

The Unabomber case's other dark side; Congress takes a poke at terrorism

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THE UNABOMBER CASE'S OTHER DARK SIDE

While specialists at the FBI laboratory in Washington continue the painstaking work of analyzing the odd collection of junk and evidence they pulled out of Theodore Kaczynski's smelly Montana cabin, the public side of the Unabomber investigation has already entered the silly stage. Last week, Kaczynski got a \$ 15 haircut at the Lewis and Clark County jail in Lincoln, Mont., during which process the dour onetime mathematics professor treated his barber to a disquisition on an ancient Japanese tribe whose members evidently never cut their hair.

In Chicago, meanwhile, the woman believed to have set Kaczynski on a life of crime by spurning his affections 18 years ago turned in a classy performance, denying the account and explaining that she had rejected substantial sums of money for tabloid interviews because she felt it was "inappropriate to profit from the tragedy of others." Would that everyone evinced such restraint. With a federal grand jury meeting to consider a more sweeping indictment of Kaczynski, television producers, book agents and the checkout-line tabloids have raised the psychobabble quotient of the Unabomber story to truly dizzying levels. Kaczynski, who certainly appeared sane to his jailhouse barber last week, professes distaste for all the media hoopla. "I hate it," he told hair-cutter Dundee Warden. "I hate the media."

CABIN CLUTTER. Among the several hundred items on an FBI list of evidence found in Kaczynski's home: Bomb components; Pipe bomb; 4 guns; San Francisco maps; 3 typewriters; \$ 32 cash; University of Michigan degree; Asimov's Guide to the Bible; Les Miserables; Growing Up Absurd; Trazadone antidepressant; Mousetrap.

CONGRESS TAKES A POKE AT TERRORISM

It took rhetorical blasts from Bill Clinton and Bob Dole plus the first anniversary of Oklahoma City's bombing to focus Congress's attention, but federal laws aimed at terrorists finally will get a bit tougher. Lawmakers heeded the pleas of victims' kin last week and passed a weakened version of a long-pending antiterrorism bill, which the president indicated he will sign. There are a few strong provisions, including one that will speed death-penalty cases (story, Page 58). The bill bans fund-raising for terrorist groups within American borders, eases deportation of terrorist suspects and requires chemical identifiers on plastic explosives. One clause will enable families of the Oklahoma City victims to watch on closed-circuit TV the moved-to-Denver trial of accused bombers Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols.

A coalition of pro-firearms advocates and civil libertarians forced Congress to drop several proposals that would have expanded the wiretapping authority of federal agents. That didn't stop the criticism. James Dempsey of the Center for National Security Studies said the law will have an "intrusive, chilling effect" on Americans who want to support nonviolent organizations that the FBI links to terrorists.

The Ted K Archive

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