

Oklahoma blast 'part of plot to murder judges' - Bomb

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A WHITE supremacist leader in America claimed yesterday that the chief suspect for the Oklahoma City bombing picked the wrong building for the attack which killed 168 adults and children.

Bobby Joe Farrington described Timothy McVeigh, whose trial opens in Denver today, as an "idiot" whose mission was part of a wider plot to kill four federal judges with lorry explosives.

Farrington, a former member of the Aryan Nations, an American neo-Nazi white supremacist group, has a long criminal record and is serving a 33-year prison sentence after stealing a lorry which he said was to be used to attack a judge. His allegations about Mr McVeigh are still being investigated by the FBI.

He said the bomb had been intended to kill Fred Daugherty, a retired judge, in an office across the street from the Alfred Murrah Building, the federal centre shredded by the blast.

In the latest theory to emerge in advance of the separate trials of Mr McVeigh and his co-defendant, Terry Nichols, Farrington described a conspiracy hatched by white supremacists, separatists and extreme members of militia groups to avenge actions by federal agents in Idaho and Waco, Texas.

He claimed that Dennis Mahon, a former leader of the white Aryan Resistance, and John Trochmann, founder of the Militia of Montana, were deeply involved in the bombing and a broader plot.

Mr Mahon and Andreas Strassmeir, a German, have also been cited in defence documents as part of an alleged international conspiracy, which included the IRA and Iraqi Government, to bomb federal targets.

Herr Strassmeir is said by Stephen Jones, the chief defence lawyer for Mr McVeigh, to have received a detonator from the IRA which was used in the Oklahoma attack.

A Sinn Fein spokesman dismissed the allegation as "absurd". All three men have denied any involvement.

Farrington said he met Mr McVeigh in 1992 at the Aryan Nations headquarters in Idaho. "I really can't say anything to prop up McVeigh," he said in an interview

with the Denver Post . "He's pretty much just an idiot. He just went to the wrong place."

The bomb plot also allegedly targeted Judge Edward Lodge of Idaho; Judge Walter Smith of Waco; and Judge Roy Rodeghiero of Montana. Mr Smith had imposed long sentences on surviving members of the Branch Davidian cult after 80 of their members died in the conflagration at Waco in 1993, exactly two years before the Oklahoma bombing.