffalo State College Criminal Justice Alumni spring awards banquet in the Buffalo Hilton.

Constantine, a Buffalo native who has headed the federal anti-drug agency since last year and who formerly served as superintendent of the New York State Police, noted the reward for suspects in the bombing stands at \$2 million and that investigators have received thousands of leads. The reward includes \$250,000 from his agency.

So far, only Timothy J. McVeigh, a former Pendleton resident, has been charged with direct involvement in the blast.

Constantine said eight special agents and 10 other DEA employees worked out of the Oklahoma City office and that he has been to four of the five funerals for DEA personnel over the last few weeks.

"I flew out there after the bombing and stayed for 2 1/2 days with the families," he said, adding that the DEA has a special trauma program to help employees' families deal with the loss.

"It's just unbelievable, the physical damage, and it's touched so many lives," he said.

Constantine was head of the State Police when the World Trade Center in New York City was rocked by a terrorist bomb. He said improving building security may help prevent future terrorist attacks, but the most important defense against such acts is alert citizens.

"Citizens who see something unusual would probably do good to call law enforcement," said Constantine, noting that the purchase of a large amount of ammonium nitrate, a fertilizer that investigators believe was a major component of the Oklahoma City truck bomb, should have raised eyebrows.

During the banquet, Samuel M. Palmiere, Town of Tonawanda police chief, accepted the group's Outstanding Professional Award.

Also, Cheektowaga Police Officer Thomas G. Dryja received the Outstanding Buffalo State College Graduate Award and John Babi, deputy chief of U.S. Probation Services for Western New York, won the Outstanding Educator in Criminal Award.