

## Did Oklahoma bombers have help?

After a decade of silence, Terry Nichols, convicted of conspiracy in the Oklahoma City bombing, has accused a third man of being an accomplice...

By Richard Serrano  
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WASHINGTON — After a decade of silence, Terry Nichols, convicted of conspiracy in the Oklahoma City bombing, has accused a third man of being an accomplice who provided some of the explosives used to kill 168 people at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building 10 years ago.

Nichols, in a letter written from his cell at the government's Supermax prison in Colorado, said Arkansas gun collector Roger Moore donated so-called binary explosives, made up of two components, to bomber Timothy McVeigh that were used in Oklahoma City, as well as additional bomb components that recently were found in Nichols' former home in Kansas.

The claim that a third man was involved in the plot comes as a California congressman has begun pressing for answers to lingering questions about the worst act of domestic terrorism in the United States.

Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, R-Calif., chairman of the investigative arm of the House Committee on International Relations, has been collecting new evidence in the bombing and said he would announce soon whether to open formal hearings into the April 19, 1995, tragedy.

He says Nichols' knowledge about other potential conspirators is central to his investigation, especially since the components found in March in a crawl space below Nichols' home remained undetected for nearly a decade. The congressman said it was important to determine whether others were involved beyond Nichols and McVeigh, two Army pals who became anti-government zealots.

"That this mass murder of Americans was accomplished by two disgruntled veterans acting alone seems to be the conclusion reached by those in authority," Rohrabacher said recently on the House floor, referring to the FBI's investigation of the bombing.

"However," Rohrabacher said, "there are some unsettling loose ends and unanswered questions."

Nichols has been convicted twice — in federal court and in an Oklahoma state court — and is serving two life sentences without parole. He had been silent for 10 years; his new revelations are considered significant because they came in letters he sent to Kathy Sanders, who lost two grandchildren in the bombing.

Nichols, 50, said he wanted to speak out about the bombing because the 10-year anniversary last month honoring the victims had passed and “I felt the record should be set straight.”

Repeated attempts to find Moore, an itinerant gun dealer who has lived in Arkansas and Florida, for comment on Nichols’ allegations were unsuccessful yesterday. The FBI in the early stages of its investigation took a hard look at Moore because of his anti-government views and close relationship with McVeigh.

McVeigh often stayed at Moore’s home in Royal, Ark., and the two had exchanged letters sharing their views about the government.

In past interviews, Moore denied involvement in the bombing. He said that, before the explosion, he was robbed at gunpoint by a masked man who stole dozens of firearms and other weapons from his home in Royal.

The FBI and government prosecutors later proved that McVeigh sold the firearms to raise money to purchase bomb ingredients, and prosecutors long have asserted that Nichols robbed Moore.

In past interviews with the Los Angeles Times, Moore said he took a lie-detector test that convinced the FBI he was not involved in the bombing. Nichols’ letter to Sanders was dated April 18, the day before the 10-year anniversary. He asserted that the government knows others were involved but will not prosecute them. He said he wants to work with Rohrabacher and Congress “to help expose the gov’t coverup in my case and thus reveal the truth in the OKC bombing.”

He said ongoing FBI tests of the components found at his house in Herington, Kan., would support his allegation that the material came from Moore and his friend Karen Anderson.

“That case of nitromethane came directly from Roger Moore’s Royal, Arkansas, home, and his prints should be found on that box and/or tubes, and Karen Anderson’s prints may be there as well,” Nichols wrote. (Anderson also could not be reached yesterday.)

The FBI spokesman in Kansas City, Mo., Jeff Lanza, said yesterday that 300 blasting caps found at Nichols’ home had been positively traced to a nearby Kansas quarry where agents believe Nichols and McVeigh stole some of the bomb components. Other material, which Lanza declined to identify, found at the home still was being examined for fingerprints and other evidence at the FBI crime laboratory in Quantico, Va.

Despite her personal loss in the Oklahoma City bombing, Sanders has befriended Nichols, while conducting a personal investigation into the bombing. She said the letter he wrote shows that he is eager to talk.

“He was a quiet, introverted little fellow before the Oklahoma City bombing,” she said. “He’s been sitting in his cell now for 10 years alone. He’s very timid, he’s not good in social circles. But he is starting to want to tell everything.”

McVeigh was considered the bombing mastermind. Nichols helped him assemble the bomb in Kansas but then stayed at home while McVeigh drove the rental truck to Oklahoma City.

McVeigh was executed in June 2001, and secrets may have died with him. That makes Nichols all the more interesting to Rohrabacher and Sanders.

She recently wrote a book, “After Oklahoma City,” and has met with the congressman to share some of what she has turned up in her quest to find others who might be responsible.

Sanders said Rohrabacher had made inquiries about meeting with Nichols. If he convenes formal hearings, the congressman could subpoena Nichols to appear in Washington as a witness.

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