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Surveillance tape shows shadowy passenger in bomb truck

The Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Videotape from a surveillance camera captured a glimpse of a shadowy figure in the passenger seat of the bomb-laden Ryder truck minutes before it blew apart the federal building, a federal law enforcement source says.

The footage is not clear enough to identify anyone, but it adds to the body of evidence that a third figure — perhaps the long-sought John Doe No. 2 — took part in the attack with Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, the source told The Associated Press in an interview this week.

"There's a shape in there, but they can't see a face," the source said of footage, taken by a camera on a nearby apartment building. The camera picked up the shadowy passenger about three minutes before the bomb went off April 19 at the Alfred P. Murrah Building.

The government says McVeigh drove to Oklahoma City in the truck, parked it in front of the federal building and made his getaway in a yellow Mercury Marquis. But prosecutors have given no indication that Nichols was also in Oklahoma City the day of the bombing.

Although a federal grand jury indicted only McVeigh

and Nichols on murder and conspiracy charges, agents scoured the country for a third conspirator, known only as John Doe No. 2, who was portrayed in sketches distributed shortly after the blast.

Authorities later said that an innocent Army private resembled the sketches. But the drawings were never withdrawn. Moreover, the indictment accuses McVeigh and Nichols of acting with "others unknown," and agents are still hunting for other conspirators.

A call to Assistant U.S. Attorney Steve Mullins, a spokesman for the prosecution team, was not immediately returned Friday. Prosecutors have repeatedly refused to discuss surveillance tape or other evidence

in the case.

McVeigh's lawyer, Stephen Jones, said he has not seen the tape and could not comment.

A senior federal official in Washington said recently that agents currently searching do not expect to turn up a major player in the plot.

But the law enforcement source said that many investigators remain convinced that John Doe No. 2 is still at large.

"No one knows who he is. It's like he walked into a wall and vanished," the source said.

McVeigh and Nichols go on trial May 17 in Lawton, about 90 miles from the bombing site.