

Proof of Bombs and Cover-up

by William F. Jasper

Startling new eyewitness testimony and official communiqués sent shortly after the bombing of the Murrah Building bring an important fresh dimension to one of the most troubling aspects of the investigation into the terrorist attack in Oklahoma City. And previously suppressed eyewitness reports from bombing survivors who claim to have seen Timothy McVeigh and other bombing suspects in the Murrah Building in the days and weeks before the bombing provide important clues as to who may have planted the charges inside the building.

On August 10, 1995, a federal grand jury handed down a three-count indictment charging Timothy McVeigh, Terry Nichols, and "others unknown" with the bombing that took 168 lives. In the three years that have passed since that time, McVeigh and Nichols have been convicted in a court of law, but others remain at large and the crime has not been solved nor has justice been rendered.

Alarm over flagrant abuses by federal investigators and prosecutors in the case, and concern that a major cover-up was underway to conceal evidence of multiple perpetrators, multiple bombs, and prior knowledge of the bomb plot, sparked a citizens' campaign led by Oklahoma State Representative Charles Key to convene a special county grand jury. Among the many things the grand jury has been examining are evidence and testimony that devastatingly challenge the central premise of the government's case. That premise holds that a Ryder truck loaded with some 4,800 pounds of ammonium nitrate and fuel oil (ANFO) was solely responsible for the death and destruction visited upon Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995.

Science vs. Silence

From the start of our investigation, THE NEW AMERICAN has found the government's obstinate adherence to this tottering premise — in the face of monumental evidence to the contrary — to be one of the most troubling aspects of the case. And we have played a major role in developing and disseminating the evidence and expert testimony that thoroughly discredit this increasingly untenable position. "What is becoming daily more obvious is that the federal investigation went off track very early on, and nowhere is this more blatantly obvious than in the claim that the truck bomb brought down the Murrah Building," Cate McCauley, executive director of Mr. Key's Oklahoma Bombing Investigation Committee, recently told THE NEW AMERICAN. "Science and the forensic evidence overwhelmingly contradict this claim. However, aside from your magazine, no one in the media or the government has really done the hard work

of explaining and exposing this travesty. What we have been seeing for three years is science versus silence."

The implications are profound. If internal charges were, in fact, used, it would have been impossible for McVeigh to have carried out the operation on his own, as the government contends. More hands — and much more sophisticated expertise — would have been required. Even more perturbing is the charge by experts that evidence of demolition charges on the building's columns would have been unmistakable to forensic investigators. Thus, the extraordinary rush to blow up the crime scene and bury the evidence before it could be subjected to independent examination is itself strong evidence of a cover-up.

The earliest and most compelling challenge to the lone bomb/lone bomber theory came from Brigadier General Benton K. Partin (USAF, Retired), an expert with sterling credentials and a distinguished military career. On May 18, 1995, one month after the bombing, General Partin delivered a preliminary detailed analysis of the event to members of Congress. "From all the evidence I have seen in the published material," Partin testified, "I can say with a high level of confidence that the damage pattern on the reinforced concrete superstructure could not possibly have been attained from the single truck bomb without supplementing demolition charges at some of the reinforced column bases." In that report (See "OKC Bombing: Expert Analysis" in our June 26, 1995 issue), and in the detailed study which he released on July 13, 1995 (see "[Explosive Evidence](#)" in our August 7, 1995 issue), Partin eviscerated the prosecution's lone-bomb thesis with a host of findings from the forensic evidence indicating that demolition charges were certainly used inside the Murrah Building.

Since that time, a veritable mountain of evidence, documents, records, eyewitness testimony, and authoritative support has accumulated to fortify General Partin's thesis, making the stubborn adherence of government officials and journalists to the lone-bomb scenario truly incredible.

