

# **Murrah Film Provokes New Call for Investigation**

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The McCurtain Gazette has obtained film footage, taken the afternoon of the April 19 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City, that clearly depicts federal agents recovering weapons and ordnance from the "pit area" of the stricken building.

Taken by a member of the Oklahoma County Sheriffs Department, the videotape buttresses earlier reports that an arsenal room, maintained by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) on the ninth floor of the building, ruptured and spilled its contents into the "pit area."

The video film clearly shows members of the ATF, the FBI and the Oklahoma City Fire Department removing weapons and ordnance from the portion of the building where most of the death and destruction occurred.

After months of speculation, the startling evidence of the videotape may be the first concrete link between an extraordinary number of casualties in the area and what earlier Gazette witnesses asserted were illegally stored explosives by federal agencies.

While the FBI and ATF have steadfastly maintained there was only one explosion at the Murrah Building (from a fuel and fertilizer mix in a rental truck parked outside the building), the McCurtain Gazette revealed in an exclusive, copyrighted story on May 4 that seismographic records of the Oklahoma Geological Survey showed a second explosion.

Dr. Raymon L. Brown, a geophysicist trained at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), one of the nation's leading universities, had characterized the second explosion in that May 4 story as being "of equal, if not greater, intensity than the first."

## **State Probe Called For**

In response to the new videotape evidence, state Rep. Charles Key, R-Oklahoma City, renewed his call for an independent state investigation — after an earlier attempt had been pooh-poohed by Gov. Frank Keating and legislative leaders. Said Key Saturday:

"This film establishes two important facts: First, it is no longer idle speculation that federal law enforcement was maintaining an arsenal room in the Murrah Building the day of the explosion.

"And second: It is clear from viewing the videotape that an arsenal was ruptured in an area of the Murrah Building where the experts say a fertilizer bomb could not have inflicted such tremendous damage and death.

"I think from these simple observations it is clear that this matter needs closer examination in order to determine exactly who killed whom that terrible day."

### Illegally Stored Explosives?

Rep. Key's remarks doubting the single explosion theory also stemmed from sources quoted May 5 by the Gazette and a visit to survivors of the bombing by a retired Air Force general, who said building damage was inconsistent with a single bomb outside the structure.

Such doubts had first been voiced by an Idabel man who formerly was demolitions expert with the U.S. Army. He speculated that the second explosion had probably been caused by C-4, a military grade "plastique" that is commonly used by law enforcement officers to blow open doors in raids.

While C-4 can be thrown against a wall and not explode, and while it normally takes a special fuse to set it off, the Idabel resident (who spoke on condition of anonymity) said it could be set off by pressure of up to 3,-500 pounds per square inch — an event that probably occurred, he said, when the building "pancaked" after the initial explosion.

The ex-sergeant's speculation gained new credibility in subsequent Gazette stories with revelations by witnesses of finding explosive materials in the rubble of the Murrah Building.

Capt. Dick Miller of the Oklahoma City Fire Marshal's Office confirmed that a box marked high explosives was recovered from the pit area shortly after the initial blast. He said it was removed by a bomb squad for detonation. Miller said the 2-ft. X 2-ft. box was "definitely high explosives."

Later, Miller confirmed to a source for the Gazette that the box in question was "blasting caps" — the type used for C-4. Miller backed away from those comments later, saying the ATF told him the box was only a "training device."

Additionally, the Gazette quoted witnesses earlier who told of the FBI and ATF agents removing weapons and explosives from a ruptured vault

### Happened Before, Ex-ATF Agent Says

Jack Barnett, acting agent in charge of the ATF office in Oklahoma City, asserts, "We didn't have any ordnance in that building. We might have had rifles or shotguns or pistols, but if we did they were inoperable or for display only."

Les Martz of the regional Dallas office of the ATF also denied the existence of any explosives in the Murrah Building. But it has happened before, says an ex- ATF agent, and it wouldn't surprise him if the same thing happened in Oklahoma City.

Rick Sherrow, a former ATF officer from Mesa, Arizona, says improperly stored explosives in public buildings have accidentally detonated before — even in the nation's capital.

That incident occurred in 1987 when a stockpile of Soviet-manufactured rocket fuses exploded during a fire at FBI headquarters in Washington D.C.

Sherrow characterized it as "just another typically stupid mistake by the FBI." That explosion set in motion an investigation by the ATF, which discovered that storing explosives in public buildings — though technically illegal — was not unusual.

"C-4 and other explosives are to be stored in special bunkers — safely away from populated areas," he said. As a result of the ATF investigation, all federal agencies were ordered to stop such practices and comply with policy.

"I find it hard to believe that something like this could happen — the field offices have been explicitly warned against any such dangerous and illegal practices," Sherrow said. But, added the ex-ATF agent: "This incident in Oklahoma City certainly deserves close scrutiny by Congress in order to determine if federal law enforcement officers were following proper and safe storage procedures...and thus thoroughly clear up this issue one way or the other."

### Videotape Mystery

The videotape filmed by a sheriff's officer makes it clear that federal agents don't even want Oklahoma City police seeing what they're doing the afternoon following the bombing.

Captured on film are federal agents yelling at local police to, "Get out of here! - Get back!"

Also shown is an argument between an ATF agent and an Oklahoma City police officer, with the federal agent also insisting that a crowd of uniformed police spectators be moved from the area.

During the time this is going on, the videotape shows FBI and ATF agents carrying various weapons, boxes of ammunition, satchels and torn-open boxes from the pit area.

At one point, two federal agents are shown removing a device from one of these satchels.

After a brief examination of the strange looking object (which was about the size of a football and appeared to have suction cups attached to one side), one of the agents notices the camera aimed in his direction — prompting him to quickly shove the device back into the satchel.

### Key Suggests Federal Coverup

State Rep. Charles Key, in renewing his call for an independent state investigation, suggested there was a federal coverup of evidence.

Alluding to the videotape and evidence uncovered by non-government sources such as the Gazette, Key said, "It is precisely this type of evidence that I predicted a special investigation by a state-appointed commission would uncover.

"It is time for Governor Keating (a former FBI agent) to have a reality check. "If the FBI can screw around and blow up a portion of its own building in Washington D.C., then certainly he (Keating) can appreciate that similar mistakes can be made here in Oklahoma City.