

MCVEIGH LETTERS TO SISTER SUGGEST FAR-RIGHT PARANOIA



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DENVER -- Timothy McVeigh told his younger sister that he would have been forced to become a government "assassin" had he joined the Army's Special Forces. The Oklahoma City bombing defendant also said the Special Forces smuggled drugs for the CIA and that the government drug interdiction effort was only an attempt to keep drug prices high.

He also said that government tear gas started the fire that killed 80 members of the Branch Davidians religious sect at Waco, Texas in 1993.

McVeigh outlined these thoughts to his sister Jennifer in letters and conversations, the Rocky Mountain News has learned from sources close to the case.

Jury selection in McVeigh's trial in Denver federal court continued for the third day Wednesday.

In the past, Stephen Jones, McVeigh's defense attorney, has said that however unusual the constellation of McVeigh's beliefs, having unusual ideas isn't criminal.

Yet the government is expected to use the letters and possibly Jennifer's testimony to help supply jurors with one of the key elements necessary to prove a crime: motive.

Was McVeigh's hatred of the federal government enough to lead him to commit the worst terrorist attack on American soil?

Twelve jurors will have to decide.

Taken individually, McVeigh's notions are not far from ones commonly held by many conspiracy theorists.

But taken as a whole, they suggest a picture of a man on the far-right fringe.

Among other thoughts that McVeigh passed on to his sister in the months leading up to the April 19, 1995, bombing was the notion that Deputy White House Counsel Vincent Foster did not commit suicide but was murdered.

As McVeigh descended into seeming paranoia, he was using methamphetamine, also known as speed.

He told his sister that the drug helped his memory.

Methamphetamine can cause paranoid reactions.

McVeigh's last letter to Jennifer -- less than a month before the bombing -- contained clippings from *The Turner Diaries*, an anti-government novel depicting the bombing of FBI headquarters.

The letter also warned that "something big" was going to happen.

He told Jennifer that he "knew too much" and had become a "liability" to the government.