New Evidence

In this article, we present startling new eyewitness testimony concerning demolition charges removed from the Murrah Building and the men who may have planted them there, together with new expert testimony, recently released official records, and some of the most important evidence and supporting documentation that has been reported piecemeal in our previous articles on the bombing. This includes:

- World-renowned physicists and an assortment of scientists, engineers, and explosives experts who concur that internal charges must have been used.
- A series of Air Force test blasts on concrete structures corroborating General Partin's main contention that air blast from a truck bomb outside of the building

could not possibly account for the pattern and magnitude of the damage to the Murrah Building's superstructure.

- A study by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) which acknowledges that a truck bomb of 4,800 pounds of ANFO (as claimed by the government) would have been insufficient to cause the destruction experienced at the Murrah Building.
- Two eyewitnesses inside the Murrah Building who attest that they observed bomb squad personnel removing undetonated explosive devices from the building after the initial blast.
- A rescue worker who attests that she heard an ATF agent state that he had found an undetonated explosive device inside the building.
- Recently released government communiques and radio transmission logs indicating that undetonated devices had been found in the building during the early rescue efforts.
- Recordings of real-time, live television news broadcasts reporting official confirmations of multiple unexploded devices inside the Murrah Building.
- Early statements from government officials and terrorism and bombing experts — before the "official" line was laid down — that the explosives used were clearly very sophisticated, indicating it was the work of a "group" highly knowledgeable in explosive techniques.
- Five survivors of the blast who attest that they saw three men in the parking garage of the Murrah Building with wires, tools, and what appeared to be building plans several days before the bombing.
- Military personnel who reportedly saw McVeigh or John Doe No. 2 inside the building but were threatened with court-martial if they mentioned what they had seen.

The Unheard Experts

General Benton Partin's report on the Oklahoma bombing should have hit the nation like a thunderclap. Not only was his analysis thorough and scholarly and his credentials unimpeachable, but his observations also conformed to a commonsense appraisal of evidence that was widely available and understandable to the general public. General Partin's highly decorated, 31-year military career included command of the Air Force Armaments Technology Laboratory and direct involvement in the research and development of many of our armaments and weapons systems. Among many other things, this expert's expert pointed out that:

- Blast through air is a terribly inefficient coupling mechanism against heavy reinforced concrete beams and columns. Blast wave energy drops dramatically when traveling through air, initially falling off more rapidly than an inverse function of the distance cubed.
- Using the official estimate of 4,800 pounds of ANFO would yield a maximum pressure of explosion of about one-half million pounds per square inch at detonation. But by the time the blast wave traveled through the air to the nearest of the building's columns, it would have dropped off to about 375 pounds of pressure per square inch, and by the time it reached the nearest column in the second row of columns it would have been down to 27 to 38 psi. The compressive yield strength of concrete is around 3,500 pounds per square inch, far above anything exerted by the truck bomb blast on the building's structure.
- The asymmetrical damage to the building — i.e., the off-center "bite" — presents another insuperable problem for the official scenario, requiring that the blast wave leave standing columns that were closer to the explosion while taking out columns that were farther from the blast.
- Inherent in the official scenario is the absurd claim that the truck blast was sufficiently strong to collapse the huge columns and beams, but not strong enough to knock down sheet rock, furring strips, and other light, fragile materials.
- Examination of the photographic evidence shows clearly that the column failures were smooth and localized, as would be expected with cutting charges, not jagged, as would be the case if they had been shattered by the brisance of an air blast.

The persuasive cogency of his analysis — coupled with his outstanding stature and experience in the field of military ordnance, explosives, and blast effects — should have earned General Partin's thesis a respectable hearing. But it was dismissed out of hand or ridiculed by the same officials and media-anointed "experts" who have propagated a continuous string of absurdities to explain away the avalanche of contradictions and inconsistencies in the official scenario of the bombing.

