

# **Nichols claims FBI official directed bombing McVeigh cohort again claims robbery of a gun collector was simply staged**

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Feb. 22--In a new statement from prison about the Oklahoma City bombing, Terry Nichols is claiming his co-conspirator Timothy McVeigh once "let slip" that a top FBI official was behind the bomb plans.

Nichols, 51, claims an angry McVeigh identified Larry Potts as the high-ranking FBI official "who was apparently directing McVeigh in the bomb plot."

Nichols claims McVeigh was upset because the official had changed the target.

"It's just nonsense and ridiculous," said Potts, a former deputy director, the No. 2 position at the FBI.

"I can't tell you how horrible it has made me feel all day to have my name associated with that," Potts told The Oklahoman on Wednesday. "I keep thinking about survivors and the families of those who lost people in that tragedy, that they have to be exposed to this kind of stuff from a guy like Nichols who was the cause of it. It's just kind of heartbreaking all the way around."

'Without any factual basis'

The FBI called Nichols' claim "completely without any factual basis."

"We remain certain that all individuals responsible for the bombing have been successfully investigated, charged and prosecuted," the FBI said.

Nichols gave no explanation in the statement why an FBI official would want a federal building bombed.

Nichols also claims McVeigh "was planning another bombing later."

Nichols made the statement Feb. 9 for a federal lawsuit brought by Utah attorney Jesse Trentadue, who is investigating the April 19, 1995, bombing on his own. Trentadue is asking a federal judge for permission to get a videotaped statement from Nichols.

Trentadue contends his younger brother, a convicted bank robber, was murdered at the Oklahoma City Federal Transfer Center in August 1995 during an interrogation. He contends authorities mistook his brother for a bombing suspect.

He is suing the FBI for records to support his theory. Federal and local officials concluded the brother, Kenneth Trentadue, committed suicide in his cell.

Nichols, a convicted murderer, is serving life sentences at the maximum-security federal penitentiary in Colorado for his role in the bombing. McVeigh was executed in 2001.

'I poured the nitromethane'

Nichols denied publicly for years that he participated in the bombing, but in 2005 admitted his involvement to the FBI, his family and a U.S. congressman. He also has written letters discussing his role.

In the new statement, Nichols again admitted he helped McVeigh build the fertilizer-based bomb in a rented truck at a lake in Kansas. "I poured the nitromethane into the barrels," he wrote. He also insisted again that he did not know McVeigh's target.

"From the outset, I want to acknowledge my poor judgment and culpability in having assisted Timothy McVeigh," Nichols wrote in the 17-page statement.

He also repeated his claim that Arkansas gun collector Roger Moore helped in the plot. He again admitted he robbed Moore but he claimed he found out later the crime was staged.

Nichols wrote, "McVeigh ... said that he and Moore came up with the plan to stage a robbery so that if any investigation of the bombing tracked back to Moore, Moore could claim he was the victim of a home robbery rather than a supplier of funds and explosives used to carry out the attack."

Moore on Wednesday again denied he was involved in the bombing.

"What else has he got to do?" Moore said of Nichols' statement. "I don't worry about it anymore."

What happened to tag?

In the new statement, Nichols revealed that he tossed the license tag from McVeigh's getaway car into a Kansas river two days after the bombing.

"The license plate was on the Mercury when I followed McVeigh to Oklahoma City prior to the bombing," Nichols wrote.

"To this day, I have never understood why McVeigh removed that license plate, which eventually led to his arrest, brought that plate back to Kansas and deliberately left it in that storage shed among his personal possessions."