

Secret Service documents cite mystery video in Oklahoma City bombing

Agents' log suggests that McVeigh might have had accomplices

By JOHN SOLOMON
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Secret Service document written shortly after the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing described security video footage of the attack and witness testimony that suggested Timothy McVeigh may have had accomplices at the scene.

"Security video tapes from the area show the truck detonation 3 minutes and 6 seconds after the suspects exited the truck," the Secret Service reported six days after the attack on a log of

agents' activities and evidence in the Oklahoma investigation.

The government has insisted McVeigh drove the truck himself and that it never had any video of the bombing or the scene of the Alfred P. Murrah building in the minutes before the April 19, 1995, blast. Several investigators and prosecutors who worked the case told the Associated Press they had never seen video footage like that described in the Secret Service log.

The document, if accurate, is either significant evidence kept secret for nine years or a misconstrued recounting of investigative leads that were

often passed by word of mouth during the hectic early days of the case, they said.

"I did not see it," said Danny Defenbaugh, the retired FBI agent who ran the Oklahoma City probe. "If it shows what it says, ... it would be significant."

Secret Service spokesman Charles Bopp declined to discuss the video footage reference, saying it would be addressed by witnesses later this week at the capital murder trial of McVeigh co-defendant Terry Nichols. "It is anticipated Secret Service employees will testify in court concerning these matters," he said.

Other documents obtained by AP show the Secret Service in late 1995 gave prosecutors several computer disks of enhanced digital photographs of the Murrah building, intelligence

files on several subjects in the investigation and a file detailing an internal affairs inquiry concerning an agent who reconstructed key phone evidence against McVeigh.

"These abstract sheets are sensitive documents which we have protected from disclosure in the past," said a Secret Service letter that recounted discussions in late 1995 with federal prosecutors on what evidence would be turned over to defense lawyers.

Lawyers for Nichols say they have never been given the security video, photo disks or internal investigative file referenced in the documents.

The trial judge has threatened to dismiss the death penalty case if evidence was withheld. McVeigh was executed in 2001 on a separate federal conviction. Nichols was sentenced to life in

prison on federal charges before being tried by the state this year.

The government has maintained for years that McVeigh parked the Ryder rental truck carrying a massive fertilizer bomb outside the Murrah building and left alone in a getaway car he parked around the corner. The bombing killed more than 160 people.

The only video prosecutors introduced at trial showed the Ryder truck without any visible passengers as it passed a security camera inside a high-rise apartment building a block away from the Murrah building.

But the Secret Service log reported on April 24 and April 25, 1995, that there was security footage showing the Ryder truck pulling up to the Murrah building. The log does not say where such video came from or who possessed it.



McVeigh