

WND » Catch All Terrorists

Postal worker Debbie Nakanashi, who worked across the street from the Murrah Building, was shown on “Good Morning America” looking at a sketch of a dark, heavy-set man she had seen with Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols not long before the bombs that took 168 lives exploded. She said, “There’s a guy out there that looks exactly like that that helped blow up the Murrah Building, and nobody’s looking for him, and nobody seems to care if he gets found and is prosecuted or not. And that really bothers me.”

There are many other survivors of that blast that feel the same way. One of them is V.Z. Lawton, who was shown on the CBS Evening News the day Judge Richard Matsch rejected McVeigh’s appeal for a stay of his execution. Lawton said, “The closest I’m going to get to closure is when they catch everybody that was involved in it and make everybody that was involved in it pay for the crime they committed. And it’s not just McVeigh.”

Correspondent Robert McNamara introduced Lawton, saying, “The deeper that disastrous day slips into history, the more people here believe there was a wider conspiracy and want McVeigh kept alive.”

Why?

Some think that keeping McVeigh alive would have helped force the FBI to focus on finding and arresting *all* the terrorists responsible for those 168 deaths. It is possible, though not very likely, that McVeigh might have been persuaded to identify his coconspirators and testify against them.

They will breathe easier when McVeigh is executed, and so will their protectors in the FBI – Louis Freeh and everyone down the line that helped wrap up the case quickly by sweeping under the rug the evidence that others, perhaps many others, were involved. Some of them are believed to have been FBI informants who gave advance warning of the bombing, to no avail. Others are believed to be agents of Osama bin Laden.

It is hard for many to believe that the FBI, which has for many years been the most respected law enforcement organization in the country, would refuse to hunt down and arrest known participants in the worst act of terrorism on American soil. But until May 10, it would have been hard for many to believe that the FBI would deliberately flout an agreement to turn over all documents on the case to the defense and prosecution attorneys.

Until Dr. Frederic Whitehurst’s charges of incompetence and dishonest testimony on the part of agents assigned to the FBI crime lab were validated by the Justice Department inspector general, few Americans would have quarreled with the claim that the FBI crime lab was the best in the world. Despite the overhaul forced by the inspector general, it is still a laboratory with standards inferior to those the government requires of private testing labs.

The FBI’s foot-dragging on sharing information with the defense and prosecution attorneys continued for weeks after the first embarrassing admission on May 10 that 3,135 pages had been wrongfully withheld. On May 29, former special agent Rick Ojeda told “60 Minutes II” that he had been concerned that documents relating to important leads that he had investigated were not in evidence and fellow agents could not find them. It was not until this interview that the documents were given to the attorneys. The FBI claimed they had been found in a file on a different case, a claim that Ojeda has disputed, according to McVeigh’s attorneys.

Attorney General John Ashcroft, who increasingly appears to have become a captive of the permanent bureaucracy at the Justice Department, strongly opposed a second delay in McVeigh’s execution. He applauded the rejection of McVeigh’s appeal, calling it “a ruling for justice.” If he honestly believes that McVeigh and Nichols carried out the bombing all by themselves and that the 4,400 pages of documents wrongfully withheld by the FBI were of no importance, he should be willing to ask that the court order sealing them be lifted so they can be made available to

the public.

Above all else, he should order the Justice Department attorneys to call a halt to their efforts to have a Federal court in Oklahoma dismiss the lawsuit filed under the Freedom of Information Act calling for the release of the 23 tapes the FBI confiscated from surveillance cameras at the Murrah Building and other buildings in the same area. Those behind this suit believe that some of these tapes will show Timothy McVeigh together with co-conspirators other than Terry Nichols before and immediately after the bombing of the Murrah Building. If that proves to be the case, Louis Freeh and former Attorney General Janet Reno will have to explain why they mounted no effort to apprehend and prosecute those terrorists.

If the Justice Department continues to fight this FOIA suit, John Ashcroft may also have some explaining to do.

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