

The Trial in Brief

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The Unabomber

Major events in the life of Theodore Kaczynski

The case

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What Kaczynski and his victims had to say

Major events in the life of Theodore Kaczynski

The Associated Press

(Published Jan. 22, 1998)

Major events in the life of Theodore Kaczynski:

- **May 22, 1942:** Theodore John Kaczynski, born in Chicago suburb of Evergreen Park, Ill., to Wanda and Theodore R. Kaczynski, a sausage maker. His mother brings him up reading Scientific American; his father teaches Ted and his younger brother David how to live outdoors.
- **Spring 1958:** After skipping two years in school and showing an aptitude for math and making small explosive devices, Kaczynski graduates from Evergreen Park High School.
- **Spring 1962:** Kaczynski graduates from Harvard University, then goes on to master's and doctorate in math from the University of Michigan.
- **Fall 1967:** Kaczynski gets a coveted math teaching post at the University of California-Berkeley but quits without explanation in 1969.
- **1971:** Kaczynski is rejected for immigration to Canada and begins writing anti-technology tracts. The Kaczynski brothers buy land near Lincoln, Mont., where Kaczynski later builds his small cabin.
- **1978:** Kaczynski, after trying to reestablish contact with his family in the Chicago area, is fired by his brother for harassing a female employee at the factory where they work. He returns to his cabin.
- **1979-1996:** Kaczynski lives as a hermit, hunting rabbits, growing vegetables, complaining about balky pay phones and worrying about getting rabies from skunks. He borrows small amounts of money from his family.
- **April 3, 1996:** Acting on David Kaczynski's suspicions following the publication of the Unabomber manifesto, federal agents arrest Kaczynski at his cabin. He is subsequently indicted in Sacramento and New Jersey for five Unabomber attacks.

- **Jan. 21, 1998:** Kaczynski agrees to a plea bargain with the government which will send him to prison for life.

Key events in the Unabomber case

The Associated Press

(Published Jan. 22, 1998)

Major events in the Unabomber case:

- **May 25, 1978:** The first Unabomber bombing – a package found at a University of Illinois parking lot in Chicago is brought to the return addressee at Northwestern University, where it explodes, injuring one.
- **May 9, 1979:** One person injured at Northwestern University.
- **Nov. 15, 1979:** Twelve people suffer smoke inhalation after a bomb explodes in the cargo hold during an American Airlines flight, forcing an emergency landing at Dulles International Airport near Washington.
- **June 10, 1980:** United Airlines president injured at his home in the Chicago area.
- **Oct. 8, 1981:** Bomb placed in a business classroom at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. No one injured.
- **May 5, 1982:** One person injured at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn.; package was addressed to a professor. The package was mailed from Brigham Young University in Utah.
- **July 2, 1982:** Professor of electrical engineering and computer science injured in faculty lounge at University of California, Berkeley.
- **May 15, 1985:** One person injured by bomb in computer room at Berkeley.
- **June 13, 1985:** Package mailed to Boeing Co. in Auburn, Wash., safely disarmed. Package was mailed from Oakland, Calif.
- **Nov. 15, 1985:** Two people injured by package mailed to professor at University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.
- **Dec. 11, 1985:** The first fatality. Sacramento, Calif., computer rental store owner Hugh Scrutton is killed when he picks up a bomb outside his business.