However, an impressive and growing array of experts supports the general's conclusions. Renowned physicist Samuel Cohen, the inventor of the "neutron bomb," is one of them. One of the last remaining scientists who worked on the Manhattan Project, the original U.S. atomic bomb program, Dr. Cohen has spent more than half a century deeply involved in scientific work on weapons systems and analysis for the U.S. government and private industry. "I believe that demolition charges in the building placed inside at certain key concrete columns did the primary damage to the Murrah Federal Building," Cohen stated in June 1995. "It would have been absolutely impossible and against the laws of nature for a truck full of fertilizer and fuel oil — no matter how much was used — to

bring the building down." Contacted this year shortly after the third anniversary of the bombing, Dr. Cohen said he was even more convinced of the truth of that statement. "I have not been following the case closely," he told THE NEW AMERICAN, "but it seems to me that the evidence has gotten much stronger in favor of internal charges, while the ammonium nitrate bomb theory has fallen apart."

Another celebrated scientist who shares much the same opinion is Dr. Frederick Hansen, professor of physics at the University of Oregon. Dr. Hansen's distinguished career includes professorships in engineering, aeronautics, and chemistry at MIT, Nagoya University in Japan, the Indian Institute of Technology in India, and Cheng Kung University in Taiwan. For 15 years he was the head of earth and astro sciences at the General Motors Defense Research Laboratories, and for more than 20 years was a research scientist with NASA, where he became chief of the Fluid Mechanics Branch and, later, chief of the Physical Gas Dynamics Branch. In the latter post, he supervised construction of the world's most powerful research shock tube, where he conducted experiments using high explosives. In a letter to Representative Charles Key earlier this year, Dr. Hansen stated: "I agree with Gen. Partin that blast through air is a very inefficient coupling mechanism against structure. Only by containing or focusing the blast can extensive damage be inflicted on reinforced structures.... Everything considered, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that only an explosive detonated right at the column could have sheared it."

Dr. Roger A. Raubach, a chemist who taught on the research faculty of Stanford University and now serves as the technical director of a chemical company, says he has "no reservations supporting General Partin." He adds that "the possibility of an ammonium nitrate fertilizer bomb, regardless of size, demolishing a reinforced concrete structure at a 20 or 30 foot standoff not only strains the limits of credibility but exceeds it by a considerable margin."

Dr. Ernest B. Paxson, an engineer with over 30 years experience in civilian and defense-related projects and a published author in many professional journals, concurs completely. "The damage pattern of any structure will indicate how the loading conditions which caused failure were applied," Dr. Paxson wrote in a letter to THE NEW AMERICAN after reviewing forensic evidence in the Oklahoma bombing. "In the case of the OKC Murrah Building, the failure pattern demonstrated to me that individual charges were placed on each of the failed columns inside the building." Paxson, who now runs his own engineering company in Utah, says he bases his evaluation on not only his knowledge of physics and engineering, but on training and practical experience he received in the U.S. Army Engineers Corps in the use of explosives to destroy different types of structures. "Based on that training alone," he told THE NEW AMERICAN, "I would say that a 4,800 pound ANFO truck bomb is an extremely inefficient way to bring down any structure. It might blow a hole in the curtain wall closest to the truck, but it would hardly touch the supporting columns of the building, because

air is such a poor coupling agent. In fact, to be assured of destroying any structure, one would have to place the correct amount of explosive charge in intimate contact with the pertinent supporting members."

These experts are on solid scientific ground and are supported by a wealth of authoritative sources pertaining to blast effects in general as well as to evidence specific to the Murrah Building explosion. Especially important in this regard is the data from tests of blast effects on concrete structures conducted by the Armament Directorate of Wright Laboratory at Eglin Air Force Base. An extensive study of the Eglin data conducted by construction and demolition analyst John Culbertson and first published in THE NEW AMERICAN (see "[Multiple Blasts](#)" in our March 31, 1997 issue) concluded that "it is impossible to ascribe the damage that occurred on April 19, 1995 to a single truck bomb containing 4,800 lbs. of ANFO.... It must be concluded that the damage at the Murrah Federal Building is not the result of the truck bomb itself, but rather due to other factors such as locally placed charges within the building itself." The same conclusions were reached by the engineering experts who reviewed the study for this magazine: Robert Frias, president of Frias Engineering in Arlington, Texas; Mike Smith, a civil engineer in Cartersville, Georgia; and Alvin Norberg of Auburn, California, the engineer of record on over 5,000 building construction projects.

