

PAPERS' DISCOVERY SHOULD LEAD TO NEW TRIAL, ROBBER SAYS

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Peter "Commander Pedro" Langan, convicted twice in Columbus of being a leader of a white-supremacist bank-robbery gang, is using documents uncovered by the Associated Press in an attempt to obtain a new trial.

In motions filed in U.S. District Court in Columbus, Langan says the documents show that federal agents in the mid-1990s investigated the possibility that some members of Langan's Midwestern Bank Bandits were linked to Timothy McVeigh and the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City.

Some of the gang members, including Kevin "Blondie" McCarthy, later became government informants and testified against Langan in his two federal trials in Columbus.

Had he known of the documents, his attorneys could have used them to attack the credibility of McCarthy and other witnesses, Langan writes.

"What is clear . . . is that the (federal government) and its agents at one time were very actively pursuing leads between . . . BOMBROB and OKBOMB," Langan writes. BOMBROB was the name given by the FBI to its investigation of the Midwestern Bank Bandits. OKBOMB was the name the bureau gave to its probe of the Oklahoma City bombing.

One document indicates McCarthy and two other gang members, but not Langan, were in Oklahoma around the time of the bombing that killed more than 160 people, Langan says.

Yesterday, the FBI ordered a review of the bombing investigation and whether McVeigh had more accomplices, the Associated Press reported.

Federal authorities once suspected McVeigh himself might have been involved in the gang's robbery of a bank in Middleburg Heights outside Cleveland, Langan writes. The FBI document obtained by the AP says agents once attempted to compare photos of McVeigh with images from a video camera in the bank at the time of the robbery, Langan writes. "The results were inconclusive," his motion says.

In its own motion, the government denies withholding any evidence.

"Langan has failed to demonstrate any newly discovered evidence concerning Kevin McCarthy, which was not properly disclosed by the government at the time McCarthy testified," the government says.

Langan was arrested Jan. 18, 1996, after a shootout on the South Side. By that time, his gang had robbed 22 banks in Ohio and five other Midwestern states.

In Langan's second trial, McCarthy testified that FBI agents briefly suspected some gang members might be linked with McVeigh. McCarthy denied any involvement.

McVeigh had many of the same anti-government and neo-Nazi sympathies as those espoused by members of the Midwestern Bank Bandits.

In an AP article this week about a possible link between McVeigh and the Midwestern Bank Bandits, Langan is quoted as saying he will testify next week in the state trial of Terry Nichols, who was a co-defendant of McVeigh.

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