- **Feb. 20, 1987:** The Unabomber is spotted. A witness in a Salt Lake City computer store sees a man in a hooded sweat shirt and aviator sunglasses placing a bomb. Unabomber attacks cease for six years.
- **June 22, 1993:** University of California-San Francisco geneticist Dr. Charles Epstein injured by a bomb sent to his home. The package is postmarked Sacramento.
- **June 24, 1993:** Yale University computer expert David Gelernter injured in his office by a bomb. The package is postmarked Sacramento.
- **June 1993:** The Unabomber communicates for the first time in a letter to The New York Times explaining his eco-anarchist views. A federal task force is set up.
- **Dec. 10, 1994:** Advertising executive Thomas Mosser is killed when a bomb explodes at his New Jersey home. The package was postmarked San Francisco.
- **April 24, 1995:** The final bombing. Timber industry lobbyist Gilbert Murray is killed opening a package in his Sacramento office. The package was postmarked Oakland, Calif.
- **Sept. 19, 1995:** The Washington Post and New York Times jointly publish the Unabomber's 35,000-word manifesto, "Industrial Society and Its Future," following the serial bomber's promise to stop his attacks.
- **February 1996:** David Kaczynski, after reading the manifesto and comparing it to letters written by his brother, Ted, communicates his suspicions to the FBI.
- **April 3, 1996:** Theodore Kaczynski is arrested at his mountain cabin in Montana. He is indicted in Sacramento for the Scrutton and Murray murders and the attacks on Epstein and Gelernter, and in New Jersey for the Mosser murder.
- **Nov. 12, 1997:** Jury selection begins.
- **Dec. 22, 1997:** Jury selection ends. U.S. District Judge Garland Burrell Jr. meets with Kaczynski and his defense lawyers to discuss an "attorney-client issue," later revealed to be a dispute over defense strategy.
- **Jan. 5, 1998:** Scheduled opening statements are delayed when Kaczynski renews his request to fire his lawyers and hire an attorney who will mount a defense based on his political views. The request is denied.
- **Jan. 8, 1998:** Opening statements are again delayed when Kaczynski asks to serve as his own attorney. Burrell orders a competency evaluation for Kaczynski.

- **Jan. 17, 1998:** Bureau of Prisons psychiatrist Sally Johnson reports that Kaczynski is competent to stand trial, but also probably a paranoid schizophrenic, as his lawyers have maintained.
- **Jan. 22, 1998:** Burrell rejects request for self-representation. Kaczynski agrees to plea bargain.

A look back at significant developments in Kaczynski's trial

(Published Jan. 22, 1998)

Following is a synopsis of key events from the Unabomber trial.

Nov. 12, 1997

Amid talks of a plea bargain, jury selection begins in the trial of Theodore Kaczynski. Documents filed today reveal that the defendant suffers from a mental disorder that leaves him terrified of psychiatrists and convinced they want to manipulate his thoughts and attitudes.

Jury selection

Government's trial brief

Declaration of Dr. Vernon Foster

Gilbert family representative talks with the press

Nov. 14, 1997

To counter claims that Kaczynski suffers from a brain disorder leaving him terrified of psychiatrists, prosecutors file documents today stating that he sought mental health counseling on several occasions prior to his arrest.

Letters written by Kaczynski

Nov. 18, 1997

Kaczynski's lawyers argue in a new set of documents that his searches for mental health care several years before his arrest "actually confirm, rather than refute, his pathological dread of psychiatric examination."

Nov. 19, 1997

The fight over Kaczynski's mental state continues. Today prosecutors release journal entries in which he vowed to "start killing people" and expressed a desire never to be dismissed as a "sickie."

Defense team makes its way to the courthouse

Nov. 24, 1997

A prospective juror who claimed to know nothing about the Unabomber case confronts the defendant. Sitting with her mouth agape as she hears the charges against him, the woman then stares at him and gasps, "Did you do that?"

Jury selection continues

Nov. 25, 1997

Kaczynski becomes visibly upset in the courtroom as his lawyers discuss his latest rejection of the government's efforts to probe his mind. He mutters "psychiatrists" and tosses his pen across the table. In the meantime, his brother leaves New York, driving to California on a mission to save the defendant's life.

Jury selection continues

Dec. 5, 1997

Kaczynski's dark, grimy cabin arrives at Sacramento's Mather Field from Montana, destined to give jurors in the Unabomber trial a window into the defendant's mind.

Kaczynski's cabin arrives at Mather Field

Dec. 10, 1997

The first phase of jury selection ends. The final jury of 12 people and six alternates will be drawn from a pool of 70 people who survived the initial questioning process.