Undetonated Devices

Millions of viewers who watched the live television coverage of the aftermath of the horrendous explosion in Oklahoma City will recall that rescue workers, survivors, and onlookers were twice evacuated from the Murrah Building area because of reports that additional unexploded bombs had been found. *Cover-up in Oklahoma*, a videotape produced by Jerry Longspaugh of the Citizens Information Network in Ft. Worth, Texas, has captured many of the early broadcasts from Oklahoma City and Dallas concerning the evacuations. Among those reports on the day of the bombing is an interview with Governor Frank Keating, who states: "The reports I have is [sic] that one device was deactivated and, apparently, there's another device; and obviously, whatever did the damage to the Murrah Building was a tremendous, very sophisticated explosive device." In another interview, terrorism expert Dr. Randall Heather says, "It was a great stroke of luck that we actually got defused bombs. It's through the bomb material that we will be able to track down who committed this atrocity." In another report the news anchorman states: "Two other explosive devices were found that were not detonated and they were larger than the first. But there were more bombs set to go off, according to ATF officials."

The discovery of undetonated devices would indeed be helpful in identifying the perpetrators, as well as proving the Partin thesis. Official government communiqués obtained by THE NEW AMERICAN over the past two years appear to confirm these earlier news stories.* These include:

- The following entries from the Oklahoma Highway Patrol's radio dispatch logs:
 - 10:29 a.m. "There is another bomb on the south side of the bldg. Need to get away as far as possible.... Evacuate the area of the bldg immediately, evacuate the S. side of the bldg immediately."
 - 10:33 a.m. "Adv CP [Advise Command Post] we poss [possibly] have another device." "If it is the one on the S. side we have already gb'd [grabbed] it." "Okay." "Did you have anything further beside the one on the S. side?" "Neg [negative]."
 - 10:37 a.m. "OC Fire Dept. confirms they did find a second device in the bldg." "O.K." "Cont. [contact] all troopers and have them move all civilian personnel back 1 more block."
 - 2:00 p.m. "Unable to contact ATF." "Keep tring [trying] they think they have found another device. Have one of there [sic] people contact HQ48 on the northside of the bld."
- A Forces Command, Fort McPherson, Georgia, log entry for April 19, 1995 at 11:57 a.m. which states: "Two more explosive devices were located vicinity the explosion site. Evidently intended for the rescuers."
- A DoD Atlantic Command memo from Norfolk, Virginia on April 20, 1995, which states: "A second bomb was disarmed, a third bomb was evacuated."
- A Federal Emergency Management Agency Situation Report for April 20, 1995 which reads: "A second and third bomb were located in the building. The second bomb was disarmed and the third bomb was evacuated."

However, after the official "line" settled on the lone-truck-bomb scenario, all reports about finding additional devices were labeled misinformation and ascribed to the confusion and rumors that attend all catastrophic events. An alternative explanation which is supposed to dispose of any reports of bomb removal asserts that only several inert "training devices" of the ATF were found in the rubble. But that story doesn't wash with bomb squad experts we have talked with, who point out that training devices are *always* clearly marked as such. To suggest that officials were so incompetent that they would — not once, but twice — evacuate the area on false alarms, forcing rescue people to leave victims to die for lack of attention, strains credulity.

It also doesn't wash with Roger Charles, a retired marine lieutenant colonel who has been investigating the bombing for the past two years — first for ABC's *20/20*, and now for Rep. Key — and who has intensively investigated the stream of official communications. "It's noteworthy that you don't find a single retraction or correction [of the accounts of undetonated devices] in any of the communications. Normally, if there had been updated information correcting false

stories of that kind, that's the type of intelligence that would have been relayed back through channels immediately and entered into the logs."

