

Nichols Letter Alleges Third Participant in Oklahoma Bombing

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Melissa Block talks with Richard J. Serrano of the *Los Angeles Times* about his report on Terry Nichols' allegations in a letter to a woman named Kathy Sanders that a third man, Roger Moore, was involved in the Oklahoma City bombing.

ROBERT SIEGEL, host:

From NPR News, this is ALL THINGS CONSIDERED. I'm Robert Siegel.

MELISSA BLOCK, host:

And I'm Melissa Block.

Terry Nichols, who was convicted of conspiring with Timothy McVeigh in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, has accused a third man of providing some of the explosives used in the attack. Terry Nichols' charges come in a letter he sent from federal prison to a woman whose two grandsons were killed in the bombing. The woman, Kathy Sanders, has been in touch with Terry Nichols over the years and has written a book laying out her theories of others who she says may have been involved in the attack. Richard Serrano is covering the story for the *Los Angeles Times*.

Thanks for being with us.

Mr. RICHARD SERRANO (Los Angeles Times): My pleasure.

BLOCK: Let's talk about the man that Terry Nichols is implicating here in providing the explosives. He's no stranger to this case; in fact, he testified against Terry Nichols at his trial. Tell us a bit more about Roger Moore.

Mr. SERRANO: Roger Moore is a longtime gun collector who used to live in Arkansas and used to sort of make the gun circuit, and ran into McVeigh at these different gun shows around the country and they struck up a bit of a relationship. Not only did they have a love of guns, but they also shared the same feelings about the government. They were anti-government, particularly after what had

happened in Waco in '93 and Ruby Ridge. So they had a very mutual interest that way.

BLOCK: Had there been any suspicion before that Roger Moore may actually have provided explosives that were used in the attack?

Mr. SERRANO: Well, Roger Moore was a man of great interest to the FBI in the early days of the bombing, as was anybody who knew McVeigh and sort of ran in his circles, and they had quite a few conversations with him. But he was never charged, and he denies to this day that he had any involvement.

BLOCK: Just this past March, bomb components and explosives, I believe, were found at Terry Nichols' former house in Kansas. What did Terry Nichols say, in this letter that we're talking about, about those explosives?

Mr. SERRANO: Well, the feds had spent a lot of time at that house and had searched the house. But here recently, they went back in in March and found these other components, and some of them are believed to be 300 blasting caps that were consistent with the caps that were stolen from a nearby quarry that-- the feds believe those caps were stolen by McVeigh and Nichols and then used in the bombing. And so some of those were there. And then Nichols says also that some of the stuff in the crawl space had come from Moore and some of it was used in the bombing and some of it was still there in storage. And there was a fear among many that Nichols or someone had hidden those there and was planning a second bombing on the anniversary, which was last month, of the Oklahoma--10-year anniversary, and Nichols denied that that was the plan.

But it does seem odd that they sat there for so long. And I think the house turned ownership over a couple of times, and that suddenly we're just now finding them and it just sort of feeds on the whole conspiracy mystery of this case.

BLOCK: Well, what has the FBI had to say about Terry Nichols' charges?

Mr. SERRANO: Not a whole lot. They told me yesterday that 300 of the blasting caps are consistent with what was taken from the quarry, and the other material is being examined forensically at the FBI lab in Quantico, Virginia. There's been no conclusive determination yet as to where those came from. Terry Nichols says that the FBI should be able to find Roger Moore's fingerprints on that material, so we'll have to wait and see what they find out.

BLOCK: You know, all of this fuels suspicions of the people who think that the government didn't fully prosecute or investigate this case and that there are unanswered questions.

Mr. SERRANO: Well, in any big case like this, there's always unanswered questions. There's always many who believe that there are others involved, and

there may very well be others involved. Congress may soon open its own formal hearings this summer to answer some of these questions.

BLOCK: What do you think the likelihood is that that will happen?

Mr. SERRANO: I don't know. Congressman Rohrabacher from Southern California is the chairman of a subcommittee who's gathering evidence now and trying to make a decision, and he says he'll come to some decision within a couple of weeks. And it'll be interesting if they do that. They did that after Waco. They had hearings up on Capitol Hill several years after Waco to sort of figure out what happened. There were a lot of conspiracy theories about that, too.

And it might not be a bad thing to do, to air out a lot of this in an open forum. And I mean, there's--for instance, there's 23 surveillance tapes that were made around the federal building in Oklahoma City. One of the tapes showed the Ryder truck in the moments before the bombing and, of course, people want to see the other tapes, see what might be on there. Was there somebody with McVeigh? Was other people there? And they refuse to make those tapes public, even though the case itself is over and closed. They refuse to make them public, and that's one of the things that the congressman wants to get access to and let the people see them.

BLOCK: Richard Serrano, thanks very much.

Mr. SERRANO: My pleasure.

BLOCK: Richard Serrano of the Los Angeles Times is author of the book "One of Ours: Timothy McVeigh and the Oklahoma City Bombing."