Texas cult continues standoff



WACO, Texas (AP) - The increasingly volatile leader of a heavily armed cult vacillates from belligerence to peacemaker in negotiations to end a 10-day standoff, the

FBI said Tuesday

The FBI had been portraying the talks as positive but on Monday began discussing what it called "the dark side" of cult leader David Koresh, who claims his name is "the surname of God.

FBI agent Bob Ricks said Tuesday Koresh is moving along "two irreconcilable tracks" - one peaceful, one not.

Ricks said the FBI was ready for whatever force Koresh might use.

'We have sufficient firepower, if we chose, to completely neutralize this situation at any moment." Ricks said. "We do not choose to do

At least four of the Army's Abrams main battle tanks were rolled into position around the Branch Davidian compound Monday after Koresh boasted he had enough fire power to blow lighter armored personnel carriers "40 to 50 feet into the air." The 67-ton tanks do not have ammunition but offer protection for law officers.

The FBI said early in the siege, after four federal agents were killed in a failed raid on Feb. 28, that

it was not planning to storm the compound. Ricks repeated that pledge today, as did Bureau of Alcohol. Tobacco and Firearms director Stephen Hig-

"We're prepared to stay there for a long time. Indefinitely," Higgins said on NBC's "Today" pro-

At midday, a white sheet appeared outside one of the windows of the compound. The significance of the sheet was not immediately known, but a Dallas radio station said it had broadcast only minutes earlier an appeal to cult members to give some sign if they wanted help.

KGBS producer Julie Van Dielen said the station suggested over the air that "if Koresh wanted our help and could hear us," to hang a white sheet out the window

Also Tuesday, two elderly women who came out of the compound with the children last week were released from custody, Ricks said. They were first charged with murder, but those charges were quickly dismissed and they had been held since March 2 as material witnesses. Ricks said they were released into the custody of a trustworthy

Koresh has told negotiators he has been preparing for a fight since 1985 and at times seems eager to provoke another gun battle to fulfill his apocalyptic prophecies.

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Continued from Page 1

state trial, acquittals and three days of deadly rioting.

King, 27, said the officers asked at one point how he felt. "I said I felt fine. I didn't want them to know what they were doing to me was really getting to me. I didn't want them to have the satisfaction.'

Under questioning by prosecutor Barry Kowalski, King insisted he never resisted arrest and suggested that a woman state Highway Patrol officer who first tracked him down for speeding could have handcuffed him if Los Angeles police had not intervened.

He said he was lying face down, trying to cooperate when officers leaped on him and "one of them applied pressure like he was trying to snap my wrist in half." He said he screamed in pain, and then heard someone shout "Back!

They all backed away from me and I'm still on the ground waiting to be handcuffed and shortly after that I was shocked by a Taser.

Asked what the stun-gun darts felt like when they hit him, he said, "I got shocked and it felt like my blood was boiling inside of me.

Moments later, as he was on the ground, he said, he heard the shout: "We're going to kill you nigger, run!"

I ran closer to the Hyundai (his car) and I was struck across the right side of the face again,' King said pointing to his temple. "To this day there is a bump

right here. Kowalski asked what King heard while being clubbed and kicked.

"I'm not exactly sure but I heard while they were hitting me chants of 'killer, nigger, how do you feel killer?"

'I didn't want them to know what they were doing to me was really getting to me. I didn't want them to have the satisfaction.'

Rodney King. alleged police brutality victim

He was asked whether he truly remembered the officers say "nigger" or "killer." King said he wasn't sure.

Outside court, defense attorney Harland Braun noted that no other witness had reported hearing racial epithets, so King

couldn't be believed. 'His case will rest and fall on the question of whether there were any racial epithets," Braun

King directed most of his comments to the jury, using his hands for emphasis. At first he seemed nervous, licking his lips, but as his narrative continued he appeared to grow calm.

He recalled being taken to a hospital, then being transferred to yet another hospital in a police car. He said an officer, previously identified as defendant Timothy Wind, sat in the back seat with him.

"I was bent over in the back seat of the police car from the pain. He kept snatching me by the collar of the shirt and saying. 'Stay with me now, stay with ... It was very painful from the injuries and I wanted to curl

Upon arrival, he said, "We were walking into the hospital and one of the police who ups."
walked me in said, 'Oh, he's on If convicted of all charges, the PCP.' I said, 'Why do you keep saying that?"

King admitted he had too

much to drink that night but said he has never taken PCP and had not used marijuana for some time before the beating.

He recalled the next morning as painful and confusing after he awakened in the jail ward of Los Angeles County-USC Medical

"I was having trouble remem-bering exactly what went on but I know for sure I was attacked by police officers," he said.

King acknowledged that the night of the beating he had been drinking while watching a basketball game on television, and admitted to speeding — going about 75 mph to 80 mph.

A convicted robber who served jail time. King said he didn't pull over because he was afraid he would be going back to prison.

Before King's testimony, two defense lawyers disclosed outside the jury's presence that King tested positive for cocaine and heroin use in the months after his beating and asked to question him and his doctors about it.

But when doctors took the stand, drug questions were not

However on cross-examination, two defense attorneys opened the door to damaging testimony from a doctor who said King's injuries were caused by baton blows to the head.

"Someone suggested it could be from a fall to the pavement. That is out of the question," Dr. Charles Aronberg, chief of ophthalmology at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center testified.

Defense attorney Stone acknowledged outside court it was "one of the classic screw-

defendants could be sentenced to 10 years in prison and fined

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