

A Small Break for McVeigh's Defense

By Mark Coatney Thursday, May 15, 1997

DENVER: The defense took heart at the Oklahoma City bombing trial when FBI fingerprint technician Louis Hupp testified that Timothy McVeigh's fingerprints were not found on several key pieces of evidence, including the key and the rental agreement for the Ryder truck allegedly used to transport the bomb, though Hupp added that touching objects does not always leave fingerprints.

"Finding the key was the big shocker in the trial," reports TIME's Patrick Cole from Denver. "This revelation rocked the defense as the government showed video of the key on the ground in the alley where it was discovered."

Cole reports that prosecutors are so pleased with results so far that they do not plan to introduce much of the mountain of evidence they've gathered, and will instead close their case early next week.

Still, there are holes in the case that the defense can exploit. Chief is that the prosecution has been unable to physically place McVeigh at the scene of the bombing. In a death penalty case, this could be a crucial omission, one that defense lawyer Stephen Jones will try to mine next week.