

## Cover-up in OKC

*by William F. Jasper*

**In trying to pin the blame for the bombing solely on despicable mass-murderer Timothy McVeigh, federal officials have ignored and covered up evidence of a wider conspiracy.**

Readers of The New American are familiar with many of the charges leveled by Jannie Coverdale, Kathy Wilburn, Jane Graham, and others personally affected by the Oklahoma City bombing (see page 12). The extensive investigation carried out by this magazine over the past six years has confirmed that their fears and charges of cover-up, coercion, deception, and obstruction are fully justified.\*

Our investigation has led to several major conclusions that completely contradict the official government line, which holds that Timothy McVeigh masterminded and carried out the terrorist assault on the Murrah Building, with his only significant assistance coming from former Army buddy Terry Nichols. Those conclusions, more fully examined in the remainder of this article, are summarized in the following bullet points:

- **Multiple Accomplices** — Credible witnesses saw McVeigh with John Does in Junction City, Kansas, where the Ryder truck was rented, in the days before the bombing. Many additional credible witnesses saw McVeigh with one or more John Does in Oklahoma City on the morning of the bombing. Still more credible witnesses saw McVeigh with one or more John Does in or around the Murrah Building in the days before the bombing. In fact, the prosecution did not present *any* eye-witnesses in Oklahoma City who saw McVeigh alone on the day of the bombing; virtually every eyewitness saw him with one or more John Does.
- **Multiple Bombs** — Physics, the available forensic evidence, official records, eyewitnesses, and an impressive array of world-class experts compellingly argue that the Ryder truck bomb could not have caused the terrible damage and deadly destruction of the federal building without the help of explosive charges placed on the columns of the building. This clearly put the bombing operation beyond McVeigh's level of technical expertise and necessitated two or more additional accomplices.
- **Prior Knowledge** — Documents from the ATF, FBI, and U.S. Marshal's Service, as well as witness testimony and the testimony of federal undercover informants, indicate that high officials in the federal government were given prior warning about the impending attack on the

Murrah Federal Building.

- **Misconduct, Coercion, and Cover-up** — In an astonishing number of instances, vital evidence was ignored, suppressed, tampered with, and even destroyed. Witnesses were coached, harassed, and coerced in attempts to get them to change their testimony.

### Making the "John Does" Disappear



**Many credible witnesses** reported seeing another individual with McVeigh strongly resembling the infamous sketch of John Doe #2. Among them, Vickie Beemer, who handled the rental transaction of the Ryder truck used in the bombing, informed the FBI of John Doe #2 only to have investigators claim that she had mistaken him for a different man.

Shortly after the bombing, eyewitnesses provided the FBI with descriptions of two suspects, which formed the basis for the famous FBI sketches known as "John Doe No. 1" and "John Doe No. 2." The John Doe No. 1 sketch turned out to be a pretty close depiction of Timothy McVeigh, who was arrested by an Oklahoma Highway Patrolman on a routine traffic stop as he fled north on the interstate highway after the bombing. John Doe No. 2, who for weeks was the "world's most wanted" fugitive, was never arrested. Attorney General Janet Reno and FBI officials swore that "no stone will be left unturned" in the pursuit of this elusive suspect. Instead of turning over stones, however, the Department of Justice and FBI were soon *burying* evidence and leads. The DOJ-FBI sleuths soon concocted a cover story, still used by the media, that John Doe 2 was a product of faulty memory and mistaken identity. According to this story, the witnesses at the Ryder truck rental agency in Junction City, Kansas, had mistakenly fingered Army Private Todd Bunting, who had come in to rent a truck with Sergeant Michael Hertig the day after McVeigh, and who had no connection to the bombing.

There were many problems with this story. For one, it conflicted, in many details, with the original accounts provided by the three Ryder witnesses to the FBI. Besides, Vickie Beemer, who handled the rental transaction, knew Sgt. Hertig and was not likely to confuse him with a stranger. What's more, she remained steadfast in her sworn testimony before the grand jury and the trial jury that she was "absolutely 100% certain" that the "Robert Kling" who rented the Ryder truck used in the bombing (whom the government says was McVeigh) was accompanied by another individual.

