A World of Trouble, *1989-2001*

All was calm aboard Pan Am Flight 103 as it cruised high above Scotland. At least for the moment.

It was a touch past 7 o'clock in the evening on December 21, 1988—four days before Christmas Day. The massive Boeing 747 had left Heathrow Airport in London about 35 minutes earlier on its journey to New York City. On board were 259 passengers and crew, including 180 Americans who were headed home for the holidays.

Also on board, in the cargo hold near the front of the aircraft, was a suitcase full of plastic explosives.

Suddenly, the bomb exploded with tremendous force. In a few horrifying seconds, the plane was ripped apart by the tornado-strength shock waves resulting from the blast and began plunging to earth. Not a single soul survived the attack.

Meanwhile, the southern coast of Scotland was about to become a massive crime scene. Metal hunks and fragments from the plane started raining down on the tiny town of Lockerbie and the surrounding countryside. The wing section and fuel tanks hit hardest; their high-speed impact—estimated at 500 miles an hour—wiped out a string of homes in Lockerbie, carving out a crater more than 150 feet long and creating a massive fireball that instantly incinerated 11 men, women, and children. Within minutes of the mid-air explosion, debris and human remains were scattered across some 845 square miles of Scotland.

A massive crater created in the town of Lockerbie by the crash of Pan Am Flight 103

The downing of Flight 103 was an attack of major proportions: aside from the 1983 truck bombing that killed 241 Marines in their barracks in Beirut, it took more American lives than any other terrorist strike up to that point in history. The death toll from the incident remains the third highest from terrorism in the nation's history.

It was also a sign of things to come—a shocking prelude to a

A Scottish police officer searches for clues near the nose of the downed Pan Am Flight 103 on a farm outside of Lockerbie

new age of international crime and terror. The investigation that followed was itself a harbinger—both massively complex and multinational in scope. The case was led by Scottish constables, British authorities, and the FBI, but it also involved police organizations in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland and intelligence agencies from many of these countries. Investigators turned up tiny bomb fragments that eventually pointed to a pair of Libyan intelligence operatives, who were indicted in the U.S. and Scotland and tried in the Netherlands. The chief U.S. prosecutor was none other than Robert Mueller, the future FBI director.

The FBI had been investigating international crime and working with global partners for years—including with the Canadians beginning in the late 1920s and the British starting in the late 1930s. The Bureau had set up its first international offices, or Legal Attachés, in the 1940s in Mexico City, London, Ottawa, Bogota, Paris, and Panama City, followed by Rome and Tokyo in the 1950s. But the coming international crime wave would be of an entirely different magnitude.

It would be driven by two major forces.

First, around the same time that Pan Am Flight 103 was exploding into a million pieces, a shadowy terrorist organization was secretly starting to come together in the Middle East.

With their surprising victory over Soviet forces in Afghanistan in the late 1980s, tens of thousands of foreign mujahadeen who'd joined the struggle were brimming with confidence, wanting to advance their Islamic cause in other parts of the world. One group that congealed during this time was called "al Qaeda, or "the Base." Its leader—Usama bin Laden—was the son of a wealthy Saudi businessman and a successful merchant in his own right. After centering operations in Sudan in 1992,

December 1989
Engineering Research Facility opened in Quantico

Usama bin Laden

bin Laden began formulating plans to attack the West with an evolving, deadly new brand of jihad. The following year, Ramzi Yousef—a young extremist who'd trained in one of bin Laden's camps—would lead the first major Middle Eastern terrorist attack on American soil by planting a truck bomb beneath the World Trade Center (see page 95).

It was just the beginning. Bin Laden and his supporters would later move to Afghanistan, where an alliance with the Taliban government gave them a secluded safe haven for training recruits and planning attacks, more of which were just around the corner.

Second, the international landscape had begun changing in ways that didn't seem possible just a few years earlier, and the resulting shifts would have a profound impact on the state of security worldwide.

One major development came in November 1989 when the Berlin Wall crumbled, electrifying the world and helping to speed the lifting of the Iron Curtain. By 1992, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—the U.S.S.R.—was officially history.

With the end of the Cold War came a growing outbreak of freedom, not just in Central and Eastern Europe but across the globe. As the rigidity, repression, and control that characterized communism began giving way to the civil liberties and free markets of democracy, the world started opening up. It soon became possible to travel to more places, to trade with more countries, and to communicate more freely with more people. At the same time, technology was taking off, with more and more computers being connected into larger and larger networks until a "world wide web" was born. On the cusp of the 21st century, globalization had arrived in a powerful new way.

Along with these many changes came a fresh set of national security challenges. As borders became unsealed and the global

An FBI agent comforts a man who lost a loved one in the 1995 Oklahoma City Bombing (see page 96)

August 1991
Computer Analysis and Response Team becomes fully operational in the FBI Lab

March 11, 1992
Criminal Justice Information Services Division created; moved to West Virginia in 1997

The Gangs of America

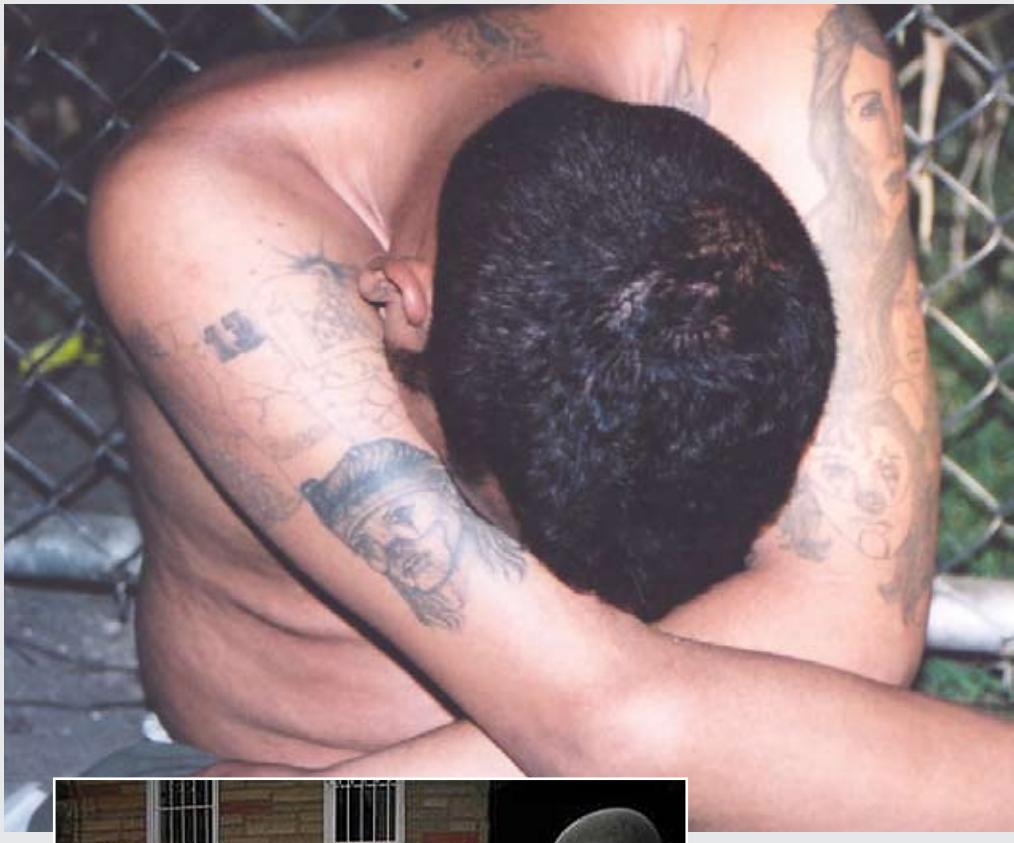
The history of street gangs in the United States is a long, sordid one—dating all the way back to colonial days. Over the past two centuries, gangs have changed and morphed in countless ways—spreading from ethnic group to ethnic group and from city to city, until they've put down roots in every state in the union; impacting neighborhoods, schools, Native American reservations, and even the military; getting their hands dirty through theft, murder, drug trafficking, and endless other crimes; and sowing plenty of violence and heartbreak along the way.

