INVESTIGATION: THE FIRST DAYS OF THE OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING

Materials

- Investigating Terrorism handout
- Investigation Timeline handout
- Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) handout
- Photos of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building before and after the bombing
- United States Code – Title 18 Definitions
- Federal Indictment of Timothy James McVeigh and Terry Lynn Nichols

Background/Overview

On April 19, 1995, at 9:02 a.m. a massive explosion destroyed the north side of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, killing 168 people. Investigators soon discovered that this explosion was not from a natural gas leak or any other natural cause. It had been a deliberate act of domestic terrorism. The rescue and recovery of survivors was everyone’s first priority; however, the need to apprehend the person or persons responsible was vital. It was paramount that the perpetrator(s) of this crime be found and brought to justice.

Objectives

- Students will understand the definition of terrorism.
- Students will understand the role of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).
- Students will understand how the evidence linked the perpetrators to the crime.
- Students will understand the role of the public in the investigation.
PROCEDURE

• Show photos of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building before and after the bombing.
• Ask students to speculate about evidence officers/investigators might have found to bring them to the conclusion that a bomb caused the explosion. What types of evidence could be collected at the scene to help in the investigation?
• Share Investigating Terrorism, Investigation Timeline and Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) handouts.
• Discuss the critical role played by the public in helping solve the case.
• Review United States Code — Title 18 Definitions and Federal Indictment of Timothy James McVeigh and Terry Lynn Nichols.

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT/ACTIVITIES

• Write a journal entry reflecting your opinions about domestic terrorism and the ways in which reactions to domestic terrorism differ from reactions to international terrorist incidents.
• Discuss other incidents (school shootings, cyber bullying, etc.) in which the role of the public has been a factor – positively or negatively – and what could be done to encourage behaviors that will prevent or mitigate the effects of these kinds of incidents.
INVESTIGATING TERRORISM

DEFINING TERRORISM

More than 100 definitions of terrorism are used in the various departments of the United States government. In Chapter 1 of the Museum, terrorism is defined as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.” This is the State Department definition of terrorism.

The FBI defines terrorism as “unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.” International terrorism is generally considered to be foreign based, directed or supported, while domestic terrorism is conducted by U. S. citizens without such foreign influence. The bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building was an act of domestic terrorism.

UNDERSTANDING THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is the principal investigative arm of the United States Department of Justice. It has the authority and responsibility to investigate specific crimes assigned to it. The FBI also is authorized to provide other law enforcement agencies with cooperative services, such as fingerprint identification, laboratory examinations and police training.

The mission of the FBI is to uphold the law through the investigation of violations of federal criminal law; to protect the United States from foreign intelligence and terrorist activities; to provide leadership and law enforcement assistance to federal, state, local and international agencies; and to perform these responsibilities in a manner that is responsive to the needs of the public and faithful to the Constitution of the United States.

The FBI was founded on July 26, 1908, and is headed by a Director who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate for a term not to exceed ten years.

The FBI is authorized to investigate all federal criminal investigations that have not been specifically assigned by Congress to another federal agency. The FBI’s investigative functions fall into the categories of applicant matters, civil rights, counterterrorism; foreign counterintelligence; organized crime/drugs; violent crimes and major offenders; and financial crime.

Domestic terrorism falls within the category of counterterrorism. The FBI’s role in counterterrorism is to protect the United States and U. S. citizens throughout the world from terrorist attacks. This is accomplished through professional investigation, intelligence activities, and coordinated efforts with local, state, federal and foreign entities as appropriate.

The FBI’s responsibility in bombing cases is to investigate the malicious damaging or destruction, by means of an explosive, of property used in interstate or foreign commerce. These matters include the bombing or attempted bombing of college or university facilities and incidents that appear to have been perpetrated by terrorist or revolutionary groups. The FBI also investigates bombings in the U. S. and overseas when the incident was an act of terrorism against U. S. persons or interests. It collects evidence, interviews witnesses, develops leads, and identifies and apprehends the person or persons responsible. The FBI assists U. S. Attorneys in preparing evidence or exhibits for trial as well.

