

Ex-Professor Is Seized In Montana as Suspect In the Unabom Attacks

David Johnston

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

VOLCXLV...No. 59,387

Copyright © 1996 The New York Times

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 1996

It beyond the greater New York metropolitan area.

60 CENTS

Late Edition

New York: Today, Cloudy, late showers. High 51. Tonight, showers. Low 42. Tomorrow, early showers, a brighter afternoon. High 48. Yesterday, high 69, low 38. Details, C18.

Ex-Professor Is Seized In Montana as Suspect In the Unabom Attacks

By DAVID JOHNSTON

WASHINGTON, April 3 — Federal agents today raided a remote Montana cabin where they seized a one-time university professor suspected of being the Unabomber, the elusive terrorist who has left a 17-year nationwide trail of mail bombs that have killed 3 people and maimed 23 others.

Law-enforcement officials said tonight that the agents had found explosive chemicals and other bomb-making material at the wilderness cabin belonging to the suspect, Theodore J. Kaczynski. They said they planned to charge Mr. Kaczynski on Thursday with the series of deadly attacks, which had long baffled the authorities.

The suspect is a 53-year-old former assistant professor of mathematics at the University of California at Berkeley, where he taught for two years in the late 1980's. He graduated from Harvard College in 1962 and then earned a doctorate in mathematics at the University of Michigan. His is just the sort of academic-oriented background that the authorities had attributed to the bomber, whose communications with the press had reflected an obsession with science and technology issues.

Since the early 1970's, Mr. Kaczynski has lived in his tiny cabin 99 miles northwest of Helena, Mont., near the Continental Divide on the edge of Lolo National Forest. The area is so remote that one of the F.B.I. agents who had kept him un-

der surveillance there for the last several weeks is said to have watched a cougar attack and kill a deer.

The agents confronted Mr. Kaczynski at the cabin today and, after a brief scuffle, searched it for evidence of bomb-related material. Federal investigators, who had said before the search that they did not have sufficient evidence to charge Mr. Kaczynski with the bombings, said afterward that the agents had found what they believe is enough to bring a complaint against him on Thursday in a Federal court in Helena.

The filing of formal charges against Mr. Kaczynski will mean that investigators can begin taking fingerprint and blood samples to determine whether they match the evidence collected over the years like the DNA, drawn from dried saliva, that the bomber left on stamps used to mail letters to his victims and to news organizations.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation put Mr. Kaczynski under scrutiny about two months ago, when — after years of false leads, fruitless searching across the country and the publication of a 35,000-word manifesto from the bomber — the long-awaited breakthrough came from the suspect's own family. According to law-enforcement officials, members of the Kaczynski family in the Chicago area, apparently while cleaning their house and preparing it for sale, discovered writings that seemed strikingly similar to the Unabomber's anarchist tracts.

The family members who the

COMMERCE SECRETARY AMONG 33 LOST IN A CROATIA PLANE CRASH

ALL FEARED DEAD

Ronald Brown Headed
a Business Mission
to Rebuild Balkans

By R. W. APPLE JR.

WASHINGTON, April 3 — A military plane carrying Commerce Secretary Ronald H. Brown and a delegation of American corporate executives slammed into a mountainside today as it approached the airport at Dubrovnik, on the Adriatic coast of Croatia. Chances that Mr. Brown had survived were "next to zero," a White House official said after more than 12 hours of rescue efforts.

Clambering over rocky, rugged terrain, working by flashlight in pelted rain, Croatian search parties found nine bodies and one survivor, described by a Dubrovnik doctor at the scene as "a woman who was bleeding profusely." She died later, Croatian officials said.

But there was no definitive word on the fate of Mr. Brown, a 54-year-old political insider who helped spark President Clinton's 1992 campaign. Glyn Davies, a State Department spokesman, said tonight that all 33 people aboard the plane were presumed dead, but later retracted his comment, saying they were considered missing. The Croatian television said all had perished.

Searchers at the scene and officials in Washington said they held



Tragic End to Mission in Balkans

April 4, 1996

Federal agents today raided a remote Montana cabin where they seized a onetime university professor suspected of being the Unabomber, the elusive terrorist who has left a 17-year nationwide trail of mail bombs that have killed 3 people and maimed 23 others.

Law-enforcement officials said tonight that the agents had found explosive chemicals and other bomb-making material at the wilderness cabin belonging to the suspect, Theodore J. Kaczynski. They said they planned to charge Mr. Kaczynski on Thursday with the series of deadly attacks, which had long baffled the authorities.

The suspect is a 53-year-old former assistant professor of mathematics at the University of California at Berkeley, where he taught for two years in the late 1960's. He graduated from Harvard College in 1962 and then earned a doctorate in mathematics at the University of Michigan. His is just the sort of academic-oriented background that the authorities had attributed to the bomber, whose communications with the press had reflected an obsession with science and technology issues.