For many years, most gangs operated locally and fell under the jurisdiction of state and local authorities, but some started expanding their reach nationally and even internationally as the 20th century came to a close. By the early 1990s, the FBI had already been investigating some of these national groups, like the Crips and the Bloods, the Jamaican Posses, and various outlaw motorcycle gangs. The Bureau had established anti-gang squads in several field offices and had started using the same federal racketeering laws that proved successful in the fight against organized crime to dismantle gangs from the top down.

After conducting a number of successful multi-agency investigations—and recognizing the synergies gained through them—the Department of Justice and the FBI launched new "Safe Streets Task Forces" in 39 cities in 1992. These task forces—made up of investigators and prosecutors from all levels of law enforcement—blend the resources, information, and unique expertise of each agency. In 1993, the FBI also announced its National Gang Strategy, formalizing efforts to identify and pursue the most dangerous gangs by using federal statutes with tougher sentences and sensitive investigative techniques.

Gangs continue to evolve. Today, they are multiplying, becoming more criminally experienced, getting more entrenched in small cities and towns, and forming stronger networks across the nation and around the world. The FBI and other law enforcement agencies are evolving right along with them, adding new strategies and tools to the mix—from a new multi-agency task force that targets the especially violent gang MS-13 to a new National Gang Intelligence Center that integrates information from across law enforcement on the gangs that pose the greatest threat. The Bureau and its partners are also taking advantage of new technologies like gunshot detection sensors and a new software tool that combines mapping software with intelligence to pinpoint crime.

Meanwhile, the Safe Streets initiative is still going strong. By April 2008, the number of task forces had risen to 193, with 141 specifically dedicated to violent gangs.



Above: An MS-13 suspect. Tattoos play a key role in gang identity and are often complex and symbolic. Tears, for example, can mean that a gang member has killed someone or has spent time in prison.
Left: The FBI arrests suspected members of MS-13

Right: Director Freeh presents awards to the Russian Interior Minister in Moscow in 1997. Freeh traveled the globe during his tenure building stronger law enforcement relationships to battle terrorism, international organized crime, and drug trafficking.

economy matured, organized criminal groups gained greater freedom to roam and conspire and found new markets for their drugs and other contraband. The threat of weapons of mass destruction falling into wrong hands was heightened by the breakup of the Soviet Union and the emergence of black markets for "loose nukes" and other weapon technologies. Competitiveness between companies and countries grew fiercer as the playing field flattened, spurring new levels of economic espionage, intellectual property rip-offs, and other crimes against businesses (in 1996 an Economic Espionage law was passed, giving the FBI a new responsibility). And technologies like the Internet gave terrorists, spies, and criminals not only a world of new targets to attack, but also the ability to attack them from the anonymity and comfort of their own crime dens.

Beginning in the early 1990s, even as it was dealing with a range of new domestic security issues—including escalating street gang violence (see page 83), major crisis situations like Waco, and the worst domestic terrorist attack in U.S. history—the FBI began reconstituting itself for a global age.

A centerpiece of that effort was new and stronger global partnerships. During the summer of 1994, Director Louis Freeh—

Waco and Ruby Ridge

Two events occurred in late 1992 and early 1993 that had a major impact on FBI policies and operations.

In August 1992, the FBI responded to the shooting death of a Deputy U.S. Marshal who had been killed at Ruby Ridge, Idaho while participating in a surveillance of federal fugitive Randall Weaver. In the course of the ensuing standoff, Weaver's wife was accidentally shot and killed by an FBI sniper.

Eight months later, at a remote compound outside Waco, Texas, FBI agents sought to end a 51-day standoff with members of a heavily armed religious sect called the Branch Davidians who had killed four ATF officers. After sending tear gas into the buildings, agents were horrified when the cultists set fire to the compound. Although some FBI agents risked their lives to save cult members, 80 Davidians died in the blaze. The loss of life was tragic, but as study after study later confirmed, the FBI fired no shots that day and did not start the fires that ultimately engulfed the compound.

Nevertheless, these two events set the stage for public and congressional inquiries into the FBI's ability to respond to crisis situations, leading to the creation of the FBI Critical Incident Response Group in 1994 that integrates the FBI's tactical and investigative expertise into a single organization. As a result of this change and the Bureau's growing negotiations skills, for example, a contentious standoff in Montana three years later was peacefully resolved.

December 1992
FBI releases first national hate crime statistics

September 1, 1993
Louis J. Freeh sworn in as FBI Director

who'd taken over the reigns of the FBI the previous year—led a delegation of high-level diplomatic and federal law enforcement officials to meet with senior officials of 11 European nations on international crime issues. A number of key agreements were hammered out and protocols signed.

The most historic one came in Moscow. On July 4, 1994—as Americans celebrated Independence Day back home—Freeh announced the opening of a new Legal Attaché in the Russian capital. FBI agents working in Moscow? It was nearly unthinkable just a few years earlier. Now, it was not only a reality but also the start of a long, productive law enforcement partnership for both countries.

The trip was just the beginning. Freeh made many more visits overseas in the years to come, sharpening joint efforts against international organized crime, drug trafficking, and terrorism. In all, he traveled to 68 countries and met with more than 2,100 foreign leaders.

He also made it a priority to open a series of new Legal Attachés, where special agents serve as official diplomatic representatives and work face-to-face with their international partners to build close, mutually beneficial relationships. As international crime and terrorism grew, these "cop-to-cop" bridges, as Freeh called them, were fast becoming vital to supporting the growing number of FBI cases with international leads, to responding quickly to crimes and terrorist attacks abroad, and to sharing

April 19, 1995
Oklahoma City bombing kills 168 in the nation's worst domestic terrorist attack

The Ones That Never Happened

International and domestic terrorists carried out some deadly and destructive attacks against the U.S. during the 1990s, both here and overseas. But did you know that the FBI and its partners prevented nearly 60 terrorist strikes during the decade, including several that could have been devastating?

Here are a few of the most significant of these preventions:

■ On June 24, 1993, following leads from the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and earlier proactive investigations by the New York Joint Terrorism Task Force, an FBI SWAT team and a NYPD bomb squad stormed a local garage and arrested a group of international extremists in the act of mixing explosives. The terrorists were planning to bomb multiple landmarks in New York City—including the United Nations building, the Holland and Lincoln tunnels, and federal building that houses the FBI's New York field office.

■ In January 1995, Filipino police responded to a fire in a Manila apartment that had been accidentally started by Abdul Murad and Ramzi Yousef, mastermind of the Trade Center bombing. A subsequent search of the apartment revealed that Yousef, his uncle Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, and others were planning a series of major attacks. Two plots involved assassinating Pope John Paul II and blowing up as many as 12 American commercial airliners flying from Asia to the United States. On February 7, 1995, Yousef was arrested in Pakistan; he was later returned to the U.S. for trial.