This information and more is available on the FBI website, www.fbi.gov.
Investigation Timeline

**April 19, 1995**

9:02 a.m. – A bomb explodes destroying the north side of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

10:20 a.m. – Oklahoma Highway Patrol Trooper Charlie Hanger stops a yellow Mercury driven by Timothy McVeigh on Interstate 35 for failure to display a rear license plate. He discovers McVeigh is carrying a loaded Glock .45 caliber semi-automatic handgun; runs a routine criminal records check and finds no outstanding warrants. McVeigh is arrested, charged with failure to display a rear license plate; failure to provide proof of vehicle insurance; unlawful transportation of a firearm in a motor vehicle and unlawful carrying a concealed weapon, and transported to the Noble County jail in Perry, Oklahoma.

Approximately 11:30 a.m. – A rear axle from a large truck is found about a block from the Murrah Building. A partial Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), which is unique to every vehicle, is found on the axle. A trace through the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) reveal the full VIN number and that the truck is registered to Ryder Rental, Incorporated, in Miami, Florida.
Early Afternoon – The FBI learn the truck has been rented from Elliot’s Body Shop, in Junction City, Kansas.

Approximately 3:00 p.m. – The FBI goes to Elliot’s Body Shop and finds that the truck has been rented to Robert “Bob” Kling, on Monday, April 17, for 4 days, with a final destination listed as Omaha, Nebraska. The driver’s license is in the name of Robert Kling, with April 19, 1970, as the date of birth. Agents begin to explore a possible connection between Kling’s date of birth, the Waco incident on April 19, 1993, and the April 19 bombing of the Murrah Building. Employees provide a description of Robert Kling; two of them think he was with another man when he rented the truck.

April 20, 1995

Early Morning – A sketch artist creates drawings of the individuals that rented the truck.

Afternoon – Sketches of John Doe #1 and #2 are released to the public.

FBI agents canvass the area near Elliot’s Body Shop to see if anyone recognizes the individuals in the sketches. The owner of the Dreamland Motel, just 4.7 miles east of Elliot’s Body Shop, recognizes John Doe #1 as a guest who had a Ryder truck as well as a yellow Mercury. He had signed the registration card “Tim McVeigh,” and stayed there April 14-17. She does not recognize John Doe #2 and says McVeigh was alone. His registration card lists a Decker, Michigan, address, which is determined to be the family farmhouse of James Nichols, Terry Nichols’ brother. Agents learn the brothers have expressed hatred toward the federal government.
April 21, 1995

Morning – FBI agents in Las Vegas, Nevada, speak with Terry Nichols’ ex-wife Lana Padilla, who tells them he lives in Herington, Kansas, 25 miles south of Junction City. Agents also learn that Terry Nichols and Timothy McVeigh became friends while at boot camp in May 1988.

A search of the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) is initiated and reveals a Timothy James McVeigh has been arrested the morning of April 19, 1995. A call to the Noble County Jail determines McVeigh has not been released and he is quickly taken into federal custody.

[Click Here for Video]

Afternoon – Terry Nichols suspects he is under surveillance, becomes apprehensive and drives to the Herington Police Station to determine why his name is being mentioned in news reports about the bombing.

April 22, 1995

Early Morning – Through interviews with Terry Nichols and his current wife Marife and information from his ex-wife Lana Padilla, agents determine they have sufficient evidence to arrest Nichols as a material witness to the bombing in Oklahoma City.

[Click Here for Video]

Source

Vehicle Identification Number

The Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) was important in identifying and locating the truck used in the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building and apprehending Timothy McVeigh. Each number or letter provides a specific piece of information about the vehicle.

