

## **Judge asked to ban dozens of witnesses - Some defense testimony in the trial of Terry Nichols will try to suggest there are other suspects in the case.**

February 19, 2004 | Oklahoman, The (Oklahoma City, OK)

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McALESTER — Prosecutors want a judge to ban dozens of Terry Nichols' defense witnesses from his upcoming trial.

Their testimony about possible "other suspects" in the Oklahoma City bombing is inadmissible under state law, prosecutors wrote in legal filings.

Judge Steven Taylor said Wednesday at a pretrial hearing he already has done extensive legal research on the requests.

The court filings reveal the identities of more than 100 defense witnesses in the state murder case. Nichols' defense will be that others — not him — helped bomber Timothy McVeigh.

### **Implications**

Prosecutors indicated the defense is seeking to implicate a group of bank robbers, Iranians, residents of the white separatist community Elohim City, convicted murderer Chevie Kehoe and others.

The defense witnesses include Carol Howe, a former federal informant from Tulsa who claims she overheard discussions about the bombing while undercover at Elohim City in eastern Oklahoma.

The pretrial hearing Wednesday wrapped up with no mention of Nichols' willingness to plead no contest if prosecutors dismiss the death penalty. The issue could come up today.

The hearing focused instead on whether photos or videos exist of the federal building blowing up on April 19, 1995.

### **Verifiable photos**

A Texas attorney, Tom Mills Jr., insisted Wednesday a former congressional aide in 1998 showed him photos of the explosion. The attorney said the aide told him the photos came from a federal agent who was part of a "sting operation" that was supposed to stop the bombing but failed.

The former aide, John Culbertson of Centreville, Va., testified last week and again Wednesday that he's never had any verifiable photos of the actual explosion.

Federal officials have denied for years that the government had any prior knowledge of the attack.

Jury selection in Nichols' trial begins March 1.