■ In July 1997, the FBI and state and local authorities in Texas, Colorado, and Kansas prevented an attack by right-wing extremists who wanted to engage in a firefight with United Nations troops that they believed were stationed at the U.S. Army base at Fort Hood, Texas. On July 4, FBI agents and Texas state police arrested Bradley Glover and Michael Dorsett about 40 miles from Fort Hood; subsequent searches revealed that they had stockpiled weapons, explosives, body armor, and camouflage clothing. Additional co-conspirators were arrested in the next several days.

■ On December 3, 1999, a plot to bomb two large propane tanks in California was foiled when two men affiliated with an anti-government group and outfitted with a cache of weapons and explosives were arrested by the Sacramento Joint Terrorism Task Force. A third co-conspirator was later located and detained. It is estimated that the explosion of the tanks would have resulted in widespread fire and as many as 12,000 deaths.

■ On December 14, 1999, Ahmed Ressam, a 34-year-old Algerian, was stopped at the U.S.-Canadian border with a car full of explosives. He later admitted that he was planning to bomb Los Angeles International Airport on the eve of millennium celebrations. An FBI investigation—supported by Canadian and Algerian officials and others—revealed that Ressam had attended al Qaeda training camps and was part of a terrorist cell operating in Canada.

Above: An FBI agent rakes through debris looking for clues following the car bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Kenya

Attacks in Africa

"Kenbom/Tanbom"—that's what FBI investigators called the cases of the nearly simultaneous blasts of U.S. embassies in the East African countries of Kenya and Tanzania on August 7, 1998.

More than 220 people died, including 12 Americans, and some 4,500 people were wounded. Those on the scene talked about the destruction with steel in their voices, vowing to bring those responsible to justice.

In the end, approximately 900 FBI investigators deployed to those two locations to assist in the recovery of evidence, to help identify the victims at the bomb sites, and to work with their African colleagues on the ground to track down the terrorists responsible. The extraordinary efforts of federal and international partners led to the identification, arrest, and extradition to the U.S. of four members of the al Qaeda terrorist network involved in the bombings. Each was found guilty in court and sentenced to life in prison. Several more suspects have since been arrested or killed.

The attacks were al Qaeda's deadliest prior to 9/11—but not its last. On October 12, 2000, suicide terrorists exploded a small boat alongside the USS *Cole* as it was refueling in the Yemeni port of Aden. The blast ripped a 40-foot-wide hole near the waterline of the *Cole*, killing 17 sailors and injuring many more. The extensive FBI investigation that followed helped identify the victims and ultimately determined that al Qaeda terrorists had planned and carried out the bombing.

intelligence and information to prevent threats from ever reaching U.S. shores.

In 1993, the FBI had 21 offices in U.S. embassies worldwide; within eight years that number had doubled. During that time, Legal Attachés were opened in such strategic locations as Pakistan, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Turkey, South Korea, and Saudi Arabia. And in the years that followed, this trend continued: by May 2008, the FBI had more than 200 special agents and support staff in over 60 international offices.

During the 1990s—in case after case, from terrorist bombings to burgeoning cyber attacks—these Legal Attachés proved invaluable. For example, when al Qaeda operatives bombed U.S. Embassies in East Africa on August 7, 1998, killing hundreds of American, Kenyan, and Tanzanian citizens (see above), FBI agents stationed in Legal Attachés in South Africa and Egypt were at the scene in a matter of hours. As a result, they were able to launch joint investigations with African authorities, to preserve the crime scenes, and to gather critical evidence as life-saving efforts were underway.

These attacks were soon directly linked to bin Laden, who was indicted and placed on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list in June 1999. A number of top al Qaeda operatives were ultimately captured and imprisoned for their role in the bombings, and the attacks led to ramped up anti-terror efforts by the United States and by the FBI, which created its first Counterterrorism Division in 1999, consolidating its many anti-terrorism efforts and capabilities for the first time in 20 years.

During this time, joint efforts expanded with the Drug Enforcement Administration, or DEA, in battling global narcotics trafficking. In 1994, for instance, the FBI and DEA established the Southwest Border Project to focus investigative resources specifically to disrupt and dismantle the activities of significant Mexican drug trafficking organizations operating in the southwest border region of the United States. This initiative and other multi-agency operations led to the capture of several major drug lords and to the takedown of drug trafficking organizations around the world.

To further build partnerships and share skills with its counter-

June 16, 1995
International Law Enforcement Academy in Budapest, Hungary graduates its first class of law enforcement officials

1996
InfraGard begins as a pilot program in FBI Cleveland office

The mysterious mid-air explosion of TWA Flight 800 some nine miles off Long Island in July 1996 led to a long and difficult investigation. The FBI's scuba team in New York helped scour a 40-square-mile patch of the ocean floor, recovering the remains of all 230 victims and over 95 percent of the airplane. Terrorism was initially suspected as the source of the explosion, and despite a raft of speculation, a massive, 17-month investigation by the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force and the National Transportation Safety Board concluded that the explosion was caused by mechanical failure. Here, an FBI agent stands next to the reconstructed plane in a Navy hangar.

The Enemies Within

The Berlin Wall had crumbled. The Cold War was over. So there was no need to worry about anyone trying to steal American secrets anymore, right?

Wrong.

Turns out, the espionage threat remained as strong as ever. Instead of coming mainly from just one direction—the Soviet Union—it started to come from many places. Traditional foes were looking to rebuild their militaries and economies—at America's expense. And other nations wanted our country's secrets to help secure their place on the changing global stage... militarily, economically, or both.

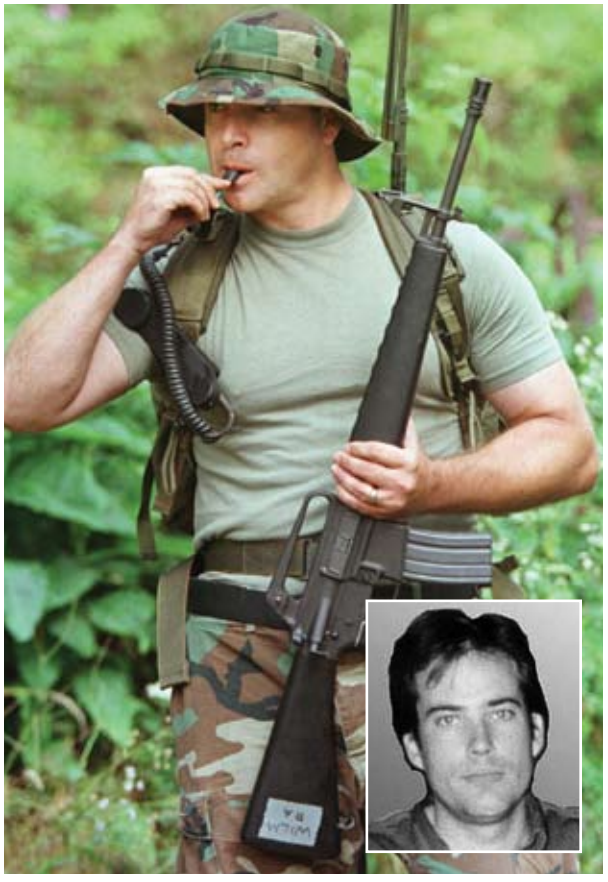
Robert Hanssen

During the 1990s and into the new century, the FBI refocused its counterintelligence strategy to better reflect this new world order. That included addressing a rising threat—economic espionage. All the while, it kept catching traditional spies. Among the 50 or so people arrested for espionage during this time period were four major moles in the U.S. intelligence community who were still spying for Russia—Aldrich Ames and Harold Nicholson at the CIA and Special Agents Earl Pitts and Robert Hanssen at the FBI.

