

# **Prosecutors Plan to Ignore Other McVeigh Eyewitnesses**

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By J.D. Cash and Jeff Holladay

The Rocky Mountain News today reported that prosecutors in the Oklahoma City bombing case plan to call only a single eyewitness to buttress their contention that Timothy McVeigh was alone when he parked a Ryder rental truck outside the Alfred P. Murrah Building. That contention flies in the face of previous information revealed by the McCurtain Gazette that more than a halfdozen people saw McVeigh with at least three different men on the day of the bombing.

Said the Colorado newspaper in this morning's edition:

"What differentiates William Dunlap from at least seven other witnesses who say they saw McVeigh near a Ryder truck in downtown Oklahoma City that day: Dunlap supports the government's contention that McVeigh alone delivered the truck bomb.

"The other supposed eyewitnesses say they saw McVeigh with up to three other people just before the bombing that killed 168. That would raise questions about asyet-  
unidentified accomplices."

The newspaper reported that Dunlap, who was leaving the post office a block from the Murrah building minutes before the bomb blew up on April 19, 1995, says he saw a man resembling McVeigh walk to the back of a Ryder truck in front of the federal building.

"Dunlap's name was revealed in court papers unsealed Wednesday by U.S. District Judge Richard Matsch, who will preside over McVeigh's trial beginning March 31 in Denver. Dunlap was among the nine witnesses the government said it may call," the newspaper said.

McVeigh attorney Stephen Jones seeks to throw out testimony from seven, including that of Dunlap, it said. The defense contents the witnesses' identification of McVeigh as the man they saw before the bombing — in Oklahoma, Kansas and Arizona — were tainted by massive publicity.

Jones said the seven challenged witnesses didn't select McVeigh from photo lineups until after the video was aired of McVeigh being removed in shackles from the Noble County, Okla., jail.

Prosecutor Scott Mendeloff said witnesses' identification was "not tainted." Besides Dunlap, the witnesses being challenged by Jones are:

- Fred Skrdla, a gas station attendant in Billings, Okla., who says McVeigh stopped to fuel a Ryder truck between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m. on the day of the bombing.

- David Ferris, a Junction City, Kan., taxi driver who said he dropped McVeigh at a McDonald's restaurant there in April 17, near the time and shop where the truck was rented.

- Eldon Elliott and Tom Kessenger, who rented the truck to a man they identified as McVeigh in Junction City on April 17.

- Tim Donahue, a Marion, Kan., rancher who employed Terry Nichols, McVeigh's co-defendant, and where McVeigh is said to have visited in September 1994, Donahue, prior to McVeigh being shown on national TV, had described him as older and shorter.

- Glynn Tipton, a fuel sales manager from Manhattan, Kan., who said McVeigh approached him at a drag race in Tdpeka in October 1994 to buy racing fuel, allegedly one of the components of the Oklahoma City bomb.

"At least seven other people told the FBI they saw a man resembling McVeigh in or near a Ryder truck on Oklahoma City the morning of the bombing," the Colorado newspaper said, using information provided by the McCurtain Daily Gazette.

In another development Wednesday, Terry Nichols' defense lawyers asked Judge Matsch to disqualify prosecutors Scott Mendeloff and Larry Mackey from the case, saying they may have influenced witnesses.

The Gazette had earlier carried stories quoting witnesses as saying federal agents refused to believe their stories and sought to get them to change them in regard to persons seen with McVeigh prior to the bombing.