

OKLAHOMA BOMBING

Friday, April 21, 1995

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Day two: Fear, frustration

Federal building security tight

By Matthew Waite
Senior Reporter

Workers at Lincoln's Robert Denney Federal Building filed out for the lunch hour at the normal time Thursday.

The hallways bustled with employees from the offices of the Social Security Administration, federal court and both of Nebraska's U.S. senators.

The children in the day care on the first floor laughed and played as they prepared for lunch. Their smiles were no different.

But one thing was.

Security measures remained tighter and guards were more alert in the building one day after the bombing of the Alfred Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Deputy U.S. Marshal Chuck LaFollette said.

Around the country, security stayed tight in federal buildings.

"Of course, there has been heightened security with packages coming into the building — people coming into the building," LaFollette said. He said security officers also had been looking around the outside of the building.

"We really don't have the resources to increase the number of (security) people," he said.

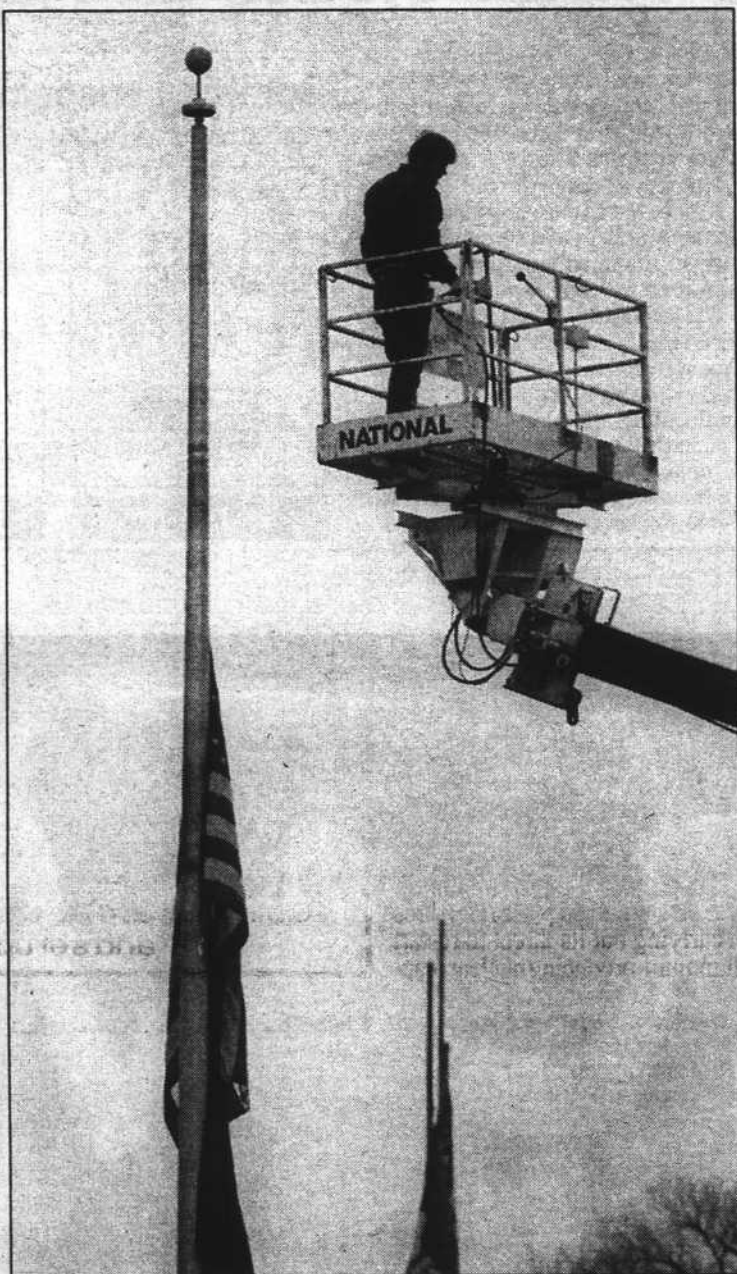
Because of the increased awareness in the building, LaFollette said security also had increased in the day care center in Lincoln's federal building.