Hanssen's arrest in February 2001, in particular, led to significant changes in the way the Bureau manages its counterintelligence investigations, including more centralized oversight at FBI Headquarters. The Bureau also established and implemented a comprehensive security program focusing on personnel, information, and physical security.

Aldrich Ames is arrested by FBI agents outside his home on February 21, 1994. Ames provided a wealth of secrets to the Soviets, leading to the compromise of more than 100 U.S. intelligence operations and to the deaths of 10 American assets.

parts across the globe, especially in the fragile new democracies that had sprung up in Eastern Europe following the fall of the Soviet Union, the FBI launched a series of new international training initiatives. One groundbreaking effort was the International Law Enforcement Academy, opened in Budapest in April 1995 and led by the FBI. The academy teaches police managers from across Central and Eastern Europe cutting edge leadership skills, anti-corruption strategies, human rights, counterterrorism investigative techniques, major case management approaches, and other issues critical to building the rule of law in their countries. By April 2008, it had trained nearly 3,000 professionals from 27 nations—and spawned more International Law Enforcement Academies worldwide.



An FBI agent hunting for Eric Rudolph (inset) in the forests of North Carolina in July 1998 takes a sip of water. Rudolph, wanted for setting off bombs at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta and at three other locations, was captured rummaging through a dumpster by a North Carolina police officer in May 2003.

December 8, 1997
New National DNA Index System announced

The FBI Goes to Hollywood

Whether it's the mission, the mystique, or all the suspense and drama you can wring out of catching the bad guys, the FBI has long been a fixture in American pop culture, appearing in countless movies, novels, TV shows, radio programs, pulp magazines, and even comic strips.

Among the memorable moments:

■ In 1935, Jimmy Cagney starred as the tough, smart FBI Agent Brick Davis in the movie, *G-Men*, heroically tracking down the crook that killed his friend. The film was the FBI's first appearance on the silver screen, and its huge success spawned a wave of similar movies, from *Public Hero Number One* to *The House on 92nd Street*.

■ In 1959, Jimmy Stewart played the amiable, hardworking FBI Agent Chip Hardesty in *The FBI Story*, based on a bestselling book of the same name.

■ The prime-time TV show, *The FBI*, featured Efrem Zimablist, Jr., as the iconic face of the Bureau from 1965 to 1974. The popular program, produced with the assistance of the FBI, helped recruit many new employees into the organization.

■ The tongue-in-cheek B-movie, *I Was a Zombie for the FBI*, was released in 1982 and went on to become something of a cult classic. The plot line: FBI agents work to save the planet after aliens try to turn mankind into zombies by spiking the world's favorite soft drink.

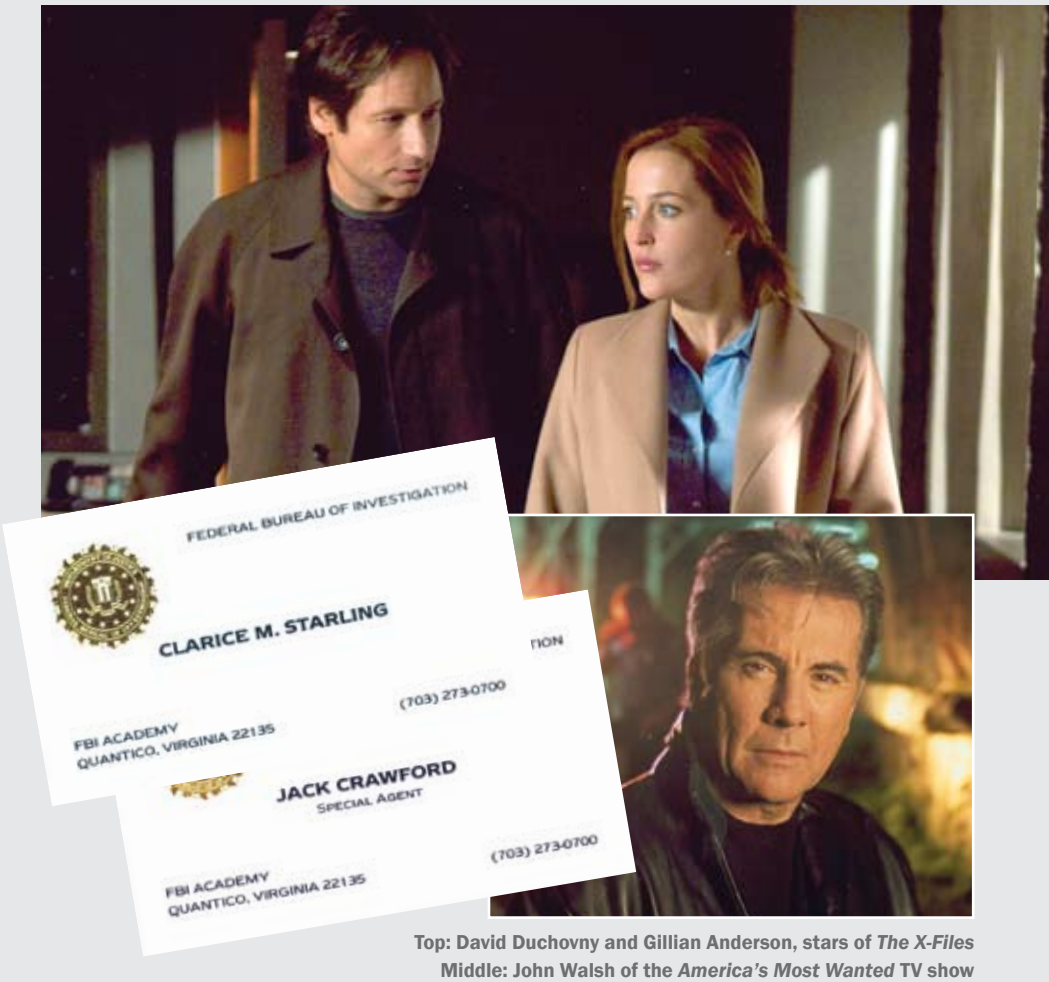
■ Starting in the late 1980s, TV became a powerful force for catching crooks thanks to popular shows like *Unsolved Mysteries* and *America's Most Wanted*, which built on the FBI's successful efforts to enlist the public's help in locating wanted fugitives and missing persons. Since it debuted in 1988, *America's Most Wanted* has helped take a thousand fugitives off the streets.

■ In 1991, the crime novel *The Silence of the Lambs* became a blockbuster on the silver screen, with Special Agent Clarice Starling (Jodie Foster) using the hot forensic science technique of the day—criminal profiling—to match wits with the brilliant, cannibalistic serial killer Dr. Hannibal Lecter (Anthony Hopkins). Several more books featuring these characters were later turned into films.

