

McVeigh defense archive shows bomber viewed blast as failure

By MICHAEL GRACZYK, Associated Press | April 17th, 2015

AUSTIN, Texas — Timothy McVeigh considered the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building 20 years ago somewhat of a failure, viewed himself as a "Paul Revere-type messenger" and even suggested his defense team should receive \$800,000 from the government, according an archive of documents donated by the convicted bomber's lead attorney.

The estimated 1 million pages of paper documents from Stephen Jones now fill 550 file cabinet-sized boxes at the Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas, where the Enid, Oklahoma, attorney received his undergraduate degree. The trove, delivered to the school in three phases since 1998, only became fully organized late last year.

It includes a confidential report from a polygraph examiner, who wrote that McVeigh had wanted to 'take out' the Murrah Building on April 19, 1995. Although the blast killed 168 people, including 19 children, the examiner concluded that "In McVeigh's mind, he believed that he had definitely screwed up because he left the building still standing."

McVeigh was executed by injection in 2001 at age 33. Co-conspirator Terry Nichols was convicted separately and sentenced to life in prison.

Even as he stood accused of orchestrating what until the Sept. 11 attacks was considered the deadliest act of terrorism on U.S. soil, McVeigh appeared to be driven by profit and thought his attorneys should be entitled to "\$800,000 (after fees, taxes)."

"If I'm gonna die anyway, I want to make some money. Not for me, but to try to make up for what my family has been put thru, as well as to shell out some 'bonuses' to my legal team.," he wrote in one note to his defense team included in the archive.

In another, he doodled a tank ramming a house and wrote: "This is the FBI! ... Send out your women and children. We know you're in there and we know you have Bibles and a copy of the Constitution!"

The collection also includes a copy of a published cartoon showing 11 jurors frowning and one smiling, with an arrow pointing to her and the note: "My choice, potential juror."

Don Carleton, executive director of the museum, said Jones wasn't comfortable putting the material at an Oklahoma institution "because the feelings were so raw" and his fears the collection could be perceived as "almost a shrine" to the convicted bomber.

© Provided by Associated Press , is a page of notes made by Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh's defense team while talking to him. The page is on one of the millions of pages of attorney/client documents donated by attorney Stephen Jones to the center at.

"It's been a difficult collection to figure out how to let people know we have it available for research," Carleton said. "You don't want to promote it. That's not the right word. You don't want to publicize it without coming across as being somewhat celebratory. It's almost like Holocaust records. You've got a whole bunch of people who are rightly so sensitive to this."

Besides the handwritten notes from McVeigh, the defense case files include reports of investigations, news stories, photos, recordings and trial exhibits.

In 2001, Jones published a book suggesting McVeigh and Nichols could not have been alone in carrying out the bombing, McVeigh denied any knowledge of another collaborator, or presence of an accomplice who became known in the case as John Doe No. 2. But the polygraph examiner, Tim Domgard, wrote there were "indications of deception" in McVeigh's responses related to questions about others involved.

McVeigh provided a first-person account of the bombing during two days of interviews with Jones in September 1995. He talked of lighting the fuse in a rental truck filled with explosive fertilizer, parking it at the building, throwing the key behind the seat, then walking away and trying not to look conspicuous, even after the blast hit.

He told Jones that he didn't have the resources to conduct a "solo war" and was convinced he "could have gotten away clean from this and continued on if I had anywhere to go."

"I determined that the best way would be to continue on as the Paul Revere type messenger instead of the John Brown type revolutionary, that you could accomplish maybe two in one," McVeigh said.

In the polygraph interview, McVeigh said when he was pulled over by an Oklahoma highway trooper shortly after the bombing for not displaying a license plate on his car, he had "several opportunities to kill the trooper, however, did not because he was a state official and not a federal official."

Asked about events leading up to the bombing, McVeigh said "action had to be taken" after the 1994 passage of the assault weapons ban, but said he wasn't certain at that time exactly what kind of action would be appropriate. In other notes, he also points to the outcome of the Branch Davidian siege near Waco as an influence.

The files have numerous references to media coverage and McVeigh's sense that Jones was too cozy with reporters and TV producers.

McVeigh complained to Jones in 1995 that he was granting so many television and newspaper interviews, "I am afraid you are becoming addicted to the 'media bug.'" Jones responded: "If you want to keep the media on your side, they must be fed."

In one note to Jones marked "Personal," McVeigh told him if anyone ever approached him "to 'lean' on you to 'throw' my case, please confide in me."

"I am a realist, and I know our government," he added. "TDC – threat, duress, or coercion – is a standard. Money or

TRUCK COWBOYS

- 9- 55 gallon drums Nitro / Ammon Nitrate
- 4- 55 gallon drums Diesel / Ammon Nitrate
- ≈ 6 Bags of Ammon Nitrate Filled w Diesel
- 350 lbs Towe - Black Box (Batteries)
- ≈ 20 Drums Diesel (in Towe or Black Towe)
- 2 Lengths of Remoras Case
- 4 *8 New Electric Battery Cars

muscle can influence all but the most ideological."

In the interview with Jones detailing the bombing and his arrest, he recalled how someone at the jail watching television coverage of the bombing investigation told him he resembled a composite photo of a suspect being sought.

Then a court appearance for his arrest for carrying a concealed gun and knife during the traffic stop, he noticed increased police activity around the courthouse where he was held. After his bond was set at \$5,000, a woman in an adjacent cell told him: "They think you're the bomber."

"And I said, 'No way.' And then here is where it becomes a blur, Stephen," McVeigh told Jones.