VIN Number Explanation 1FDNF72J4PVA26077

1. World Manufacturer Identifier .........................................................1FD
2. Brake System and GVWR Class for Trucks ........................................N
3. Model or Line Series, Chassis, Cab Type .............................................F72
4. Engine type, displacement, cylinders, fuel type and manufacturer ..........J
5. Check digit for all vehicles .................................................................4
6. Vehicle Model Year ...........................................................................P
7. Assembly Plant ..................................................................................V
8. Production Sequence Number ............................................................A26077
TITLE 18 - CRIMES AND CRIMINAL PROCEDURE
CHAPTER 113B - TERRORISM
§ 2331. Definitions

(5) the term “domestic terrorism” means activities that—
    (A) involve acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State;
    (B) appear to be intended—
        (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population;
        (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or
        (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and
    (C) occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States.

§ 2332a. Use of weapons of mass destruction

(a) Offense Against a National of the United States or Within the United States.— A person who, without lawful authority, uses, threatens, or attempts or conspires to use, a weapon of mass destruction—
    (1) against a national of the United States while such national is outside of the United States;
    (2) against any person or property within the United States, and
        (A) the mail or any facility of interstate or foreign commerce is used in furtherance of the offense;
        (B) such property is used in interstate or foreign commerce or in an activity that affects interstate or foreign commerce;
        (C) any perpetrator travels in or causes another to travel in interstate or foreign commerce in furtherance of the offense; or
        (D) the offense, or the results of the offense, affect interstate or foreign commerce, or, in the case of a threat, attempt, or conspiracy, would have affected interstate or foreign commerce;

§ 844. Penalties (Destruction of a Federal Building)

(f) Whoever maliciously damages or destroys, or attempts to damage or destroy, by means of fire or an explosive, any building, vehicle, or other personal or real property in whole or in part owned or possessed by, or leased to, the United States, or any
department or agency thereof, or any institution or organization receiving Federal financial assistance, shall be imprisoned for not less than 5 years and not more than 20 years, fined under this title, or both.

(2) Whoever engages in conduct prohibited by this subsection, and as a result of such conduct, directly or proximately causes personal injury or creates a substantial risk of injury to any person, including any public safety officer performing duties, shall be imprisoned for not less than 7 years and not more than 40 years, fined under this title, or both.

(3) Whoever engages in conduct prohibited by this subsection, and as a result of such conduct directly or proximately causes the death of any person, including any public safety officer performing duties, shall be subject to the death penalty, or imprisoned for not less than 20 years or for life, fined under this title, or both.

§ 1114. Protection of officers and employees of the United States (Changed after the Murrah Building bombing)

Whoever kills or attempts to kill any officer or employee of the United States or of any agency in any branch of the United States Government (including any member of the uniformed services) while such officer or employee is engaged in or on account of the performance of official duties, or any person assisting such an officer or employee in the performance of such duties or on account of that assistance, shall be punished—

(1) in the case of murder, as provided under section 1111;

(2) in the case of manslaughter, as provided under section 1112; or

(3) in the case of attempted murder or manslaughter, as provided in section 1113.
IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
WESTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

--VS--
No CR 95-110
TIMOTHY JAMES McVEIGH       )
and                          )
TERRY LYNN NICHOLS,         )
) Defendants.               )

Violations
18 USC Sec. 2332a;
18 USC Sec. 844(f);
18 USC Sec. 1114;
18 USC Sec. 1111;
18 USC Sec. 2(a)&(b)

INDICTMENT

COUNT ONE

(Conspiracy to Use a Weapon of Mass Destruction)

The Grand Jury charges:

1. Beginning on or about September 13, 1994 and
   continuing thereafter until on or about April 19, 1995, at
   Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in the Western District of
   Oklahoma and elsewhere,

TIMOTHY JAMES McVEIGH

and

TERRY LYNN NICHOLS,

the defendants herein, did knowingly, intentionally,
willfully and maliciously conspire, combine and agree
together and with others unknown to the Grand Jury to use
a weapon of mass destruction, namely an explosive bomb placed in a truck (a "truck bomb"), against persons within the United States and against property that was owned and used by the United States and by a department and agency of the United States, namely, the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building at 200 N.W. 5th Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, resulting in death, grievous bodily injury and destruction of the building.