■ In 1993, David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson made their appearance as the alien-chasing FBI agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully in the long-running cult phenomenon *The X-Files*, uttering classic lines like "the truth is out there" while hopelessly trying to find it.

■ Johnny Depp starred as New York Special Agent Joe Pistone in the 1997 film, *Donnie Brasco*, based on Pistone's memoir about his undercover work to infiltrate the Mafia (see page 78).

Today, the FBI is as popular as ever in print and on screen. Bureau sleuths are regulars on a slew of fictionalized TV dramas, including *Bones*, *Criminal Minds*, *Numb3rs*, and *Without a Trace*, and the FBI has had leading roles in many post-9/11 movies such as *The Kingdom* and *Untraceable*. These portrayals rarely show how the FBI really operates—they are fiction, after all—but the Bureau does work with many producers, screenwriters, and authors make their depictions of the FBI as realistic and accurate as possible.



Top: David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson, stars of *The X-Files*
Middle: John Walsh of the *America's Most Wanted* TV show
Left: Fictitious business cards of two FBI agents who starred in the thriller, *The Silence of the Lambs*

A New Home, a New Name, and a Continuing Mission

In July 1997, the Criminal Information Services Division, or CJIS, moved into new, state-of-the-art digs in Clarksburg, West Virginia. The massive complex was a major upgrade for CJIS, which had been created five years earlier from the "Ident" division set up in 1924 and from other offices.

The move came just in time to help CJIS take on new responsibilities and develop new capabilities. For example, in response to the "Brady Bill," the National Instant Criminal Background Check System was launched in November 1998, making it possible to instantly determine whether a prospective gun buyer is eligible to buy firearms and explosives—and making our nation's streets safer by keeping dangerous weapons out of wrong hands. The following year, the National Crime Information Center—a massive index that puts criminal justice information at the fingertips of law enforcement officers in their squad cars and offices—went through a major upgrade. That same year, CJIS also created the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System, a national fingerprint and criminal history system that made it easier and faster for law enforcement to submit fingerprints into the database and to find matches.

Meanwhile, an era of electronic crime was coming of age. The FBI had been playing a crucial role in the investigation and prevention of computer crimes since the 1980s; the FBI Laboratory, in fact, had received its first-ever request to examine computer evidence in 1984. In 1991, the Computer Analysis and Response Team became operational, providing investigators with the technical expertise necessary to obtain evidence from the computers of suspects. Eight years later, that concept was expanded to include Regional Computer Forensics Laboratories, where the FBI works with state, local, and federal partners to gather digital evidence from computers, cell phones, video cameras, and other digital devices. By the spring of 2008, there were 14 such computer labs nationwide.

The global dimensions of cyber crime, though, became apparent as early as 1994. That summer, from deep inside the heart of Russia, a young computer wiz named Vladimir Levin robbed a bank in the U.S. without ever leaving his chair. Over a two-month period, Levin—with the help of several conspirators—hacked into Citibank computers and transferred more than $10 million to accounts around the world using a dial-up wire transfer service. Working with Citibank and Russian authorities, FBI agents helped trace the theft back to Levin in St. Petersburg. Levin was soon lured to London and arrested.

It was just the beginning, especially as a commercially viable Internet began to take off in the mid-1990s. Computer worms and viruses had begun circulating on the Web as early as 1988, and they gained power and sophistication with each passing year. These bits of malicious code would quickly grow into a new national security and criminal threat, able to cause millions and even billions of dollars in damages around the world at lightning speed and to bring down vital military, government, and public safety networks. And before long, the Internet was spawning an increasing breed of new crime challenges—everything cyber-stalking to cyber-terrorism, from phishing to spamming and spoofing.

The FBI responded by building its investigative expertise, staffing up a series of new programs, and ultimately becoming a leader in fighting cyber crime.

November 30, 1998
National Instant Criminal Background Check System launched

July 11, 1999
Major upgrade of National Crime Information Center unveiled

Nestled deep in the heart of FBI Headquarters is the Bureau's high-tech command center—called the Strategic Information and Operations Center, or SIOC—which was created in 1989 to centrally manage one or more crisis situations. The center went through a major upgrade in 1998 and later became the nerve center of the FBI's massive 9/11 investigation.

For example, the Innocent Images National Initiative—which catches pedophiles using the Internet to purvey child pornography and to lure children into situations where they can be harmed—was established in Baltimore in 1995 and eventually expanded nationwide (see page 93). InfraGard, begun in Cleveland in 1996 and likewise extended across the country, unites public and private sector professionals in working to protect the nation's physical and electronic infrastructure. In 1998, the FBI's National Infrastructure Protection Center was created to monitor the spread of computer viruses, worms, and other malicious programs and to warn government and business of these dangers; this center was later folded into continuing FBI and Department of Homeland Security efforts. And in 2000, the FBI joined with the National White Collar Crime Center in standing up an Internet Fraud Complaint Center—now called the Internet Crime Complaint Center—to serve as a clearinghouse for reporting and triaging computer-related crimes and for performing analysis and research on behalf of the law enforcement community.

By the turn of the 21st century, the FBI had become a full-fledged international agency with a full plate of national security responsibilities. But the deadliest terrorist attack in U.S. history was just around the corner, and it would lead to even more sweeping changes for the FBI.

A Lesson to Remember

How seriously does the FBI take its responsibility to uphold the civil liberties of every man, woman, and child it is sworn to protect?

Seriously enough that it sends every new agent to a specialized tour of the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. After the tour, agents and museum representatives talk about how the Nazis took power in Germany in 1933 with the help of civilian police and what horrors can occur when law enforcement fails to protect and serve with compassion and fairness.

The program began in April 2000 with the help of the leadership of the Anti-Defamation League, and it makes a stunning and lasting impact on the agents. The program has since been expanded to include top Bureau execs as well as police leaders training at the FBI Academy. In the mid-1990s, the FBI also began a block of instruction on law enforcement ethics for new agents and other employees.

May 8, 2000
Internet Fraud Complaint Center created; later renamed Internet Crime Complaint Center