Another major problem with the government theory is that even if the Ryder witness mix-up story were true, there are still many additional eyewitnesses who

saw McVeigh with a man resembling the John Doe 2 sketch. And still more witnesses also saw McVeigh with several other individuals immediately before the bombing. In any criminal case — and especially in one this important, involving the "most deadly terrorist attack on U.S. soil" — the prosecution normally desires to use eyewitnesses who can establish the connection of the accused directly to the crime, and particularly to the crime scene. Prior to the McVeigh trial, the prosecution filed a list of 327 witnesses with the court. Only 141 were called. Very few were eyewitnesses, and none placed McVeigh in Oklahoma City. There were many witnesses who could have placed him there. Why were they not called?

One of the eyewitnesses never called was Mike Moroz, who worked at a tire store several blocks from the Murrah Building. Moroz picked McVeigh out of the FBI lineup, providing identification that led to McVeigh's arraignment. According to Moroz and his co-worker, Brian Marshall, McVeigh pulled the Ryder truck into the tire shop's parking lot around 8:40 a.m., about 20 minutes before the explosion. Moroz spoke briefly to McVeigh, who was driving, and also saw a passenger in the truck with McVeigh.

About five minutes later, McVeigh stopped his truck in front of the Regency Towers, one block west of the Murrah Building, and purchased two sodas and a package of cigarettes from Danny Wilkerson, who ran the Towers' convenience store. The truck was caught on the Regency surveillance tape. Wilkerson stated that a male passenger accompanied McVeigh. This remained his death-bed testimony, when he died of cancer in 1998.

Around 8:58 a.m., about five minutes before the explosion, Rodney Johnson, a paramedic, was driving in front of the Murrah Building when he was forced to brake for two men walking from the direction of the Murrah Building to the parking lot across the street, where another witness saw McVeigh and a John Doe get into McVeigh's Mercury Marquis and hurriedly drive away. Rodney Johnson notified the FBI that night, and his description of the two suspects closely matched McVeigh and John Doe No. 2 — before the FBI sketches were made public.

Many other important eyewitnesses saw McVeigh in or near the Murrah Building with one or more John Does, including:

- Kyle Hunt, a Tulsa banker;
- Morris John Kuper, an employee of the nearby Kerr-McGee Oil Company;
- Debbie Nakanashi, a U.S. Postal Service employee;
- Dr. Paul Heath, a public affairs officer with the Veterans Administration;
- Danielle Hunt, the former operator of the Murrah Building daycare center;
- Priscilla Salyer, an employee of the U.S. Customs Service; and
- Germaine Johnson, a HUD branch chief.

Other eyewitnesses who saw Timothy McVeigh with John Does in the Junction City, Kansas area, where he stayed before driving to Oklahoma City, or who saw John Does in McVeigh's motel room, include:

- Jeff Davis, who delivered Chinese food to McVeigh's motel room;
- Hilda Sostre, a maid at the Dreamland Motel where McVeigh stayed;
- Joan Van Buren, a Subway sandwich clerk;
- Donald and Connie Hood, visitors at the Dreamland Motel; and
- Barbara Whittenberg, owner of the Santa Fe Trail Diner.

How compelling is the cumulative eyewitness testimony? According to John Douglas, the FBI's legendary criminal personality profile expert, it is *very* compelling. Mr. Douglas, the author of the nonfiction bestsellers *Mind Hunter* and *Journey Into Darkness*, is a 25-year veteran with the FBI and a consultant to law enforcement agencies nationwide. He was interviewed for the September 3, 1996 broadcast of NBC's *Dateline* segment on the bombing investigation. Douglas stated that based upon his personality profiles of McVeigh and Nichols, as well as practical considerations involved in building and delivering the truck bomb and the compelling testimony of so many witnesses with no apparent motive for lying, he is convinced there must be other co-conspirators. According to Douglas: "I believe there has to be someone who looks like the sketch because there are too many people who have looked at the sketch and said 'that's who I saw on or about that day.'"