The fact that official sources were still reporting as fact 24 hours later that bombs had been discovered, disarmed, and evacuated would seem to weigh strongly in favor of the position that explosive devices were indeed found.

On the Scene

Recent eyewitness testimony received by this magazine supports the bomb removal reports. In May of this year, THE NEWAMERICAN interviewed Joe Harp, a retired CIA operative who claims to have been at the Murrah Building on the morning of April 19th. In our interview and in an affidavit, Mr. Harp stated that he flew to Oklahoma City from his home in Texas shortly after the explosion to search for his good friend, Mickey Maroney, a Secret Service agent who worked in the Murrah Building. According to Harp, he flew with his friend Woody Lemons, in Lemons' private plane, and the two arrived at the Murrah Building around 11:00 a.m. His affidavit states:

I knew right away that the explosive device that had caused the building damage was not an ANFO (ammonium nitrate fuel oil) bomb, for two reasons:

- 1) There was a strong sulfur smell in the air that was very reminiscent of the gas-enhanced "Daisy cutter" bombs I am familiar with from my tours of duty in Vietnam, as well as other military experience. It was not an ANFO smell.
- 2) I could see right away from the bomb signature — the damage to the structure of the building — that there must have been explosive charges inside the building. The truck bomb could not have done that damage from out on the street.

Mr. Harp further states: "While I was up in the building, the police and fire department started evacuating people from the area because of the discovery of additional explosive devices. Most of the rescuers at the ground level and the spectators evacuated the area, but many of us up inside the building did not leave. I observed members of the fire department EOD removing two devices and placing them in the bomb disposal unit. The devices were military olive drab in color, and the size of round five-gallon drums, with black lettering designating the contents as fulminated mercury, a high-grade explosive. I was also close enough to see what looked to me like mercury switches on the devices, which I presumed were for detonation purposes. I have had significant experience with these materials in the military and so readily recognized them." The bomb handlers were treating the devices as if they were real bombs, not training devices, he says.

According to Harp's affidavit, he and Woody Lemons "took residue samples from the bomb site and scrapings from another building across the street from the

Murrah Building to a laboratory for chemical analysis. That analysis showed that there was fulminated mercury residue, along with other chemicals, in the sample." Harp says he originally had intended to take the test results and his testimony to the Oklahoma County grand jury, but changed his mind when he became convinced that there was a leak in the grand jury and that District Attorney Macy's office was working with the Clinton-Reno Justice Department to scuttle the investigation. A couple weeks before this magazine's first telephone interview with him, Harp says a representative of Mr. Macy's office, accompanied by a Texas Ranger and a U.S. marshal, appeared at his home with a subpoena demanding all of his materials relating to the bombing, including his lab test report. However, in a May 12th telephone interview he said that Woody Lemons also had a copy of the report, as well as other documents and receipts to verify their story, and that Lemons would provide them to THE NEW AMERICAN, along with an interview. Four days later — before this reporter could arrange travel to Texas — news stories reported that Woody Lemons, along with his wife and his mother, had been killed when their private, twin-engine plane crashed under mysterious circumstances. Harp said he is sure the crash was no accident and that more than one attempt has been made on his own life. "Somebody doesn't want us to tell what we know, I guess," he told THE NEW AMERICAN during a face-to-face interview at his home.

Other Eyewitnesses

Joe Harp's story of a fulminated mercury bomb is consistent with a 1995 article by Phil O'Halloran in *Relevance* magazine which quoted Lieutenant Bill Martin of the Oklahoma City Police Department as saying that such a device had been found at the Murrah Building. Martin now denies that report, but O'Halloran sticks by his story, insisting that Martin has changed his earlier testimony.

