

# Witness Says He May Be Suspect in Bombing

Gun enthusiast, an associate of Fortier and McVeigh, cites his short appearance before federal grand jury. He testified less than five minutes.

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July 07, 1995 | Richard A. Serrano | Times Staff Writer

OKLAHOMA CITY — A close associate of two of the men implicated in the Oklahoma City bombing said after a short appearance before a federal grand jury Thursday that he believes he has become a target of the government investigation.

Jim Rosencrans, a 29-year-old gun enthusiast from Kingman, Ariz., said that he testified for less than five minutes before the grand jury investigating the April 19 blast that killed 168 people at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

Rosencrans, a lifelong resident of Kingman, Ariz., lived next door to Michael Fortier, who is a former Army buddy of chief suspect Timothy J. McVeigh. He came to know McVeigh, who last fall was living with Fortier in the trailer park where Rosencrans also lived and working with him at a Kingman hardware store.

McVeigh is now in a federal prison in El Reno, Okla., charged in the bombing. Fortier is believed to be in federal custody as he and government agents attempt to work out a plea agreement for his testimony against McVeigh and Terry L. Nichols, who also has been charged in the bomb blast.

Rosencrans said that he believes the brevity of his appearance indicates the FBI now considers him a suspect—even though he says that he came to Oklahoma City to help the government's investigation.

"I think I'm a suspect now," Rosencrans said in the interview Thursday evening at the Oklahoma City airport as he waited for a flight to return home to Kingman. He wore a red "No Fear" T-shirt and a black Harley-Davidson cap and seemed nervous, rubbing his palms and staring at the floor.

"They asked a couple of questions and that was about it," he said. "I'm confused about this whole damn thing. I haven't figured out nothing."

But he added: "I feel like they're trying to rile up anybody they can. It's like a witch hunt. It's a scary thought."

Federal sources familiar with similar situations said that Rosencrans could have been advised before the grand jury that he is now a "target" of the investigation. Or, the sources said, the prosecutors could have learned new information from his interview on Wednesday and decided to limit his grand jury appearance to an introduction, intending to recall at a later time.

Rosencrans said that two FBI agents and two federal prosecutors interrogated him for four hours Wednesday at the U.S. Attorney's Office here about his relationship with Fortier and McVeigh.