"It's right there on the first floor," he said. "For us to go out and check out the building, we have to go by there. It's right there in everyone's sight."

Around Lincoln, citizens have been calling the Lancaster County Red Cross to find out how to become disaster volunteers, local Red Cross spokesman Jim Pratt said.

The Red Cross is offering a class on disaster relief 6 p.m. Tuesday at the First Presbyterian Church, 840 South 17th St. People interested in the class should call the Red Cross office at 441-7997 to sign up, Pratt said.

Those who want to offer finan-



Travis Heying/DN

Marvin Potter, a UNL maintenance department employee, lowers the flag outside the Nebraska State Historical Society to half-staff. Potter lowered flags across campus in commemoration of the Oklahoma City bombing victims.

cial support for the Red Cross relief effort in Oklahoma City can send checks made out to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund.

Pratt said donations can be sent to the Lancaster County Red Cross at P.O. Box 83267, Lincoln, Neb. 68501.

Safety of Heartland questioned after bomb

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — The bombing of the federal office building in Oklahoma City is sure to make Midwesterners rethink the idea that they are insulated from certain kinds of violence, experts said Thursday.

"I think there's a real feeling that America's heartland, even the word heartland, implies that it's a safe place, a place you can come home to," said Dr. Donald Rosen, a psychiatrist at the Menninger Clinic in Topeka, Kan.

"When a place perceived as less vulnerable to attack is attacked in a more savage way than ever before, it really debunks the myth" that the Midwest is more secure than other parts of the country, he said.

Rosen researched attitudes and reactions of people who endured an August 1993 shooting spree at a federal courthouse in Topeka, when a security guard was killed and five people

wounded by a man about to be sentenced on a drug conviction.

That attack made people doubt the safety of their workplace, he said, adding that the Oklahoma City bombing on Wednesday will have the same effect.

"These catastrophes don't only affect the people at the office, they affect everybody," he said. "Most of us work at an office. Our job sites are not as safe as we thought they were."

In Kansas City, Jan Smith said the Oklahoma City bombing made her feel more vulnerable in a way that New York's World Trade Center bombing hadn't.

"I feel invaded," said Smith, a 44-year-old postal worker from the suburb of Independence. "I feel like the sanctity of the United States was just totally raped yesterday."

Unable to talk, bomb victim finds way to express grief

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Speckled with scars, a breathing tube in his mouth, a gauze patch over a swollen eye, he had lost two-thirds of his blood from a gashed carotid artery.

Randy Ledger, a maintenance worker in the bomb-wrecked federal building, couldn't talk — but he had things he needed to say.

Feebly, he lifted a pad of paper Thursday in his intensive-care room. Wrists resting on his chest, he wrote notes. And notes, and notes.

He told his parents he had left everything to them "if I don't make it." Then he tried to cheer them with a joke when they asked to stay at his apartment: "Sure! Clean it!"

He thanked the nurses "for the gentleness."

He wondered and worried about the General Services Administration co-worker he said had saved him but was unaccounted for now.

And he grieved for the day-care children he had left only a moment before the bomb went off.

"I heard that this might be terrorists. How," he wrote slowly, painfully, "can anyone justify the murder of children for anything?"

He also communicated with hand squeezes and tears.

"He's just been crying about the children," said Sondra Dodgen, one of the Presbyterian Hospital nurses Ledger thanked.

A day after the explosion and the surgery that saved him, hospital monitors loomed at Ledger's side, their changing digital readouts glowing. Intravenous lines fed him antibiotics. Tubes from a breathing machine stretched to his mouth because neck swelling inhibited breathing. Still, when visitors entered his room he managed a half-wave.

Ms. Dodgen said Ledger, 38, had received six pints of blood, about two-thirds of the average body's total, to make up for losses from two cut arteries in his neck, one of them the thick, throbbing carotid artery.

"He would have died in minutes if someone hadn't found him," she said.

That's one of Ledger's deepest concerns. Another note explains: "I could swear that was Mike who found me."

