

Forewoman Threatened

By Peggy Lowe
Denver Post Staff Writer
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Niki Deutchman, the outspoken forewoman of the Terry Nichols jury, reported receiving a bomb threat at her home hours after giving a news conference about the deadlocked jury's deliberations.

In a report filed Wednesday with Denver police, Deutchman said a man called her home three times between 7:25 p.m. and 8:36 p.m. The caller "threatened to blow up the ... house," the report said.

The Colorado jury that convicted Nichols of conspiracy in the Oklahoma City bombing could not decide if Nichols should live or die. That decision will be made by U.S. District Judge Richard Matsch in the coming months. Many survivors and victims of the blast were critical of the jury's decision.

During a 1 1/2-hour press conference Wednesday afternoon, Deutchman said that the government "dropped the ball" and that the bombing was not thoroughly investigated. "I think there are other people out there," she said.

She was particularly critical of the FBI, saying it was sloppy with the evidence and "arrogant" in failing to tape a 9 1/2-hour interview with Nichols.

Thursday in Washington, Attorney General Janet Reno defended the investigation, saying she was "very, very proud," of the work done in the biggest case in FBI history.

"I think the FBI did an excellent job," she said. "They interviewed over 30,000 witnesses. They pursued innumerable leads. And I think they did so based on appropriate standards for how to conduct an investigation." Deutchman, 47, an obstetrics nurse, lives with her husband and daughter.

She would not comment Thursday.

Federal authorities would not comment, but confirmed the threat.

"Matters concerning the safety and security of the judicial process are not something we discuss publicly," said Chief Deputy U.S. Marshal Larry Homenick.

At least two other jurors and one alternate juror said they had not received any threatening phone calls.

"Nothing justifies more violence, even the threat of violence," said Charlie Hebler, a Denver lobbyist and alternate juror.