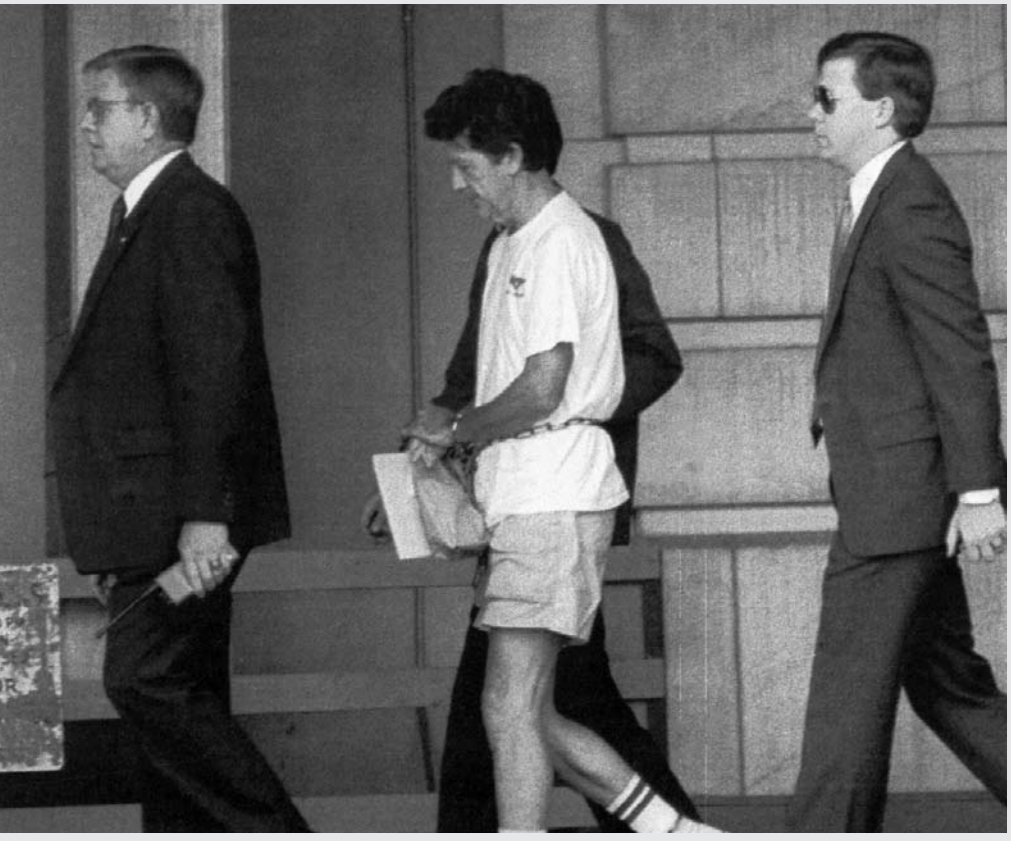
February 18, 2001
FBI Agent Robert Hanssen arrested for espionage

FAMOUS CASES

The Mail Bomb Murders

Getting a plainly wrapped package in the mail wasn't all that surprising. It was the holidays, after all. What was inside was another matter. It was a bomb.

When Federal Appeals Judge Robert Vance opened the small brown parcel in the kitchen of his suburban Alabama home on December 16, 1989, it exploded, killing him instantly and seriously injuring his wife.



Walter Moody (center) is led into a federal courthouse in Macon, Georgia, during a hearing in 1990

Two days later, virtually the same scenario happened again. This time, the victim was Atlanta attorney Robert Robertson.

It wasn't over. Two more bombs mysteriously appeared. The third, sent to the federal courthouse in Atlanta, was intercepted and defused. A fourth was recovered and deactivated after being mailed to the Jacksonville office of the NAACP.

The murders and serial bombings stunned the nation. Who'd be spiteful enough to send mail bombs, especially during the holidays?

That's what the FBI aimed to find out. Investigators started with the obvious. Both victims were known for their work in civil rights, but that fact turned out to be a red herring.

Meanwhile, with extensive help from U.S. postal inspectors, agents gathered the remnants of the bombs and packages for the FBI Lab to analyze. They learned the path the packages had taken through the postal system and assembled a long list of suspects.

A break came when an ATF expert was contacted by a colleague who had helped defuse one of the bombs. He thought it resembled one he'd seen 17 years earlier. And he remembered the name of the person who had built it—Walter Leroy Moody.

With this lead, the Bureau and its partners began an extensive probe of the events—purchases, contacts, phone calls, etc.—and ultimately linked both the exploded and unexploded bombs to each other and to Moody. Court authorized surveillance of Moody at home and in jail (he talked to himself) provided additional evidence. Other leads were followed, suspects eliminated or linked to the crimes, and detailed analysis done on every bit of evidence, information, and trail that investigators came across.

Over the next year, Moody's motive became clear. There was a pattern of experimentation with bombs dating back to the early 1970s when Moody was convicted of possessing a bomb that had hurt his wife when it exploded. His conviction and failed appeals in that case had led him to harbor a long-festering resentment towards the court system. His contact with Judge Vance in a 1980s case led to an even deeper personal animus. The other bombs, investigators determined, were meant to throw authorities off by making them suspect that racism was involved.

By the spring of 1991, with the help of prosecutor (and future FBI Director) Louis Freeh, a solid case had been developed. The trial was difficult—Moody had made every effort to conceal his connection to the bombings. He did not succeed. On June 28, 1991, based on the extensive investigative work of the FBI, the ATF, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the IRS, the U.S. Marshals, the Georgia State Police, and many others, the jury found Moody guilty of more than 70 charges and sentenced him to life in prison.

FAMOUS CASES

Operation Innocent Images

In May 1993, a 10-year-old boy suddenly went missing from his neighborhood in Brentwood, Maryland. Within weeks, the investigation uncovered two pedophiles and a larger ring of online child pornographers. Within two years, it spawned a major national initiative that is now the centerpiece of the FBI's efforts to protect children from cyberspace predators.

Here's how the events unfolded: When FBI agents and Prince George's County, Maryland, police detectives went door-to-door to talk with neighbors following the boy's disappearance, they encountered a pair of suspicious men who had been "befriending" local children—showering them with gifts and even taking them on vacation.

Investigators soon discovered that the men had been sexually abusing children for a quarter century. More recently, these men had moved online, setting up several private computer bulletin boards not only to "chat" with boys and set up meetings with them, but also to share images of child pornography with a larger ring of pedophiles. Both men were ultimately convicted of abusing children, but there was no evidence to link them to the boy's disappearance.

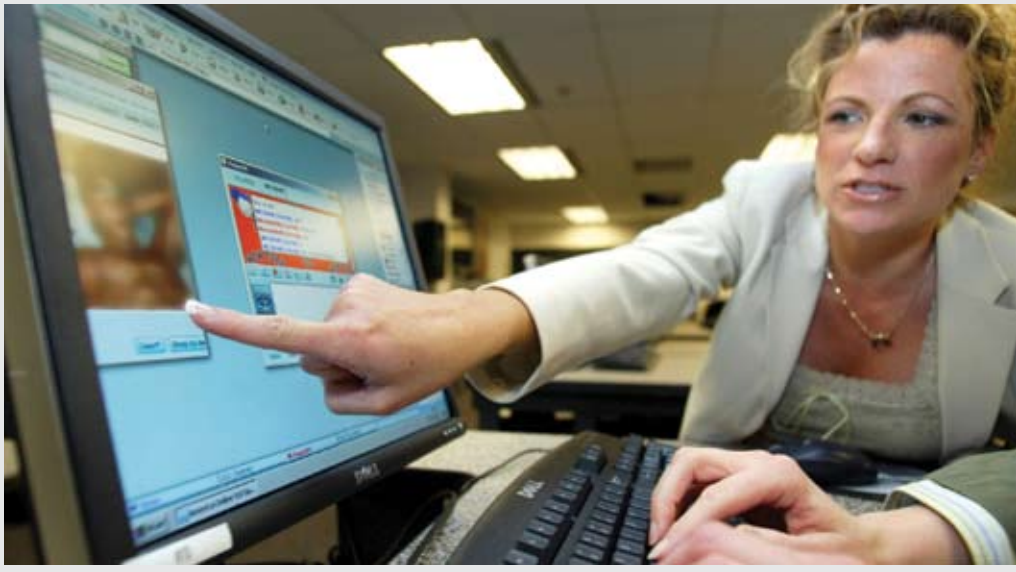
In the meantime, however, the original kidnapping case was expanding. Agents called every FBI office in the country to see how widespread these illicit computer techniques were. They learned that numerous complaints had been filed nationwide by irate parents who were offended by pornographic images and unsolicited obscene messages e-mailed right into their homes. Experts were consulted who confirmed this alarming new trend: sexual exploitation of children via computers.