Family members said the friend Ledger worked with is unaccounted for.

Bomb searches

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms guidelines to search out explosive devices:

- Designate search teams made up of supervisory personnel, area occupants or trained explosive teams.
- Move to various parts of the area and stand quietly with eyes closed, listening for a clockwork device.
- Become aware of background noise or transferred sounds such as air conditioners, water pipes, traffic and wind.
- For a search, the area should be divided equally, based on the number and type of objects in the space.



Source: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

AP/Tracie Tuo

Bombing

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ity. Major auto parts are marked with an ID number to thwart thieves.

Two years ago, the vehicle ID number on a piece of an axle enabled investigators to break the World Trade Center bombing case.

A federal law enforcement official, demanding anonymity, said investigators believed the truck was rented in Kansas, and they were checking fertilizer dealers in that state to try to trace the chemicals used in the bomb.

Dave Russell, a Ryder Truck Rental official, said the FBI had contacted his company about a truck rented from Elliott's Body Shop in Junction City, Kan., about 270 miles north of Oklahoma City. Russell said he could not comment further.

The FBI issued sketches of the two suspects after sending an artist to Junction City to talk to witnesses.

In Washington, Attorney General Janet Reno announced a \$2 million reward for information leading to arrests and convictions in the case.

CNN reported that three men — two in Dallas, one in Oklahoma City — were arrested on immigration charges and were being questioned in

the bombing. The men had stopped to ask an Oklahoma Highway Patrol officer for directions Wednesday, and the officer was suspicious enough to write down their car's license plate number.

The license turned out to be registered to a rental car and not the vehicle the men were driving, CNN reported.

But an official at the Immigration and Naturalization Service in Washington denied INS had anyone in custody in Dallas or Oklahoma City.

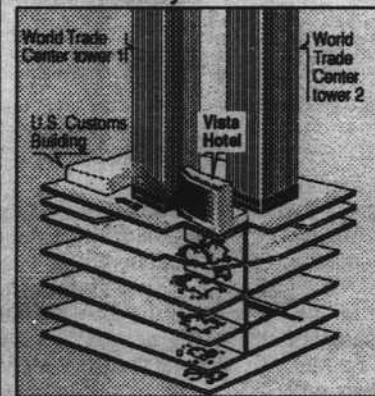
A law enforcement source in New York told The Associated Press that one of the men named by CNN, Asad R. Siddiqy, a cab driver from Queens, arrived in Oklahoma City about an hour before the blast and was considered a suspect.

Until Wednesday, the deadliest bombing in U.S. history was in 1927, when a man fearful he couldn't pay his property taxes lined a school near Lansing, Mich., with dynamite and blew it up. Forty-five people, 38 of them children, were killed.

Worried friends and relatives of the missing gathered at St. Luke United Methodist Church, where the Red Cross posted a victims list. Clutching photographs of the missing, some stayed to eat, talk to counselors or sleep.

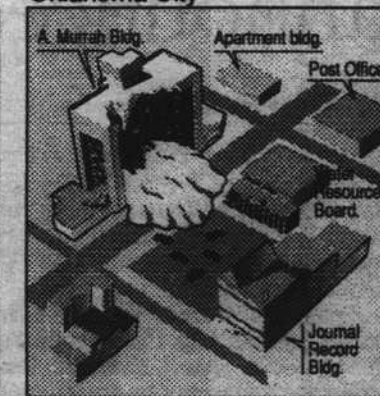
Comparisons in terror

World Trade Center, New York City



Date: Feb. 26, 1993
Group responsible: Muslim fundamentalists associated with Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman.
Casualties: 6 dead, 1000 injured
Type of attack: Bomb constructed of fertilizer and fuel delivered in a rented van.

Alfred Murrah Building, Oklahoma City



Date: April 19, 1995
Group responsible: Unknown. No group has claimed responsibility
Casualties: At least 52 dead, 400+ injured
Type of attack: 1,000- to 1,200-pound bomb similar to one used in World Trade Center, delivered by car.

AP