Jury selection ends

Dec. 19, 1997

Kaczynski appears in a closed meeting with a federal judge as the debate over his mental state intensifies.

Discussion following ex parte in camera hearing

Dec. 22, 1997

Jury selection ends. The judge meets behind closed doors with Kaczynski and his defense lawyers to discuss an "attorney-client issue" later revealed to be a dispute over defense strategy.

Scheduling discussion and peremptory challenges

Dec. 31, 1997

A judge rules that all of Kaczynski's comments during private conferences in recent days were potentially damaging and will be sealed.

Government's 404b motion and motions to unseal transcripts

Jan. 2, 1998

Prosecutors seek to bar Kaczynski's attorneys from using his own writings, hermitlike existence and primitive living conditions to portray him to jurors as mentally fragile, saying such information is irrelevant in the "guilt" phase of the trial and might confuse the jury.

Jan. 5, 1998

Scheduled opening statements are delayed when Kaczynski renews his request to fire his lawyers and hire an attorney who will mount a defense based on his political views. The request is denied.

Kaczynski requests a hearing

Redacted chambers proceeding

Kaczynski's mother and brother head to court

Jan. 8, 1998

Opening statements are again delayed when Kaczynski asks to serve as his own attorney. Judge Burrell orders a competency evaluation for Kaczynski and appoints attorney

ney Kevin Clymo to handle the competency issue. Reports also surface that Kaczynski attempted suicide the previous night.

Kaczynski requests to serve as his own attorney
Kaczynski heads back to jail

Jan. 12, 1998

Plea bargain talks resume as Dr. Sally Johnson begins her psychiatric evaluation of Kaczynski.

Conference call regarding scheduling
Johnson leaves the jail

Jan. 14, 1998

Gov. Pete Wilson urges federal prosecutors not to cut any deals with Kaczynski that would spare him the death penalty.

Jan. 15, 1998

The prosecution files a motion asking the judge to order Kaczynski's attorneys to present a defense that complies with his wishes.

Government's motion for hearing on defendant's representation if he is found competent

Hearing on competency report

Jan. 17, 1998

Dr. Johnson reports that Kaczynski is competent to stand trial, but also probably a paranoid schizophrenic, as his lawyers have maintained. Kaczynski is taken off jail suicide watch.

Jan. 20, 1998

Defense attorneys demand that the government reveal to them any information they have regarding "secret shacks" that Kaczynski wrote about in his journals.

Motion to compel government to disclose information about secret shacks

Jan. 21, 1998

Lawyers on both sides agree that Kaczynski has the right to represent himself.

Defense motion for disclosure

Jan. 22, 1998

The judge rejects Kaczynski's request for self-representation. The defendant agrees to plead guilty in exchange for life in prison.

Wanda Kaczynski lets out a smile of relief
David and Wanda Kaczynski express sorrow to victims
Department of Justice accepts guilty plea

Unabomber gets life sentence: Victims tell Kaczynski of their anguish

By Cynthia Hubert

Bee Staff Writer

(Published May 5, 1998)

Men and women whose lives were shattered by Theodore Kaczynski's bombing campaign confronted him for the first time Monday, recounting their pain and losses in a hushed Sacramento courtroom.

Afterward, a federal judge sentenced the admitted Unabomber to prison for the remainder of his days.

"Lock him so far down that when he does die, he'll be closer to hell," urged Susan Mosser, her voice quavering as she described how she tended to her dying husband, Thomas, after he opened a package bomb Kaczynski sent to their home in 1994. "That is where the devil belongs."

Mosser, reading from a handwritten script, spoke of the "unbearable pain" of having to tell her children that their father was dead, and of trying to be strong in the aftermath of the tragedy.

"My children are bleeding from their souls. Sometimes, it is a pinprick. Sometimes, it is a hemorrhage. To lose your father this way is unfathomable."