From there, agents opened a new case in September 1994 that came to be called "Operation Innocent Images." More agents and support staff were called in. Working under strict guidelines, the agents posed undercover, pretending to be children. They engaged in electronic conversations with suspected pedophiles and posed as consumers to peddlers of child pornography. At times, they were stunned by the graphic images and the overt nature of the messages that flashed across their computer screens.

In the summer of 1995 the Bureau went public with the case, executing more than 100 search warrants simultaneously nationwide. Based on this investigation, the FBI formally launched the "Innocent Images National Initiative" to crack down on illicit activities conducted through commercial and private online services and the Internet.

Today, the mission of the Innocent Images initiative is even broader: to break up entire networks and communities of online pedophiles; to take down major distributors and producers of child pornography; to stop sexual predators from using the Internet to lure children from their families; and to catch those viewing and sharing illicit images.

Much of that work is done through proactive task forces across the country, which team up FBI agents and local police officers in undercover operations. In October 2004, the FBI also launched an Innocent Images International Task Force, which brings international law enforcement officers to the U.S. to work side-by-side with agents in combating global child exploitation.



An FBI agent in the Innocent Images Unit in Calverton, Maryland, in May 2006

The accomplishments of the program are impressive: through September 2007, the FBI had opened more than 20,000 Innocent Images cases, leading to more than 6,800 convictions. And the human impact—children and families who have been protected and rescued—is incalculable.

So what happened to the missing boy whose case started it all? Tragically, he was never found. It is to him—and to the countless victims of child sexual exploitation over the years—that the FBI's Innocent Images National Initiative is dedicated.

FAMOUS CASES

John Gotti: Making the Charges Stick

He was slippery, yes, but even the "Teflon Don" couldn't escape justice forever.

Despite the future nickname, John Gotti—a violent, ruthless mobster who'd grown up on the streets of New York—had been sent to prison several times in his early career. In 1968, for example, the FBI arrested him for his role in a plot to steal thousands of dollars worth of merchandise. Gotti went to jail, but was released in 1972.

And quickly made more trouble. Within two years, the Bureau arrested Gotti again for murder. Same story: he went to prison and was out in a few years. Soon after, he became a "made man" for the Gambino family, one of the five most powerful syndicates in the Big Apple. Gambling, loan sharking, and narcotics trafficking were his stocks in trade.

"Sammy the Bull" Gravano

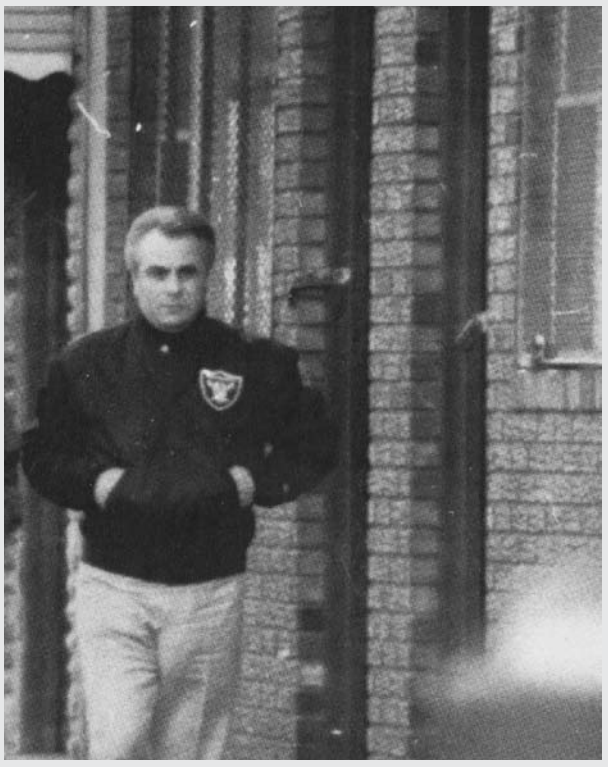
By the early 1980s, using Title III wiretaps, mob informants, and undercover agents, the FBI was beginning to get clear insight into the hierarchy and activities of the Gambino family and other Mafia families and was building strong cases against them as criminal enterprises.

The beginning of Gotti's ascent in the mob came in late 1985, when violence spilled out onto the streets of Manhattan.

The scene of the crime was Sparks' Steak House, a popular hangout for major criminals. On the evening of December 16, 1985, 70-year-old-Mafioso Paul Castellano—the apparent successor of recently deceased Gambino boss Aniello Dellacroce—was gunned down in front of the restaurant along with his number two in command, Thomas Bilotti. Gotti, who'd been watching from a car at a safe distance, had one of his men drive him by the scene to make sure his deadly orders had been carried out.

Having eliminated the competition, Gotti took over as head of the Gambino family. With his expensive suits, lavish parties, and illegal dealings, he quickly became something of a media celebrity, and the press dubbed him "The Dapper Don." Following a string of highly-publicized acquittals—helped in large part by witness intimidation and jury tampering—Gotti also earned the "Teflon Don" nickname.

FBI agents and their colleagues in the New York Police Department, though, refused to give up. With extensive court-authorized electronic surveillance, diligent detective work, and the eventual cooperation of Gotti's henchman—"Sammy the Bull" Gravano—the Bureau and the NYPD built a strong case.



John Gotti, the "Teflon Don," in a surveillance photo

In December 1990, agents and NYPD detectives arrested Gotti, and he was charged with multiple counts of racketeering, extortion, jury tampering, and other crimes. This time, the judge ordered that the jurors remain anonymous, identified only by number, so no one could pressure them. And the case was airtight.

The combination worked. On April 2, 1992, Gotti was convicted on 13 counts, including for ordering the murders of Castellano and Bilotti. The head of the FBI's New York office famously remarked, "The don is covered with Velcro, and every charge stuck."

Indeed. Gotti had evaded the law for the last time. He died in prison in June 2002.

FAMOUS CASES

First Strike: Global Terror in America

On February 26, 1993, at about 17 minutes past noon, a thunderous explosion rocked lower Manhattan.

The epicenter was the parking garage beneath the World Trade Center, where a massive eruption carved out a nearly 100-foot crater several stories deep and several more high. Six people were killed almost instantly. Smoke and flames began filling the gaping wound and streaming upward into the building. Those who weren't trapped were soon pouring out of the building—many panic-stricken and covered in soot. More than a thousand people were hurt in some way—some badly, with crushed limbs.

Ramzi Yousef

Middle Eastern terrorism had arrived on American soil—with a bang.

As a small band of terrorists scurried away from the scene unnoticed, the FBI and its partners on the New York Joint Terrorism Task Force began staffing up a command center and preparing to send in a team to investigate. Their instincts told them that this was terrorism—they'd been tracking Islamic fundamentalists in the city for months and, they'd later learn, were tantalizingly close to discovering the planners of this attack. But hunches weren't enough; what was needed was definitive proof.

They'd have it soon enough. The massive investigation that followed—led by the task force, with some 700 FBI agents worldwide ultimately joining in—quickly uncovered a key bit of evidence. In the rubble investigators uncovered a vehicle identification number on a piece of wreckage that seemed suspiciously obliterated. A search of the Bureau's crime records returned a match: the number belonged to a rented van reported stolen the day before the attack. An Islamic fundamentalist named Mohammad Salameh had rented the vehicle, and on March 4, an FBI SWAT team arrested him as he tried in vain to get his $400 deposit back.

