

DUTCH SUSPECT REPORTEDLY TIED TO MCVEIGH, NICHOLS



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Dutch newspapers reported Friday that a man fighting extradition to the United States is linked to suspects in the Oklahoma City bombing. The U.S. Justice Department denied any connection.

The Netherlands has granted a request to extradite Daniel Spiegelman on unrelated charges, but three Dutch newspapers reported the suspect also is linked to Oklahoma City bombing suspects Timothy J. McVeigh and Terry Nichols.

The Dutch newspaper De Telegraaf said a man it identified only as Daniel S. is suspected of supplying weapons to those responsible for the April 19 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building that killed 169 people and injured more than 500.

Justice Department spokesman Carl Stern in Washington said Spiegelman is a convicted felon who was being extradited to face federal charges of illegal weapons possession -- but that the charges were unrelated to the Oklahoma City bombing.

"That story is false. There is absolutely no known connection between Mr. Spiegelman and the Oklahoma City bombing," Stern said.

FBI spokesman Walt Lamar and Assistant U.S. Attorney Steve Mullins, both in Oklahoma City, said neither agency had information connecting the suspect in Dutch custody with the bombing.

A connection with the Oklahoma City bombing could actually help block his extradition. It would raise the possibility of the death penalty, and Dutch law bars extradition of any suspect who could be put to death.

Stern said the weapons that form the basis for the extradition request were discovered by police during a search of the suspect's New York City apartment while

investigating the theft of rare manuscripts from Columbia University.

According to receipts found in two safe deposit boxes and one storage facility in New York, six weapons were bought in two Arizona gun shops in September 1994 under the name Craig Wesley Hesseltine, Stern said.

De Telegraaf and other Dutch newspapers also said authorities found a list of up to 40 names of people believed linked to the blast.

A U.S. Justice Department source denied such a list exists.

Spiegelman, 32, was convicted in 1984 of forging government documents and is being sought by U.S. officials on weapons possession charges.