

# WHY DO THEY DO IT?

TED KACZYNSKI



In 1978, the explosion of what was considered a primitive homemade bomb sent to a Chicago university started Theodore Kaczynski's "reign of terror." Over the next 17 years, these bombs were either hand-delivered or mailed, resulting in three deaths and 24 injuries. In 1979, an FBI task force, including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, was formed to investigate what was designated as the UNABOM (university and airline bombing targets) case. This task force, which grew to more than 150 full-time investigators, analysts, and others, attempted to recover bomb components and examined the lives of the victims in an effort to identify the bomber.<sup>130</sup>

In 1995, the unidentified "Unabomber" sent the FBI a 35,000-word essay that explained, from his perspective, the reasons for these bombs, as well as his views on the ills of modern society. The following is just one item among the 232 listed in the manifesto:

4. We therefore advocate a revolution against the industrial system. This revolution may or may not make use of violence; it may be sudden or it may be a relatively gradual process spanning a few decades. We can't predict any of that. But we do outline in a very general way the measures that those who hate the industrial system should take in order to prepare the way for a revolution against that form of society. This is not to be a POLITICAL revolution. Its object will be to overthrow not governments but the economic and technological basis of the present society.<sup>131</sup>

FBI director Louis Freeh and Attorney General Janet Reno agreed with the task force's recommendation to publish the



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Mug shot of Theodore "Ted" Kaczynski.

essay, with the hope that a reader could identify the author. This manifesto was printed in the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*.

While thousands of people offered various suspects, one stood out. In January 1996, in his family home in Illinois, David Kaczynski found papers, written by his brother Theodore (Ted), that contained Unabomber-like rhetoric. David Kaczynski notified the FBI. Linguistic analysis revealed that the author of these documents was most likely the author of the manifesto as well. On April 3, 1996, Ted Kaczynski was arrested in his remote mountain cabin in Stemple Pass, Montana. During the search of his cabin, investigators found a large number of bomb components, 40,000 handwritten journal pages, descriptions of Unabomber crimes, and one live bomb ready for mailing. Following his guilty plea in January of 1998, Ted Kaczynski was incarcerated in an isolated cell in a Colorado super-max prison.<sup>132</sup>

## THINK ABOUT IT:

1. Are any features of this type of offense reflected in the various theories that have been discussed?
2. In reference to Steven Spitzer's work, would Ted Kaczynski be considered social dynamite? Why or why not?