

Witness a No-Show in Oklahoma He's the 2nd Failing to Appear for Panel Looking into Broader Bomb Bonspiracy

Dallas Morning News
December 5, 1997 | Page: 34A | Section: NEWS

OKLAHOMA CITY - A witness failed to appear Thursday before the grand jury investigating allegations of a government cover-up and a larger conspiracy in the Oklahoma City bombing. He was the second no-show this week.

The witness was from Colorado and had agreed to testify, said Oklahoma County Assistant District Attorney Pat Morgan.

"The last word we had last night was he was on his way, driving," Mr. Morgan said.

If the man purposely avoided testifying, grand jurors will have to decide whether they want to compel his testimony.

"The jury's now in closed session looking through the materials they've already got, the testimony they've got," Mr. Morgan said.

A witness had also failed to show on Monday. Mr. Morgan would not confirm his identity, but free-lance reporter J.D. Cash had said he was called to appear this week.

Mr. Cash, a close associate of the men who sparked the grand jury probe, has written dozens of stories about conspiracy theories of the bombing for the McCurtain Daily Gazette and various right-wing publications.

Mr. Morgan said prosecutors have begun steps to compel testimony from Monday's no-show.

"They have informed us that they want this witness," he said of the grand jury. Mr. Cash has said he will fight a subpoena.

This week's no-shows were the first among the more than 50 witnesses who have testified since the panel convened June 30, Mr. Morgan said. The grand jury was expected to meet Friday, but not to hear witnesses.

The panel has been meeting every week and expects to continue its investigation at least into January.

"I can tell you honestly I don't know how long they are going to meet," Mr. Morgan said.

The grand jury was impaneled after a petition drive led by state Rep. Charles Key and the late Glenn Wilburn, who lost two young grandsons in the bombing. Both men contended federal prosecutors have ignored evidence of conspirators besides Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols. They also believe agents of the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms had prior knowledge of the blast.

Prosecutors say they now doubt a larger conspiracy and the ATF has denied any advance knowledge.

Mr. Nichols is on trial in Denver on federal murder and conspiracy charges that could carry the death penalty. Mr. McVeigh was convicted and condemned earlier this year.