"We are still processing the horror," she said.

Mosser and others seemed to be searching for emotional closure in addressing the man who anonymously targeted them or their loved ones for death out of revenge against a society from which he had become hopelessly isolated. But the legal outcome of the proceeding was never in doubt.

Based on an earlier plea agreement, U.S. District Judge Garland E. Burrell Jr. sentenced Kaczynski to life in prison without possibility of parole or appeal. Sources said he would be moved imminently, possibly overnight, from the Sacramento County jail to a maximum security federal prison.

Before he imposed the sentence Monday, Burrell offered Kaczynski and the victims of his crimes an opportunity to speak.

As Kaczynski, wearing a striped shirt topped by a pullover sweater, strode to the podium in front of the judge's bench, one of the women he rendered a widow hurried from the room.

Kaczynski read a brief statement attacking a lengthy document filed by prosecutors last week that detailed his methods and motives, calling it "clearly political" and a misrepresentation of facts of the case.

"At a later time I expect to respond at length to the sentencing memorandum and also the many falsehoods that have been propagated about me," the Harvard graduate said in a highly pitched voice. "Meanwhile, I only ask that people reserve their judgment about me and about the Unabom case until all the facts have been made public."

Survivors of the bombings, accompanied by family members and friends, craned their necks to see the man responsible for a reign of terror that lasted 18 years and altered their lives forever.

But Connie Murray, who lost her husband, Gilbert, in a bombing at the California Forestry Association in Sacramento in 1995, left the courtroom as Kaczynski began to speak. She returned moments later, after he finished.

"There was nothing he could say that I was willing to hear," she said later in a written statement. She also declined the opportunity to address the court, she said, "because I did not have the emotional energy to speak to Kaczynski's deaf ears."

Family members of Hugh Scrutton, who became the Unabomber's first fatality when he picked up a bomb outside his Sacramento computer store in 1985, also declined to talk publicly.

Others glared at the Unabomber from the witness stand and addressed him directly.

"I have thought long and hard about what I should say to you, Ted Kaczynski," said Lois Epstein, whose husband of 42 years, Charles, nearly died and bears permanent hand injuries from a mail bomb he opened in 1993.

"You are the person who sent a bomb to my home in an attempt to murder a man who has never done you a moment's harm but has done the world a lot of good" through his work on the genetic causes of illnesses, said Epstein, herself a physician and cancer researcher.

"That you have been sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of appeal or parole is, in my opinion, almost too kind," she said.

She said she hoped that, "given that your victims were killed by your bombs, may your own eventual death occur as you have lived, in a solitary manner, without compassion or love."

Her husband also stared down Kaczynski. Charles Epstein, a physician and researcher at the University of California, San Francisco, said he has spent his life trying to help people with devastating genetic afflictions, including mental retardation. "True, my tools are genetic ones," he said, "but why their use in the service of people who need help should mark me for death is beyond my understanding."

"To the extent that you really were trying to make some sort of statement about the potential problems engendered by science and technology, your murderous approach doomed you to failure. And fail you did."

Others talked of forgiveness and healing.

"Ted, I do not hate you," said Gary Wright, who was injured in a bombing outside his computer store in Salt Lake City 11 years ago. Even though he still suffers psychologically from what happened, he said, "I forgave you a long time ago."

A Harvard graduate and doctor of mathematics who retreated to the life of a hermit, Kaczynski admitted in January to planning and carrying out explosions that killed three people and injured 23 others between 1978 and 1995. He pleaded guilty to 13 criminal counts in connection with five of the explosions, including the three fatal blasts.

Kaczynski, 55, said in journals seized from his crude cabin in Montana that he committed the bombings in the name of revenge. He targeted airline executives, computer experts, medical scientists and advertising executives, who he said represented industries and fields that help isolate people from one another and from nature, and manipulate people's minds and attitudes.

