

# Witnesses describe horror of fatal blast

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BOSTON — With a hand and a leg blown off by a bomb, Boston Police Officer Jerry Hurley lay bleeding to death on a Roslindale lawn. He called out to fellow Officer Frank Foley to tell his family he loved them.

Foley lay on the driveway. He had lost an eye and parts of his face — and he also expected to die. After passing on what he thought would be a last message to his family, Foley sent his rescuers to help his dying partner.

Boston Police Officer Denise Corbett wiped tears from her eyes yesterday as she described the scene of the 1991 bomb blast in the trial of a 21-year-old Quincy man accused of planting the bomb.

Federal prosecutors charge that Thomas A. Shay conspired with another Quincy man to put the bomb under the car of Shay's father, Thomas L. Shay of Roslindale.

The senior Shay found the bomb and called police. A police bomb squad — Hurley and Foley — was called to the house on Oct. 28, 1991. Hurley, 50, of Readville, died of massive trauma three hours after the explosion; Foley, 51, of Jamaica Plain, was maimed but survived.

Corbett, who had been standing on the other side of a truck as Hurley and Foley examined the bomb, described her help-

## Officer: Colleague's last thoughts of family

lessness after the explosion shook the driveway and showered her with debris.

"They told us to leave, that more of the bomb could go off," Corbett said, her voice shaking. "I tried to put a towel over Jerry's leg, but it was mostly gone and I couldn't do anything."

As Corbett testified, at least a half-dozen sobs broke out from the courtroom crowd of about 100 people. One weeping member of the Hurley family was led from the room, and about a half-dozen family members left minutes later.

"They wanted to be here, but it was just too much for them," prosecutor Paul V. Kelly said during a recess. "Both officers expected to die and were thinking of their families."

In his opening statement, Kelly said Shay planted the bomb to kill his father in retaliation for years of abuse. Shay also wanted money from a lawsuit his father filed against the former landlord of his Dedham auto body business — and even asked his father's lawyer what would happen to any money won from the suit if his father died, Kelly said.

The younger Shay met Alfred W. Trenkler, 36, who ran a Weymouth electronics company, in 1989, and they became lovers, Kelly said. Shay bought parts for the bomb at a Radio Shack store,

and Kelly said he will show the jury a receipt Shay had for the parts.

The bomb was in a black wooden box roughly the size of a shoe box. Magnets were glued to one side to hold it to the underside of the elder Shay's car, Kelly said.

The elder Shay discovered the bomb when it scraped off the bottom of his car, Kelly said, and tossed it against the side of the house. Later, when he thought it might be a bomb, the elder Shay moved it between a car and a truck in his driveway before calling police.

"A bomb is the ultimate weapon of terror," Kelly said, because its makers "are unable to focus on the intended target."

But Shay's attorney, Nancy Gertner, said Shay and Trenkler were merely casual acquaintances who had only met in 1991, and that Shay cared about his father.

"For every witness that says they weren't getting along, we offer witnesses that say they were," Gertner said. "If there is no evidence, you can't use your prejudices."

She also said Shay had mental problems that caused him to call news conferences and make other statements to investigators that apparently implicated him in the bombing.

Gertner also questioned why the elder Shay would move an item he suspected of being a bomb. She suggested that the targets of the lawsuit also could have had reason to want to kill the elder Shay.

In addition to the charge of conspiring to kill his father, Shay and Trenkler are also charged with attempting to damage personal property and violating federal explosives laws. Trenkler will be tried separately.

The charges carry a possible death penalty or life sentence because the bomb caused a death.

At the time of his indictment, Shay was being held on a separate charge of telephoning a bomb threat to a Boston woman.

The trial is expected to last at least three weeks, with the prosecution presenting up to 45 witnesses and more than 50 exhibits. Because of the length of the trial, U.S. District Court Judge Rya Zobel impaneled 16 jurors, who visited the site of the explosion on Wednesday.

In addition to Corbett's testimony, Boston Police Detective Sgt. Thomas Creavin yesterday described the scene of the explosion, saying that despite suffering massive injuries, Foley told him, "You take care of Jerry."

After Hurley and Foley were taken away, Corbett said, she took their gun belts back to her cruiser and sat there, "then someone found me."