

# MCVEIGH DEFENSE TEAM INSPECTS BOMBED BUILDING



News Wire

The Buffalo News (Buffalo, NY)

May 21, 1995 | KELLY KURT - Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY -- Wearing gray hard hats, an explosives expert and a camera crew hired by the defense inspected the ruins of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building on Saturday, occasionally peering into the rubble through gaping holes in the walls.

Stephen Jones, lawyer for bombing suspect Timothy J. McVeigh, said the inspection was "mainly for preservation and understanding the dynamics of the bomb."

"I doubt there's anything left in the building of evidentiary value," he said. "All we can get from this is to understand the physics of the explosion: Where did it come from? How far did the damage go?"

An agreement with federal prosecutors gave Jones until midnight today to complete his investigation of the April 19 blast site.

He said the crew, which also included an architect, would spend a few hours taking pictures. The site is to be demolished early Tuesday with a dynamite blast. The rubble pile where the bodies of Christy Rosas, 22, and Virginia Thompson, 56, are believed to be entombed has been marked in orange paint.

Firefighters will try to recover the bodies after the implosion.

McVeigh, 27, a native of Pendleton, and an Army friend, Terry Nichols, 40, of Herington, Kan., are the only two people charged in the fuel-and-fertilizer bomb blast that killed 167 people and injured hundreds more.

People toting children, dogs and video cameras continued to swarm the site Saturday. Many said they came to get a glimpse of the building before it is demolished.

In other developments:

An FBI spokesman denied a report in Saturday's Fort Worth Star-Telegram quoting unnamed law enforcement sources as saying John Doe No. 2 has been identified and eliminated as a suspect.

The officials told the newspaper that authorities do not believe the man was involved in the bombing or in renting the truck that was used to transport the explosives.

The man did rent a truck about the same time that McVeigh did and was traced through the truck rental agency, sources told the Star-Telegram. "The person in the composite was an erroneous lead," one official told the newspaper.

Dan Vogel, a FBI spokesman in Oklahoma City, said the report was incorrect. He declined to comment further.

A motel manager and a housekeeper told the FBI that McVeigh was in St. George, Utah, seven weeks before the blast, the Spectrum newspaper reported in a copyright story Saturday.

Dixie Palm Motel manager Norma Phillips and housekeeper Ann Mitchell were quoted as saying that McVeigh stayed at the downtown motel Feb. 25 and 26. Ms. Phillips said she was questioned by the FBI on Thursday, but she declined to offer further details of the investigation, citing her fears that McVeigh may have friends in the area.

Calls to the motel Saturday afternoon went unanswered.

Dale Wyss, special agent with the Salt Lake City FBI office, would neither confirm nor deny the report.

The weekend McVeigh purportedly stayed in St. George coincided with the city's hosting of the "Crossroads of the West" gun show. McVeigh reportedly sold firearms and frequented such shows.

Johnny Bangerter, leader of the local white supremacist "Army of Israel" group, said he had heard rumors from undisclosed sources that McVeigh had been in St. George.

But Bangerter, who said he had refused to meet with FBI agents, believes the story is being manufactured by the federal agency to link his group to the bombing.

Bangerter made headlines last month when he publicly threatened U.S. Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, on a Salt Lake City television station.

Bangerter, who was upset with Hatch's support for anti-domestic terrorism legislation, later retracted his statements.