One clue led to another, and the FBI soon had in custody three more suspects—Nidal Ayyad, Mahmoud Abouhalima, and Ahmed Ajaj. Investigators also found the apartment where the bomb was built and a storage locker containing dangerous chemicals, including enough cyanide gas to wipe out a town. All four men were tried, convicted, and sentenced to life.

The shockwave from the attack continued to reverberate. Following the unfolding connections, the task force soon uncovered a second terrorist plot to bomb a series of New York landmarks simultaneously, including the U.N. building, the Holland and Lincoln Tunnels, and the federal plaza where the FBI's office in New York is housed. On June 24, 1994, agents stormed a garage in Queens and caught several members of a terrorist cell in the act of assembling bombs.

Meanwhile, the mastermind of the World Trade Center bombing was still on the run—and up to no good. The task force learned his name—Ramzi Yousef—within weeks after the attack and discovered he was planning more attacks, including the simultaneous bombing of a dozen U.S. international flights. Yousef was captured in Pakistan in February 1995, brought back to America, and convicted along with the van driver, Eyad Ismoil. A seventh plotter, Abdul Yasin, remains at large.

Agents later learned from Yousef that his Trade Center plot was far more sinister. He wanted the bomb to topple one tower, with the collapsing debris knocking down the second. The attack turned out to be something of a deadly dress rehearsal for 9/11. With the help of Yousef's uncle, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, al Qaeda would later return to realize Yousef's nightmarish vision.

Investigators going through the rubble following the bombing of the World Trade Center

FAMOUS CASES

The Oklahoma City Bombing

On the morning of April 19, 1995, an ex-Army soldier named Timothy McVeigh parked a rented Ryder truck in front of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City. He was about to commit mass murder.

Inside the vehicle was a powerful bomb made out of a deadly cocktail of agricultural fertilizer, diesel fuel, and other chemicals. McVeigh got out, locked the door, and headed towards his getaway car. At precisely 9:02 a.m., the bomb exploded.

Within moments, the surrounding area looked like a war zone. A third of the building had been reduced to rubble, with many floors flattened like pancakes. Dozens of cars were incinerated and more than 300 nearby buildings were damaged or destroyed.

The human toll was still more devastating: 168 souls lost, including 19 children, with several hundred more injured. It was the deadliest act of homegrown terrorism in the nation's history.

Coming on the heels of the World Trade Center bombing in New York two years earlier, the media and many Americans immediately assumed that the attack was the handiwork of Middle Eastern terrorists. The FBI, meanwhile, quickly arrived at the scene and began supporting rescue efforts and investigating the facts. Beneath the pile of concrete and twisted steel were clues. And the FBI was determined to find them.

It didn't take long. On April 20, the rear axle of the Ryder truck was located, which yielded a vehicle identification number that was traced to a body shop in Junction City, Kansas. Employees at the shop helped the FBI put together a composite drawing of the man who had rented the van. Agents showed the drawing around town, and local hotel employees supplied a name: Tim McVeigh.

A quick call to the Bureau's Criminal Justice Information Services Division in West Virginia on April 21 led to an astonishing discovery: McVeigh was already in jail. He'd been pulled over about 80 miles north of Oklahoma City by an observant Oklahoma State Trooper who noticed a missing license plate on his yellow Mercury Marquis. McVeigh had a concealed weapon and was arrested. It was just 90 minutes after the bombing.

From there, the evidence began adding up. Agents found traces of the chemicals used in the explosion on McVeigh's clothes and a business card on which McVeigh had suspiciously scribbled, "TNT @ $5/stick, need more." They learned about McVeigh's extremist ideologies and his anger over the events at Waco two years earlier. They discovered that a friend of McVeigh's named Terry Nichols helped build the bomb and that another man—Michael Fortier—was aware of the bomb plot.

The bombing had been solved in short order, but the investigation turned out to be one of the most exhaustive in FBI history. No stone was left unturned to make sure every clue was found and all the culprits identified. By the time it was over, the Bureau had conducted more than 28,000 interviews, followed some 43,000 investigative leads, amassed three-and-a-half tons of evidence, and reviewed nearly a billion pieces of information.

In the end, the government that McVeigh hated and hoped to topple swiftly captured and convincingly convicted him.

Above right: The devastation caused by the bomb blast Below: FBI agents help lead Timothy McVeigh from an Oklahoma courthouse on April 21, 1995

FAMOUS CASES

The Unabomber

How do you catch a twisted genius who aspires to be the perfect, anonymous killer—who builds untraceable bombs and delivers them to random targets, who leaves false clues to throw off authorities, who lives like a recluse in the mountains of Montana and tells no one of his secret crimes?

That was the challenge facing the FBI and its investigative partners, who spent nearly two decades hunting down this ultimate lone wolf bomber.

Theodore Kaczynski

The man that the world would eventually know as Theodore Kaczynski came to the FBI's attention in 1978 with the explosion of his first, primitive homemade bomb at a Chicago university. Over the next 17 years, he mailed or hand delivered a series of increasingly sophisticated bombs that killed three Americans and injured 24 more. Along the way, he sowed fear and panic, even threatening to blow up airliners in flight.

In 1979, an FBI-led task force that included the ATF and U.S. Postal Inspection Service was formed to investigate the "UNABOM" case, code-named for the UNiversity and Airline BOMbing targets involved. The task force would grow to more than 150 full time investigators, analysts, and others. In search of clues, the team made every possible forensic examination of recovered bomb components and studied the lives of victims in minute detail. These efforts proved of little use in identifying the bomber, who took pains to leave no forensic clues, building his bombs essentially from "scrap" materials available almost anywhere. And the victims, investigators later learned, were chosen randomly from library research.

Investigators felt confident that the Unabomber had been raised in Chicago and later lived in the Salt Lake City and San Francisco areas. This proved to be true. His occupation proved more elusive, with theories ranging from aircraft mechanic to scientist. Even the gender was not certain: although investigators believed the bomber was most likely male, they also investigated several female suspects.

The big break in the case came in 1995. The Unabomber sent the FBI a 35,000 word essay claiming to explain his motives and views of the ills of modern society. After much debate about the wisdom of "giving in to terrorists," FBI Director Louis Freeh and Attorney General Janet Reno approved the task force's recommendation to publish the essay in hopes that a reader could identify the author.

After the manifesto appeared in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, thousands of people suggested possible suspects. One stood out: David Kaczynski described his troubled brother Ted, who had grown up in Chicago, taught at the University of California at Berkeley (where two of the bombs had been placed), then lived for a time in Salt Lake City before settling permanently into the primitive 10' x 14' cabin that the brothers had constructed near Lincoln, Montana.

Most importantly, David provided letters and documents written by his brother. FBI linguistic analysis determined that the author of those papers and the manifesto were almost certainly the same. When combined with facts gleaned from the bombings and Kaczynski's life, that analysis provided the basis for a search warrant.

On April 3, 1996, investigators arrested Kaczynski and combed his cabin. There, they found a wealth of bomb components; 40,000 handwritten journal pages that included bomb-making experiments and descriptions of Unabomber crimes; and one live bomb, ready for mailing.

Kaczynski's reign of terror was over. His new home, following his guilty plea in January 1998: an isolated cell in a "Supermax" prison in Colorado.

Kaczynski's cabin in the woods of Montana