Harp's story is also supported by another important witness, Virgil Steele, who attests to seeing two bombs removed from the building following the evacuation alarms. Steele, an elevator inspector, was among the first to arrive at the Murrah Building after the blast and was one of the few who worked at the site from that day until the building was demolished.

Still another witness who has already gone on the record is Tiffany Bible, an emergency paramedic who was among the first medical personnel to arrive at the blast scene. According to Mrs. Bible (see "Witness Floodgate Opening" in our March 2, 1998 issue), she was standing with a police officer after the first bomb scare evacuation, when an ATF agent remarked to the policeman: "We found a 50-pound bomb attached to a gas line inside the Murrah Building."

There are also many witnesses — including survivors of the bombing — who reported seeing Timothy McVeigh together with other suspects inside the Murrah Building during the days and weeks prior to the explosion. Were they checking the building's security and planning where and how they would place charges?

Those are logical explanations. What is illogical is the FBI's and the Justice Department's apparent disinterest in following through on these potentially vital witness reports.

One of those witnesses is bombing survivor Jane Graham, who was interviewed last year and again earlier this year by THENEW AMERICAN. Mrs. Graham cannot be written off as your stereotypical "anti-government, right-wing wacko." A lifelong Democrat, Graham is a public housing specialist with the federal HUD office in Oklahoma City and president of the American Federation of Government Employees Local 3138. Mrs. Graham is especially troubled and angry because of the government's failure to follow through on testimony by her and others concerning suspects inside the building prior to the bombing. According to Graham, the week before the bombing she came upon three men on the second level of the parking garage, behind an old station wagon, with what appeared to be plans of the Murrah Building. "At first I thought, as I studied them, they were with the phone company, because I saw what looked like telephone wiring," she says.

However, after mentally reconstructing the incident and talking to three other survivors (we have since discovered a fourth) who also saw the strange men in the parking garage, and who experienced the same odd treatment from the FBI, she became disturbed.

According to Graham, "When I first told my story [to the FBI], the only question asked was, 'Was one of the men McVeigh?' I told the agent absolutely not." She was puzzled that she was not asked to describe the men, look at photos, work with a sketch artist, or provide any other information about the incident. "I wanted to know why no one asked questions about the week before the bombing and if anyone saw anything suspicious," she says. "Apparently the FBI was not interested in any time other than the Monday or Tuesday the week of the bombing. And only if the responses pointed directly to McVeigh. My question is: Why is it that they were only interested if information was related to McVeigh? It appears that the FBI had an agenda which was to only target McVeigh and Nichols."

Arlene Blanchard also suspects a hidden agenda. She was a sergeant in the Army recruiting office of the Murrah Building when the bomb went off. Interviewed briefly for ABC's *Nightline* program two days later, she mentioned that the suspect depicted in the sketches of John Doe No. 2 looked "very familiar" and that her colleague, Sgt. Marilyn Travis, had seen and conversed with Timothy McVeigh inside the building. The next day she was called in by the battalion commander and, in spite of her serious injuries, subjected to a hostile grilling by the commander and agents of the FBI, ATF and Army CID. Moreover, she says, she was given a direct order not to speak to any members of the press and threatened with court-martial if she mentioned the sightings of McVeigh or John Doe 2 again. Sgt. Travis and other recruiting office personnel were likewise

ordered by the commander not to speak to the press, or even to the official investigators, about information that may be material to the case. It is only since her recent retirement from the military that Mrs. Blanchard has been able to speak up. Says her husband, Stan Blanchard, a former member of the Army Special Forces: "Having been involved in covert operations, I am well aware of the need for secrecy, at times, in the interests of national security, but the treatment of my wife and others and the suppression of important evidence in this case has been outrageous."

General Benton Partin was one of the early witnesses to appear before the Oklahoma County grand jury last year. He came out of the hearing very impressed with the serious and respectful attention given to his testimony by the jurors. It is to be hoped that Jane Graham and other similar witnesses will be called to testify also — along with many of the FBI agents and officials who conducted the government's investigation.