2. It was the object of the conspiracy to kill and injure innocent persons and to damage property of the United States.

THE MANNER AND MEANS USED BY THE CONSPIRATORS TO FURTHER THE OBJECTS OF THE CONSPIRACY

Among the manner and means used by the defendants to further the objects of the conspiracy were the following:

3. McVEIGH and NICHOLS planned an act of violence against persons and property of the United States.

4. McVEIGH and NICHOLS selected the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building and its occupants as the targets of their act of violence and McVEIGH attempted to recruit others to assist in the act of violence.

5. McVEIGH and NICHOLS obtained and attempted to obtain the components of a truck bomb, including a truck, ammonium nitrate, racing and diesel fuel, detonation cord and other explosive materials.

6. McVEIGH and NICHOLS used storage units to conceal the truck bomb components and stolen property.
7. McVEIGH and NICHOLS used stolen property and its proceeds to help finance their act of violence.

8. McVEIGH and NICHOLS made calls with a telephone calling card that they had acquired in a false name as a means of concealing their true identities and as a means of preventing calls from being traced to them.

9. McVEIGH and NICHOLS used different false names in business transactions as a means of concealing their true identities, their whereabouts and the true intent of their activities.

10. McVEIGH and NICHOLS constructed an explosive truck bomb, and McVEIGH placed it outside the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City, where he detonated the bomb.

OVERT ACTS

To further the conspiracy and to achieve its objectives, McVEIGH and NICHOLS committed and caused to be committed the following acts, among others, in the Western District of Oklahoma and elsewhere:

11. On or about September 22, 1994, McVEIGH rented a storage unit in the name "Shawn Rivers" in Herington, Kansas.

12. On or about September 30, 1994, McVEIGH and NICHOLS purchased forty fifty-pound bags of ammonium nitrate in McPherson, Kansas under the name "Mike Havens."

13. In or about late September 1994, McVEIGH made telephone calls in an attempt to obtain detonation cord and
racing fuel.

14. On or about October 1, 1994, McVEIGH and NICHOLS stole explosives from a storage locker (commonly referred to as a magazine) in Marion, Kansas.

15. On or about October 3, 1994, McVEIGH and NICHOLS transported the stolen explosives to Kingman, Arizona.

16. On or about October 4, 1994, McVEIGH rented a storage unit in Kingman, Arizona for the stolen explosives.

17. On or about October 16, 1994, NICHOLS registered at a motel in Salina, Kansas under the name "Terry Havens."

18. On or about October 17, 1994, NICHOLS rented storage unit No. 40 in Council Grove, Kansas in the name "Joe Kyle."

19. On or about October 18, 1994, McVEIGH and NICHOLS purchased forty fifty-pound bags of ammonium nitrate in McPherson, Kansas under the name "Mike Havens.

20. In or about October 1994, McVEIGH and NICHOLS planned a robbery of a firearms dealer in Arkansas as a means to obtain moneys to help finance their planned act of violence.

21. On or about November 5, 1994, McVEIGH and NICHOLS caused firearms, ammunition, coins, United States currency, precious metals and other property to be stolen from a firearms dealer in Arkansas.

22. On or about November 7, 1994, NICHOLS rented storage unit No. 37 in Council Grove, Kansas in the name
"Ted Parker" and used the unit to conceal property stolen in the Arkansas robbery.

23. On or about November 16, 1994, NICHOLS rented a storage unit in Las Vegas, Nevada and stored, among other items, a ski mask.

24. On or about November 21, 1994 and prior to departing for the Philippines, NICHOLS prepared a letter to McVEIGH, to be delivered only in the event of NICHOLS' death, in which he advised McVEIGH, among other matters, that storage unit No. 37 in Council Grove, Kansas had been rented in the name "Parker" and instructed McVEIGH to clear out the contents or extend the lease on No. 37 by February 1, 1995. NICHOLS further instructed McVEIGH to "liquidate" storage unit No. 40.

