

Woman had two dates with Unabom suspect

'We had nothing in common'

April 18, 1996

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CHICAGO (CNN) – A Chicago woman who had two 1978 dates with Unabom suspect Theodore Kaczynski said they were never romantically involved. She said she stopped seeing him because "we had nothing in common." (196K AIFF sound or 196K WAV sound)

Ellen Tarmichael was a manager at a Chicago-area packing material factory where Kaczynski worked for two months before being fired by his brother, David, for harassing Tarmichael.

Flanked by two attorneys, Tarmichael read a statement at a news conference to "dispel misinformation" in the media about her relationship with the man suspected in the bombings that have killed three people and wounded 23 since 1978.

Kaczynski, 53, was arrested April 3 at his Montana cabin and is jailed in Helena. He has been charged only with possession of bomb components, and not with any of the Unabom attacks.

She said she first met Theodore Kaczynski when he began working as a press operator on June 23, 1978 – almost one month after the first bombing attack. On May 26, a package bomb exploded at Northwestern University in Evanston, north of Chicago, injuring one person. (179K AIFF sound or 179K WAV sound)

Two dates

About four weeks after Tarmichael met Kaczynski, she accepted a dinner invitation.

"About two weeks later, we went to pick apples and returned to his parents' home where we baked an apple pie. It was on that occasion that I informed Ted that I did not wish to see him further on a social basis, because I didn't feel we had much in common besides our employment."

"The two times I saw Ted outside of work was the total extent of my social relationship with him." She said she was "offended" by news reports of a romantic involvement.

Kaczynski was fired on August 23, 1978 – a few weeks after the second date – when he "posted poems about me at the plant and continued to do so after his brother told him not to."

David Kaczynski was another supervisor at the plant. Tarmichael said she has never seen the poems or been informed of their content. After being fired, Theodore Kaczynski met with Tarmichael in her office.

"Ted asked me if his brother could fire him." Tarmichael responded, "yes," and said she supported the decision. She said she has had no contact with Kaczynski since.

Angry at media

Tarmichael said she resented "incessant phone calls to my home and place of employment, repeated calls to members of my family and offers of substantial sums of money for an interview."

She said she has refused the offers, one of them for \$10,000. Tarmichael declined to reveal her current occupation.

"I am not a public person. Nor do I feel it is appropriate to profit from the tragedy of others."

She said she never felt threatened by Kaczynski, and he never discussed environmental or technical issues with her. Tarmichael was "surprised" when the FBI informed her they had arrested the man she described as "intelligent, quiet."

A grand jury meeting in Great Falls adjourned Wednesday without indicting Kaczynski. According to a court document, jurors didn't take up the case. They weren't scheduled to reconvene until mid-May.

The Ted K Archive

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