John Douglas suggested that "the FBI may be in trouble here. There are other people involved in this and they'd better find them. I don't know what happened precisely, but I do know the criminal personality. But when I look at Nichols and I look at McVeigh — these two people are solely and exclusively responsible for this type of crime? I doubt it." Later, in 1997, when this writer discussed the Oklahoma City bombing case with Douglas, the famed consultant and crime fighter stated that additional evidence and witnesses had made his earlier opinion even stronger. "I think the government's position, in light of all the evidence to the contrary, is absurd," he said.

### **Science Is Silenced**

Almost before the dust had cleared from the explosion, the official government line was that the attack on the Murrah Building had involved only a truck bomb, composed of ANFO (ammonium nitrate and fuel oil) and parked on the street next to the building. From that point on, the government story on the size and composition of the bomb mutated several times to fit the official line. As the McVeigh trial was about to start, the Department of Justice issued a report by the Office of the Inspector General that particularly censured the work of Special Agent David Williams of the FBI lab explosives unit, and Williams' supervisor, Thomas Thurman. Williams, the main explosives analyst for the prosecution in this case, had grossly fudged evidence on all of the major points: the size and

composition of the truck bomb; the velocity of the explosives; the type of detonator used; the containers that supposedly were used; and the presence of explosive residue on clothing and other articles belonging to Timothy McVeigh. The Inspector General's critique found that Williams' forensic report was flawed, unscientific, biased, improper, unjustified, invalid, and appeared "to tailor the opinion to evidence associated with the defendants."

Long before this, however, many genuine experts had already concluded that it would have been physically impossible for the truck bomb alone to have accomplished the massive structural destruction of the heavy concrete, steel-reinforced columns. The evidence pointed overwhelmingly, they insisted, to the detonation of high-explosive contact charges on the columns inside the building. This stellar group of experts includes legendary physicist and defense analyst Sam Cohen, inventor of the neutron bomb; Brigadier General Benton K. Partin, former director of the Air Force Armaments Technology Laboratory; Dr. Frederick Hansen, professor of physics at the University of Oregon, former research scientist with NASA, and former head of earth and astro sciences at the General Motors Defense Research Laboratories; Dr. Ernest B. Paxson, an engineer with over 30 years' experience in civilian and defense-related projects and a published author in many professional journals; and Dr. Robert G. Breene, author, former professor of physics, and formerly a visiting scientist at the Max Planck Institute in Germany.

In addition to the authoritative assessments of these and other experts, there is the equally compelling testimony provided by eyewitnesses; official police, military, and fire department logs; and television video coverage showing that there were additional internal charges within the Murrah Building that failed to detonate and that were later removed by bomb squads. (See, "Proof of Multiple Bombs," in our issue for July 20, 1998.) This matter could have been settled with finality if an independent, technically competent analysis of the crime scene and the forensic evidence — especially from the concrete columns — had been allowed. But, incredibly, one month after the bombing, before such an evaluation could be made, the crime scene and evidence were destroyed, as the building was imploded by commercial demolition blasters. Then the massive evidence of the crime scene was hauled away and buried. This happened at the very time that heated arguments in the O.J. Simpson trial, "the trial of the century," centered on charges that the Los Angeles Police Department had failed to preserve the crime scene and other important evidence in that case. It is elementary doctrine and procedure to preserve the crime scene and preserve evidence; why in this, of all cases, was there such a rush to destroy the evidence?

### **Prior Warning**

On the morning of April 19, 1995, the second anniversary of the federal assault on the Branch Davidian church complex in Waco, the ATF office at the Murrah

Building was all but abandoned. Had they been warned of a possible attack? Compelling evidence led many survivors to begin asking questions about this. Bruce Shaw rushed to the building immediately after the blast to try to find his wife, an employee with the Federal Credit Union. In an interview with this reporter, and in sworn affidavits, Shaw said he was informed by an ATF agent at the scene that the ATF staff had been warned on their pagers not to come in. Two paramedics at the scene, in separate incidents, also reported hearing similar statements from ATF agents. The paramedics, Katherine Mallette and Tiffany Bible, have provided sworn affidavits of their testimony.