His capture in April 1996 brought to an end the longest running terrorist campaign in U.S. history, and the case drew worldwide attention. Kaczynski's brother, David, emerged as a hero after he read the serial bomber's widely published treatise condemning industrial society, suspected his only sibling might be responsible and made the wrenching decision to turn him in.

A federal prison psychiatrist diagnosed Theodore Kaczynski as suffering from paranoid schizophrenia, but ruled him mentally competent to stand trial. After Burrell denied his request to represent himself, Kaczynski agreed to the plea deal.

On Monday, after imposing the life sentence, Burrell called Kaczynski's crimes "unspeakable and monstrous" and urged that he be sent to a facility "where he can be clearly monitored to prevent any future acts of violence or intimidation."

The judge also ordered the destitute Kaczynski to pay \$15 million in restitution to victims and insurance companies, should he receive any revenues from books, films or interviews.

U.S. Marshal Jerry Enomoto said he could not, for security reasons, reveal where Kaczynski will be incarcerated or when he will be transferred from Sacramento. Other sources said he was scheduled to be moved overnight, possibly to a prison in Florence, Colo., where Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh is incarcerated; or a facility in Illinois or Kansas.

Some of the bombing victims who spoke Monday said they believed Kaczynski should have received the death penalty.

"If ever there was a model candidate for the death penalty, Mr. Kaczynski is that candidate," said Nick Suino, who was hurt by a Unabomber device at the University of Michigan in 1985.

But rather than wish him dead, he said, "I feel sorry for him. How lonely he must have been then. How lonely he must be now."

He urged others who have been hurt by Kaczynski's wrath to let go of their anger. "There is no time for us to go on hating Mr. Kaczynski," he said. "Do not join him in that prison cell. We have more important things to do."

David Kaczynski sat in the first row of seats behind his brother, listening intently to the emotional testimony of his victims.

"It was very difficult," he said later. "It was hard to listen to it. But it was so important."

Later, he told reporters that the three men killed by the Unabomber explosions were "exceptional human beings" and issued an apology to all victims of the bombings and their families.

"The Kaczynski family offers you its deepest apologies," he said. "We are very, very sorry."

Kaczynski's mother, Wanda, devastated by the events of the past two years, did not attend Monday's sentencing.

"But she has made a conscious decision to get on with her life," David Kaczynski said, making travel plans and taking a class.

Monday's court session may be the last time the brothers see one another, said lawyer Anthony Bisceglie, who represents Wanda and David Kaczynski, because Theodore has rebuffed their attempts to see him.

Theodore Kaczynski seemed unmoved by the sometimes dramatic testimony of his victims.

Susan Mosser, who sat at the prosecution table across from Kaczynski and his defense lawyers while she spoke, evoked sobs from others in the courtroom when she described the horror of the bombing that killed her husband.

"It was supposed to be the day my family picked out a Christmas tree, the day we celebrated Tom's latest promotion," she said. Instead, "It was the day I had to tell my children, 'Daddy's dead,'" she said.

She described chasing after their baby daughter as Mosser went into the kitchen to open some mail. "A thunderous noise resounded throughout the house," she recalled, and a white mist poured from the kitchen doorway.

Inside, she found her dying husband, "face up on the floor, his stomach slashed open, his face partially blackened. Blood. Horror." She dialed 911, tried to stanch his blood with the baby's blanket, then shepherded all of her children to a neighbor's house.

"It was the worst day of my life, but only the beginning of the nightmare that is the Unabomber," Mosser said.

She called Kaczynski a "creature" whose sentence should be "bulletproof and bombproof. Don't let Kaczynski murder justice the way he has murdered others," she said.

She ended her statement with a prayer.

"God, thank you for letting us see this day. It is hopefully the beginning of the end. Bless everyone who has worked on this case. Bless everyone who has ever been touched by this. Bless everyone who has ever prayed for any of us.

"But most of all, God, bless our children. Keep their world safe from people like Theodore Kaczynski."

Bee staff writer Wayne Wilson contributed to this report.

A critique of his ideas & actions.



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