



Written by [Bonnie Gillis](#) on June 18, 2001

McVeigh and the “Misplaced” FBI Files

Attorney General John Ashcroft’s decision on May 11th to delay the execution of convicted Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh (shown) highlighted one of the most troubling aspects of the deadliest act of terrorism in America’s history. Millions of Americans want to know why the Clinton Justice Department and FBI were so anxious to close this case that they ignored and suppressed massive evidence concerning McVeigh’s accomplices and have propagated the myth that this terrible crime was the work of a “lone bomber.”



Attorney General Ashcroft’s acknowledgement that the FBI withheld thousands of documents in the bombing case is an important vindication of the serious charges of cover-up repeatedly leveled by The New American against the federal authorities charged with investigating and prosecuting this crime. The new revelations *could be* the start of genuine efforts to redress this terrible wrong. Ashcroft’s initial announcement concerning the FBI files was followed by subsequent announcements that still more OKC bombing-related files in dozens of FBI offices have been found. The spin that was put on most of the news stories surrounding the “lost” files is that these files were “misplaced” and forgotten, or that the FBI field offices “misunderstood” orders from the Department of Justice (DOJ) and did not realize that they should have turned over these files sooner.

The main problem, though, with the FBI-DOJ handling of the OKC bombing case is more sinister than merely sloppy office practices and bureaucratic ineptitude; it has to do with systemic top-down efforts to obstruct justice by suppressing evidence, destroying evidence, falsifying evidence, providing false “expert” testimony, intimidating witnesses, and much more. These and other felonious criminal acts by federal authorities in charge of the OKC investigation are detailed in the more than 30 ground-breaking stories on the Oklahoma City bombing published by The New American over the past six years.

As the trial of Timothy McVeigh began in Denver in 1997, The New American warned that the criminal misconduct by federal authorities was not only allowing McVeigh’s terrorist accomplices to go free, but was jeopardizing the case against McVeigh as well. The March 31, 1997 issue of The New American provided a special focus on the incredible obstruction and cover-up in the bombing case under the direction of Janet Reno and Louis Freeh, featuring several explosive stories exposing the misbehavior and criminal misconduct by U.S. government officials in the handling of the investigation and prosecution.

The headline on our cover read:

Two Years Later: As the second anniversary approaches of America’s “deadliest terrorist attack,” federal prosecutors are jeopardizing the case against Timothy McVeigh while his fellow murderers walk free.

Troubling Questions

The stories in that issue of the magazine presented mountains of evidence (eye-witnesses, expert



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testimony, federal informants, and forensic evidence) exposing the Justice/FBI “OKBOMB” task force thesis as completely fraudulent. Among the many vital questions these stories raised were:

- Why was the Justice Department trying so hard to make “John Doe #2” and other bombing accomplices disappear? (Answer: Because the existence of co-conspirators, the “others unknown” referred to in the original federal indictment, jeopardized the Clinton-Reno strategy of “closing” this case with the conviction of Timothy McVeigh.)
- Why, on the eve of the trial, did the federal prosecutors dump all of their most important eye-witnesses who could establish McVeigh as the driver of the Ryder truck and his physical presence in Oklahoma City? (Answer: Because all of them saw him with one or more accomplices, which contradicts the prosecution’s untenable “lone bomber” scenario.)
- Why were FBI agents sent all over the country and around the world to question suspects and interview witnesses, but were not sent to question Andreas Strassmeir, a German national and illegal alien who was in Oklahoma reportedly training and agitating radical separatists for terrorist actions against the federal government? (Answer: Because, even though he was “wanted” under a federal warrant, he apparently had protected status here as a federal undercover operative.)
- Why was federal ATF/FBI informant Carol Howe’s testimony suppressed? (Answer: Because her documents show that she provided advance warning that the radical “Elohim City” group and related groups which she had infiltrated were planning on blowing up federal facilities and had explicitly mentioned the Murrah Building. Her ATF reports and testimony show that Andreas Strassmeir was one of the key ringleaders in these terrorist schemes.)

These and a host of other equally troubling questions remain unaddressed by the federal investigators and prosecutors. There is, for instance, the very disturbing fact that emerged during the trial of McVeigh’s accomplice Terry Nichols concerning the FBI’s explicit orders not to run checks on more than 1,000 unidentified fingerprints taken from Tim McVeigh’s car, motel room, and other important evidentiary sites. Why did DOJ/FBI officials order FBI fingerprint experts *not to* attempt to match these prints with the millions of fingerprints in its computer database?

Widespread Malfeasance

The current attempts to pass off the “lost” FBI files as simply another bureaucratic snafu ignore the disturbing reality of systemic political corruption and malfeasance in the Department of Justice and FBI. Almost completely ignored in the major media coverage of the recent FBI files scandal is the fact that internal investigations of the FBI have shown a pattern of criminal activity. In 1997, as the McVeigh trial was getting underway, a lengthy investigation of the FBI crime lab by the Department of Justice’s Inspector General confirmed widespread malfeasance within the once-vaunted lab. This included the FBI’s explosives unit, which was to play a central role in the OKC bombing investigation/cover-up. Particularly cited in the Inspector General’s (IG) report for severe censure was FBI explosives analyst Dave Williams, who was severely criticized for the fraudulent methods by which he concluded that the Ryder truck used in the OKC bombing had contained a 4,000 pound ANFO device. The IG report found that Agent Williams’ conclusions about the weight and composition of the explosive device and its velocity of detonation, the type of detonator used, and the type of containers used for the explosive material were “flawed,” “without a scientific basis,” and appeared “to tailor the opinion to evidence associated with the defendants,” i.e., Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols.

These and other equally serious revelations in the IG report piled on top of a continuous eruption of



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DOJ/FBI scandals. The scandals included matters of serious official misconduct such as “Filegate,” in which the FBI illegally provided the Clinton White House with files on its political “enemies.” FBI Director Louis Freeh acknowledged that the Bureau’s cooperation with the White House in that case constituted “a complete violation of management responsibility” that allowed “egregious violations of privacy.” Yet no serious action was taken by Congress to penalize those officials responsible for these and other criminal acts and gross misconduct. In fact, the FBI’s jurisdiction, power, and budget were vastly expanded.

A *thorough* congressional investigation of the Oklahoma City bombing and the massive cover-up by the DOJ and FBI is clearly overdue. Timothy McVeigh’s fellow terrorists, who are equally guilty of the murder of 168 men, women, and children, *are still at large!* If future acts of terrorism like this are to be avoided, they must be brought to justice. And officials who have obstructed this objective must be exposed, removed from office, and, where warranted, prosecuted to the full extent of the law.



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