

## **Cynthia Hubert - Unabomber gets life sentence: Victims tell Kaczynski of their anguish**

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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 Unabomber 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."

<http://www.unabombertrial.com/archive/1998/050598.2.html>

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