

Unabomb suspect held in Montana

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HELENA, Mont (AP) — Federal agents found a partially assembled bomb in the mountain shack of a former Berkeley math professor suspected of being the Unabomber, federal officials said. They prepared to charge him today.

Theodore John Kaczynski, 53, was to be charged with one count of possession of a bomb, according to three federal law enforcement officials, who requested anonymity. The initial charge would hold Kaczynski but would make no mention of the Unabomber's 18-year string of bombing attacks while agents put together a detailed case.



SUSPECT – UNABOMBER

FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents found a partially assembled explosive device when they X-rayed one of many boxes in his remote wilderness cabin late yesterday, two officials said. They also said bomb diagrams were found.

"It's going very slowly because we're not sure if it's booby-trapped," said one federal agent. "We have an explosives ordnance team X-raying everything before we touch it."

Officials said the search of the cabin and an outbuilding could take several days. "We've got all the time in the world now that he's in custody," said one agent.

Also found were chemicals that could be used in bombs, including aluminum, and two manual typewriters, the officials said. The Unabomber has sent a sheaf of typed missives over the past few years and investigators wanted to compare those with the machines.

The officials denied a CBS News report that alibi evidence for two bombings had been uncovered. "Nothing has been found that precludes him from being the Unabomber," said a senior federal official in Washington. "There are outstanding issues, such as how he could have gotten from Montana to the locations where the bombs were mailed given that he has no car."

Dick Lundberg, a neighbor, told The Associated Press that he sometimes gave Kaczynski rides into Helena. Plane connections were available there.

Kaczynski was taken into custody by federal agents yesterday so they could search his cabin 50 miles northwest of here. He was not immediately placed under arrest or charged.

Deaths

The Unabomber is thought to be responsible for three deaths and 23 injuries since 1978. The FBI gave the case the code name "Unabom" because early targets were universities and airlines.

The bearded, long-haired suspect wore torn black jeans and a black shirt as he was taken in handcuffs to an FBI office in Helena and transferred late last night to the nearby county jail.

FBI agents had been staking out Kaczynski's hand-built cabin near the Continental Divide for several weeks, ever since relatives in the Chicago area notified authorities that they had stumbled across some of his old writings and found them similar to the Unabomber's anarchist manifestoes.

A former assistant professor of mathematics at the University of California at Berkeley, Kaczynski graduated from Harvard when he was barely 20, and received a master's degree and doctorate from the University of Michigan several years later. Academic-oriented and obsessed with technology, he fits the FBI profile of the suspect.

Recluse

The cabin, with no electricity or plumbing, had been Kaczynski's home for about a dozen years. Neighbors said he was a loner and a recluse, going everywhere on foot or on an old bicycle.

After retreating from academic life in the 1970s. Kaczynski lived in Utah, doing odd jobs and menial labor.

Dale Eickelman, who went to junior high school with Kaczynski in the quiet, working-class Chicago suburb of Evergreen Park, Ill., said even as a teen-ager, "Ted had the know-how of putting together things like batteries, wire leads, potassium nitrate and whatever, and creating explosions.

"We would go to the hardware store, use household products and make these things you might call bombs," Eickelman, now a Dartmouth anthropology professor, told the Daily Southtown in Chicago. "Once we created an explosion in a metal garbage can.

Attacks

The Unabomber's spree began at Northwestern University in suburban Chicago in May 1978. The most recent of 16 attacks came April 24, 1995, when a timber industry executive was killed in Sacramento.

The FBI has spread copies of the Unabomber's writings throughout the academic community in hopes of finding someone who recognizes the work.

Last September, The New York Times and The Washington Post published, in the Post, his 35,000-word treatise on the inhumanity of industrial society. His manifesto held that industrial society should be abolished and replaced with "small, autonomous units" of no more than 100 people.

He promised to stop planting bombs that kill people if the treatise was published. There have been no bombings since.

Federal agents working the Unabomber case "have been hot to trot for about two weeks," said Salt Lake Police Sgt. Don Bell, a member of the multi-agency Unabom task force and former homicide detective who worked the 1987 case in which a Salt Lake man was critically injured when he picked up a package left outside a computer store.

That was the only time anyone ever spotted the man believed to be the Unabomber and it resulted in the now-famous composite drawing showing a hooded man wearing aviator-style sunglasses.

‘The right man’

Rick Smith, who retired just last week from the FBI in San Francisco — headquarters of the Unabom task force — said the force had half a dozen good suspects, but none better than the man in Montana.

The further we went along the more likely it was that he was a viable suspect,” Smith said. ”The FBI’s fairly certain they have the right man.”

Federal agents have described the Unabomber as white, male, 40ish, a killer-from-afar who is quiet, antisocial and meticulous. He could easily buy the electrical switches he has used. Instead, he painstakingly builds them himself. His explosives are not exotic. From match heads he moved up to powders.

He seems fascinated with wood, sometimes carving bomb parts out of wood instead of buying easily available metal pieces. He also likes to box his videocassette-size devices in wood — sometimes using four varieties.

Last June, the Unabomber threatened in a letter to the San Francisco Chronicle to blow up a plane out of Los Angeles International Airport. The next day, an authenticated letter sent to The New York Times said the threat was merely a prank.

The Ted K Archive

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The Union Democrat, 4 Apr 1996.
<books.google.co.uk/books?id=tSlZAAAAIBAJ&pg=PA10>

www.thetedkarchive.com