

# **Officials Deny Suspect Is Linked To Bombing Relatives Of Victims In Oklahoma Explosion Named Him In Lawsuit**

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A Philadelphia man was charged Thursday with conspiracy as a member of the Aryan Republican Army bank robbers while his attorney and the government denied claims by some Oklahoma City bombing victims that he is also John Doe 2.

Michael Brescia, a college student in his mid-20s, was arrested near his Philadelphia home by the FBI. He pleaded not guilty to involvement in an Aug. 30, 1995, bank robbery in Madison, Wis.

Aryan Republican Army members have been implicated in 19 bank robberies across the Midwest between January 1994 and December 1995. One member has been convicted in Iowa, and the alleged leader is now on trial in Columbus, Ohio.

Brescia was named as a defendant in a wrongful death suit by Glenn and Kathy Wilburn, grandparents of Chase and Colton Smith, two children killed in the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

The Wilburns and those working with them believe Brescia is the mysterious John Doe 2 reported to have been with the man who rented the Ryder truck that carried the bomb.

The Wilburns told the Rocky Mountain News that witnesses in the Junction City, Kan., area told them Brescia's college yearbook photograph looked like the person they saw with bombing suspect Timothy McVeigh.

But Brescia's resemblance to the famous sketch of John Doe 2 now appears to be meaningless. The sketch has been repudiated by the witness who helped provide it. He says he mistakenly described an innocent bystander.

Prosecutors in the Oklahoma case don't believe Brescia had any involvement in the bombing. His attorney, Brian McMonagle, said Brescia denies involvement.

Brescia lived for a time at Elohim City, a racist religious compound in eastern Oklahoma.

Telephone records purport to show that McVeigh called Elohim City on April 5, 1995, immediately after a brief call was made to a Ryder rental agency on the same calling card account.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Schwartz said the government will ask a judge at a detention hearing Monday to hold Brescia without bond.