25. On or about December 16, 1994, while en route to Kansas to take possession of firearms stolen in the Arkansas robbery, McVEIGH drove with Michael Fortier to the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building and identified the building as the target.

26. In early 1995, following NICHOLS' return from the Philippines, firearms stolen in the Arkansas robbery were sold and McVEIGH, NICHOLS and Michael Fortier obtained currency from those sales.

27. On or about February 9, 1995, NICHOLS, using currency, paid for the continued use of storage unit No. 40 at Council Grove, Kansas in the name of "Joe Kyle."

28. In or about March, 1995, McVEIGH obtained a driver's license in the name of "Robert Kling" bearing a date of
birth of April 19, 1972.


30. On or about April 14, 1995, McVEIGH called the NICHOLS residence in Herington, Kansas from Junction City, Kansas.

31. On or about April 14, 1995, McVEIGH called a business in Junction City and, using the name "Bob Kling", inquired about renting a truck capable of carrying 5,000 pounds of cargo.

32. On or about April 14, 1995, McVEIGH, using currency, rented a room at a motel in Junction City, Kansas.

33. On or about April 15, 1995, McVEIGH, using currency, placed a deposit for a rental truck in the name "Robert Kling."

34. On or about April 17, 1995, McVEIGH took possession of a 20-foot rental truck in Junction City, Kansas.

35. On or about April 18, 1995, at Geary Lake State Park in Kansas, McVEIGH and NICHOLS constructed an explosive truck bomb with barrels filled with a mixture of ammonium nitrate, fuel and other explosives placed in the cargo compartment of the rental truck.

36. On April 19, 1995, McVEIGH parked the truck bomb directly outside the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, located within the Western District of Oklahoma, during regular business and day-care hours.

37. On April 19, 1995, McVEIGH caused the
truck bomb
to explode.

THE RESULTS OF THE CONSPIRACY

38. As intended by McVEIGH and NICHOLS, the truck
bomb explosion resulted in death and personal
injury and
the destruction of the Alfred P. Murrah
Federal Building,
located within the Western District of
Oklahoma. The
following persons were present at the Alfred
P. Murrah
Federal Building on April 19, 1995, and were
killed as a
result of the explosion:

Charles E. Hurlburt            73
John Karl Vaness III           67
Anna Jean Hurlburt             67
Donald Lee Fritzler            64
Eula Leigh Mitchell            64
Donald Earl Burns, Sr.         63
Norma Jean Johnson             62
Calvin C. Battle               62
Laura Jane Garrison            61
Olen Burl Bloomer              61
Luther Hartman Treanor         61
Rheta Ione Bender Long         60
Juretta Colleen Guiles         59
Robert Glen Westberry          57
Carolyn Ann Kreymborg          57
Leora Lee Sells                57
Mary Anne Fritzler             57
Virginia Mae Thompson          56
Peola Y. Battle                56
Peter Robert Avillanoza        56
Richard Leroy Cummins          55
Ronald Vernon Harding          55
LaRue Ann Treanor              55
Ethel Louise Griffin           55
Antonio C. Reyes               55
Thompson Eugene Hodges, Jr.    54
Alvin Junior Justes            54
Margaret Goodson               54
Oleta Christine Biddy          54
David Jack Walker              54
James Anthony McCarthy         53
Carol L. Bowers                53
Linda Coleen Housley           53
John Albert Youngblood         52
Robert Nolan Walker, Jr.       52
Thomas Lynn Hawthorne, Sr.     52
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<td>John Thomas Stewart</td>
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<td>John Clayton Moss III</td>
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<td>Ted Leon Allen</td>
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<td>Patricia &quot;Trish&quot; Ann Nix</td>
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<td>Christi Yolanda Jenkins</td>
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<td>Benjamin Laranzo Davis</td>
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<td>Tresia Jo Mathes-Worton</td>
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<td>Mark Allen Bolte</td>
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<td>Randolph Guzman</td>
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<td>Sheila R. Gigger Driver</td>
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<td>Derwin Wade Miller</td>
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<td>Jill Diane Randolph</td>
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<td>Shelly Deann (Turner) Bland</td>
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<td>Scott Dwain Williams</td>
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<td>Dana LeAnne Cooper</td>
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<td>Cartney J. McRaven</td>
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<td>Aaron M. Coverdale</td>
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<td>Ashley Megan Eckles</td>
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<td>Zackary Taylor Chavez</td>
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<td>Kayla Marie Haddock</td>
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<td>Peachlyn Bradley</td>
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<td>Chase Dalton Smith</td>
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</table>
Anthony Christopher Cooper II  2
Colton Smith                    2
Elijah Coverdale                2
Dominique R. London             2
Baylee Almon                    1
Jaci Rae Coyne                  1
Blake Ryan Kennedy              1
Tevin D'Aundrae Garrett         1
Danielle Nicole Bell            1
Tylor S. Eaves                 8 months
Antonio Ansara Cooper, Jr.     6 months
Kevin Lee Gottshall II         6 months
Gabreon Bruce                   4 months

