

# CIA Provided Imagery, Searched Databases For OKC Bombing Probe

March 18, 2007

**By J.M. Berger**  
INTELWIRE.com

The CIA provided imagery, translators and searched a database of Islamic extremists during the first week after the Oklahoma City bombing.

An unclassified summary of CIA activities was provided to INTELWIRE in response to a Freedom of Information Act request. The information provided is intriguing, but mostly lacking in salient detail. INTELWIRE has filed an appeal seeking additional documents in support of the summary.

The CIA provided imagery of the Alfred E. Murrah Federal Building for use by the FBI in evaluating the bomb blast. The imagery included both before and after images. It was not clear from the document when -- or why -- the "before" pictures were taken. At the time, the CIA was heavily restricted in its domestic surveillance activities.

The CIA made translators available for the FBI. It was not indicated whether those translators were employed.

The agency's Counterterrorist Center followed up on "preliminary leads from CIA Field Stations with name traces and file reviews as appropriate." The document did not disclose the nature or number of those leads.

The CTC also "searched its data archives for members of any Islamic extremist or terrorist groups known to have spent time in Oklahoma City."

The document did not characterize the results of that search, but it is likely that several names appeared. Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, who led the World Trade Center bombing conspiracy, was known to have visited Oklahoma City. Another visitor was Mahmud Abouhalima, one of the WTC conspirators.

Interestingly, another name that might have popped up was Wadih El-Hage, an American citizen who served as Osama bin Laden's personal secretary. El-Hage met Abouhalima in OKC in 1989, during an Islamic conference. Although El-Hage had come to the attention of investigators no later than 1993, he was not arrested until after the 1998 East African Embassy bombings.

The agency also provided the FBI with forensic information on the truck bomb that destroyed the U.S. embassy in Beirut in 1983.

In response to the attack, the CIA set up an "agency-wide task force to focus foreign intelligence resources on the Oklahoma City case," but the task force had been "disestablished" by April 27, just eight days after the bombing, "in light of the domestic background of the apparent perpetrators."

The document makes no mention of the overseas travel of OKC conspirator Terry Nichols, who spent a significant amount of time in the Philippines during the same period Ramzi Yousef was actively plotting terrorist attacks in that country.