Since the early 1970's, Mr. Kaczynski has lived in his tiny cabin 50 miles northwest of Helena, Mont., near the Continental Divide on the edge of Lolo National Forest. The area is so remote that one of the F.B.I. agents who had kept him under surveillance there for the last several weeks is said to have watched a cougar attack and kill a deer.

The agents confronted Mr. Kaczynski at the cabin today and, after a brief scuffle, searched it for evidence of bomb-related material. Federal investigators, who had said before the search that they did not have sufficient evidence to charge Mr. Kaczynski with the bombings, said afterward that the agents had found what they believe is enough to bring a complaint against him on Thursday in a Federal court in Helena.

The filing of formal charges against Mr. Kaczynski will mean that investigators can begin taking fingerprint and blood samples to determine whether they match the evidence collected over the years like the DNA, drawn from dried saliva, that the bomber left on stamps used to mail letters to his victims and to news organizations.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation put Mr. Kaczynski under scrutiny about two months ago, when – after years of false leads, fruitless searching across the country and the publication of a 35,000-word manifesto from the bomber – the long-awaited breakthrough came from the suspect's own family. According to law-enforcement officials, members of the Kaczynski family in the Chicago area, apparently while cleaning their house and preparing it for sale, discovered writings that seemed strikingly similar to the Unabomber's anarchist tracts.

The family members, who the officials said included Mr. Kaczynski's brother, turned the papers over to the F.B.I., apparently through a Washington lawyer acting as intermediary. They also permitted the F.B.I. to search their house, where, officials said, further evidence against Mr. Kaczynski was found.

Mr. Kaczynski was reared in Evergreen Park, Ill., a working-class suburb of Chicago that offers a tableau of Middle American images, from the Cape Cod house where the Kaczynski family once lived to the nearby park where children played soccer and touch

football today. The family later moved to Lombard, another Chicago suburb, and it was at the house in that city that Mr. Kaczynski's papers were found.

The Unabom case, which came to be so called because some of the early targets were university employees and airlines, began in May 1978 with the first of 16 bombings or attempted bombings. The Unabomber mailed his last package bomb in April 1995, when a blast in Sacramento, Calif., killed the president of the California Forestry Association. During the 17 years in between, the bomber's meticulously built devices grew ever more powerful and lethal, and his communications to the authorities more menacing.

In an effort to showcase his antitechnological ideology, the Unabomber last year sent The New York Times a 35,000-word manuscript that railed against what he described as the corrupt and dehumanizing influences of post-industrial society. Academics said the writing conveyed passable but unoriginal thinking about subjects like the history of science.

After the Unabomber had pledged to cease his campaign of violence if The Times or The Washington Post published his manifesto, the two newspapers jointly financed the publication of the manuscript by The Post in September. Later it was distributed widely through computer networks.

The manifesto and a false threat in California to blow up a plane, both of which seemed uncharacteristically erratic, prompted some criminal profilers to alter their view of the bomber. They now saw him not as a disciplined terrorist with a political aim but as a driven serial killer whose bombs fulfilled a psychological need.

The fear that the Unabomber was growing more unpredictable and dangerous put greater pressure on the Government to find him. Vast lists were culled by computer, a telephone line received more than 20,000 tips, and new investigative technologies were perfected to sift huge databases of information.

But the years of effort proved fruitless until investigators received what they said was the vital clue, the tip from a member of Mr. Kaczynski's family about two months ago.

In the following weeks, Mr. Kaczynski's cabin was under continuous hidden surveillance by Federal agents who stood watch through blizzards that periodically raked the rugged region.

Throughout the surveillance, Mr. Kaczynski remained at the cabin, a 10-by-12-foot dwelling that has no electricity or running water. He chopped his own wood for heat and kept a cache of food in a root cellar, officials said.

Although he had lived as a wilderness recluse far from the scenes of the bombings, Mr. Kaczynski did seem to fit the Government's profile of the man who had been one of its top fugitives from justice. He was a loner, had lived in the Chicago area, was well educated and once lived in Northern California.

For years, the Unabomber remained a shadowy figure, known to the public only from the F.B.I.'s composite drawing of a gaunt man wearing aviator sunglasses and

staring out from under the hood of a sweatshirt. But his personality became more boldly defined through his manifesto.

His text was a dense essay on political philosophy, social science and technology, a hodgepodge of ideas that were in vogue on college campuses in the late 1960's, when Mr. Kaczynski was teaching at Berkeley.

The earliest bombings were in the Chicago area, where investigators ultimately set up a separate base of operations, predicting that they might be able to catch the Unabomber by searching for his roots. They hoped to pick up a trail left by the bomber in his youth, when he would have been less skilled, less careful and more reckless. And in the end, it was the Chicago area that led to Mr. Kaczynski.

The Ted K Archive

David Johnston

Ex-Professor Is Seized In Montana as Suspect In the Unabom Attacks

April 4, 1996

The New York Times, April 4, 1996, Section A, Page 1.

<nytimes.com/1996/04/04/us/unabomber-track-overview-ex-professor-seized-montana-suspect-unabom-attacks.html>

www.thetedkarchive.com