The ATF responded immediately, claiming "malicious rumors" of prior ATF warning "are entirely false." The ATF rushed to cover the fact that only two, three, or five (depending on which account one takes) of the agency's 17 employees were in the office that morning. ATF spokesman Lester Martz presented an apocryphal tale of ATF heroism to counter the mounting concern, claiming that Agent Alex McCauley was in an elevator with a DEA agent when the bomb exploded. "The elevator dropped in a free fall from the eighth floor to the third," said Martz. "The two men were trapped in the smoke-filled elevator.... On their fourth attempt, they managed to break through the doors and escape from the elevator. The agents made their way to the stairwell and brought with them 10 or 15 people they found along the way...."

This ludicrous scenario soon proved to be a lie, and an embarrassment to the ATF. The New American interviewed Oscar Johnson, the president of Midwestern Elevator, and his technicians who were at the Murrah Building minutes after the blast. They certified that "none of the elevators fell," and that "all of the elevators' cables were intact." They presented photographs and their official reports to back up their assertions. Johnson and other elevator experts we consulted assured us that although the elevator free fall is a staple of Hollywood action films, "it is not something that happens in real life." Moreover, as Johnson pointed out, if a free fall of five stories *had* occurred, those inside would have suffered *severe* injuries. (See "Prior Knowledge," in our issue for December 11, 1995.)

At least two undercover federal informants repeatedly warned federal authorities weeks in advance of the April 19, 1995 attack of specific plots to blow up federal buildings: Carol Howe, an ATF informant in "Elohim City," a rural enclave providing refuge to violent criminals and members of the Aryan Republican Army, the Ku Klux Klan, and Aryan Nation; and Cary Gagan, an informant for the U.S. Justice Department amongst a group of narco-terrorists operating through Mexico that included foreign nationals of Middle Eastern extraction, as well as domestic Caucasian-Americans. Both Howe and Gagan had formal, written agreements with federal authorities, and both provided substantial documentary evidence to back up their claims that they had provided ample warning to their federal superiors to have foreseen and prevented the devastating attack. (See

"Undercover: The Howe Revelations" in our September 15, 1997 issue, and "Fighting for Answers in OKC" in our issue for August 4, 1997.)

## **Obstructing Justice**

We have already mentioned the incredible destruction of the Murrah Building crime scene and the Inspector General's report on the fraudulent FBI analysis of the truck bomb. Decorated FBI scientist Dr. Frederick Whitehurst has charged that the abuses at the FBI Crime Labs are serious, conscious, and systemic. Senator Charles Grassley was far more critical than the IG report, suggesting that criminal charges against FBI agents may be in order.

Title 18 USCS 1512 provides criminal penalties for intimidation, physical force or misleading conduct directed at a witness. Other sections of the code provide additional penalties for other forms of conduct aimed at falsifying, misrepresenting, or improperly influencing a witness. Penalties would seem to be in order with regard to FBI and DOJ treatment of many OKC witnesses, including: Jeffrey Davis; Danny Wilkerson; Debbie Burdick; Jane Graham; Arlene Blanchard; Morris John Kuper; Paul Heath; David Kochendorfer; James Miller; Kimberly Tolson; Russell Stuart Green; Lana Padilla; Barbara Whittenberg; Eldon Elliot; Vickie Beemer; and Tom Kessinger.

As important as the sins of commission in the OKC bombing case are, it may prove that the FBI's and DOJ's sins of omission are even greater. Following the Nichols trial, Kathy Wilburn made an issue of the fact that the FBI had only checked the more than 1,000 fingerprints in the case against a very small number of suspects (12), many of whom were members of the Nichols family (including two-year-old Nicole Nichols). They had, however, refused to run checks on prime suspects such as Andreas Strassmeir, Dennis Mahon, Michael Brescia, Tony and Peter Ward, Chevie and Cheyne Kehoe, Mark Thomas, and others. Wilburn said FBI Agent John Hersley told her that they would run the prints later. The Justice Department, though, has announced that there is no on-going investigation and "no evidence" of other suspects in the case.

\* See [www.thenewamerican.com/focus/okc](http://www.thenewamerican.com/focus/okc) for access to the text of more than 30 trail-blazing, investigative articles on the OKC bombing).