

Man who says agents were warned about bombing talks to grand jury Federal authorities deny any prior knowledge of Oklahoma attack

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OKLAHOMA CITY - A man who says he was told federal agents were warned before the Oklahoma City bombing testified before a grand jury Monday. But another witness was not allowed to testify, apparently because she works for the federal government.

Bruce Shaw has said an agent of the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms told him agents were warned to stay away from the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building on the morning of April 19, 1995. The ATF has denied any prior knowledge of the bombing.

Mr. Shaw was at the building minutes after the bombing to search for his wife, who survived.

"I did get to tell my story," he said as he left an Oklahoma County grand jury investigating allegations of a larger conspiracy and a government cover-up in the bombing.

"They seemed concerned, they really did," said Mr. Shaw, who carried a videotape into the grand jury and left without it about 90 minutes later.

He would not say what was on the tape but said that it had been widely broadcast. He also would not comment when asked whether he had been able to identify the ATF agent.

The next witness called was Debbie Nakanashi, a U.S. Postal Service employee who has said Timothy McVeigh and another man stopped at the post office near the federal building before the bombing to ask for a federal job application.

Ms. Nakanashi left the grand jury room at the Oklahoma County Jail without testifying.

"It had something to do with me being a federal employee," she said. Her response indicates that she may be covered by a gag order imposed on federal employees by U.S. District Judge Richard Matsch, who is presiding over the federal cases against Mr. McVeigh and Terry Nichols, whose federal trial is scheduled Sept. 29.

Federal prosecutors have asked Judge Matsch to clarify the order with respect to the grand jury.

A third witness, an unidentified man, walked into the jail Monday afternoon without speaking to reporters.

Mr. McVeigh was convicted on federal murder and conspiracy charges in June and sentenced to die for the bombing that killed 168 people.

Federal authorities say they doubt a larger conspiracy and vehemently deny any prior knowledge of the attack.

The grand jury was empaneled by a petition drive mounted by State Rep. Charles Key, R-Oklahoma City, and Glenn Wilburn, an Oklahoma City accountant who lost two young grandsons in the bombing. Mr. Wilburn died of cancer shortly after the grand jury began its work June 30.

Mr. Key says all 39 of the people on his recommended witness list have been called to testify. The jury heard from 10 of them in July and was scheduled to hear at least 11 more in August. But the panel recessed after two members suffered medical problems. They are expected to meet all this week and next week.

Many of the witnesses say they saw Mr. McVeigh in Oklahoma City with at least one other person before the bombing. Mr. Key is compiling a list of additional witnesses.

One much-anticipated witness, former ATF informant Carol Howe, was not expected to testify this month. Ms. Howe maintains she warned agents before the bombing that she had overheard a white supremacist and a German national discuss plans to bomb a federal building.

The former Tulsa debutante was acquitted on federal conspiracy and bomb-threat charges in an unrelated case this summer.

Ms. Howe's lawyer, Clark O. Brewster, said she is ready and willing to testify, but added he was unable to juggle his trial schedule accompany her to the grand jury.

Also expected to testify this week was Gary G. Antene of Oklahoma City. Mr. Antene told the Tulsa World he has been subpoenaed to appear Tuesday. Mr. Antene has said he saw Mr. McVeigh with another man a few days before the blast at a model airplane shop in Oklahoma City. Mr. Antene said Mr. McVeigh asked him about 100 percent nitromethane model fuel, which the shop did not sell.