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2332a.

COUNT TWO

(Use of A Weapon of Mass Destruction)

The Grand Jury further charges:

On or about April 19, 1995, at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in the Western District of Oklahoma, TIMOTHY JAMES McVEIGH and TERRY LYNN NICHOLS.

the defendants herein, did knowingly, intentionally, willfully and maliciously use, aid and abet the use of, and cause to be used, a weapon of mass destruction, namely an explosive bomb placed in a truck, against persons within the United States, resulting in death to the persons named in Count One, Paragraph 38 (which is expressly incorporated by reference herein) and personal injury to other persons.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 2332a and 2(a) & (b).

COUNT THREE
(Destruction by Explosive)

The Grand Jury further charges:

On or about April 19, 1995, at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in the Western District of Oklahoma, TIMOTHY JAMES McVEIGH

and

TERRY LYNN NICHOLS,

the defendants herein, did knowingly, intentionally, willfully and maliciously damage and destroy, aid and abet the damage and destruction of, and cause to be damaged and destroyed, by means of an explosive, namely, an explosive bomb placed in a truck, a building and other personal and real property in whole and in part owned, possessed and used by the United States and departments and agencies of the United States, that is, the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, 200 N.W. 5th Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, causing, as a direct and proximate result, the death of the persons named in Count One, Paragraph 38 (which is expressly incorporated by reference herein) and personal injury to other persons. All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 844(f) and 2(a)&(b).

COUNTS FOUR THROUGH ELEVEN

(First Degree Murder)

The Grand Jury further charges:

On or about April 19, 1995, at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in the Western District of Oklahoma, TIMOTHY JAMES McVEIGH
and

TERRY LYNN NICHOLS,

the defendants herein, did unlawfully, willfully, deliberately, maliciously, and with premeditation and malice aforethought, kill, and aid, abet and cause the killing of, the following persons while they were engaged in and on account of the performance of official duties as law enforcement officers:

Name/Position:

COUNT: FOUR
Name/Position: Mickey Bryant Maroney
Special Agent
United States Secret Service

COUNT: FIVE
Name/Position: Donald R. Leonard
Special Agent
United States Secret Service

COUNT: SIX
Alan Gerald Whicher
Assistant Special Agent in Charge
United States Secret Service

COUNT: SEVEN Cynthia Lynn Campbell-Brown
Special Agent United States Secret Service

COUNT: EIGHT
Kenneth Glenn McCullough
Special Agent
United States Drug Enforcement Administration

COUNT: NINE
Paul Douglas Ice
Special Agent
United States Customs Service

COUNT: TEN Claude Arthur Medearis
Special Agent
United States Customs Service

COUNT: ELEVEN
Paul G. Broxterman
Special Agent
Department of Housing and
Urban Development
Office of Inspector General

All in violation of Title 18, United States
Code, Sections
1114, 1111 and 2(a)&(b); and Title 28, Code of
Federal
Regulations, Section 64.2(h).

PATRICK M. RYAN
United States Attorney