

# Kaczynski blasts Unabomber book

Charles S. Johnson

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HELENA — Admitted Unabomber Ted Kaczynski, in a letter to Montana newspapers, has denounced a recently published book about him as “a hoax and a clumsy one at that.”

Kaczynski, who is incarcerated at a federal prison in Florence, Colo., mailed letters to the editors of the Missoulian and Helena Independent Record on Jan. 28 to complain about the book, “Unabomber: The Secret Life of Ted Kaczynski. His 25 Years in Montana,” written by Chris Waits and Dave Shors. It was published last month by the Helena Independent Record and Montana Magazine.

The book alleges that during the same period that his mail bombs killed and maimed people around the country, Kaczynski also secretly waged his own terrorist war in the mountains around Lincoln, where he lived. The book said Kaczynski is believed to have tried to kill a miner in the Lincoln area in 1980, disabling the man with a bullet.

It also said he tortured and killed pet dogs, sabotaged bulldozers and logging equipment, destroyed motorcycles, wrecked cabins, fired shots at people, chopped down a power pole and struck neck wire between trees in hopes of injuring motorcycle riders.

Waits, who moved to the mountains near Lincoln in the early 1970s, wrote that he knew Kaczynski and considered the loner to be a friend. Waits said he occasionally gave Kaczynski rides and allowed him unlimited access to his land holdings in the McClellan Creek drainage. Waits later helped the FBI obtain evidence used against Kaczynski and said he was the first outsider to see what was the first of the Unabomber’s many journals.

Having recently finished reading the book, Kaczynski fired back in a neatly printed, 14-page letter he wrote from prison.

“I never had more than a nodding acquaintance with Waits, I never visited his home or his shop, and, with one minor exception, none of the conversations he claims he had with me ever took place,” Kaczynski said. He added that when documents are made public in a few years, if not sooner, “Chris Waits will be indisputably exposed as the pathetic fake that he is.”

At the same time, however, Kaczynski admitted for the first time publicly in the letters to the newspapers that he “did do some monkey-wrenching,” damaging heavy equipment and machines, in the Lincoln area, as Waits wrote. The Unabomber also said he set up traps to injure motorcyclists; not those who stayed on trails but those who went off-road into the hills.

“However, I did not do more than a small fraction of the illegal actions that Waits attributes to me either explicitly or by implication,” Kaczynski wrote. “I wish I HAD destroyed as much machinery as Waits claims. I’d be proud of it.”

Kaczynski conceded that Waits was right by concluding “I was motivated by anger.” But, Kaczynski added, quite a few people will verify he had good reason to be angry.

Asked about being called a liar by Kaczynski, Waits said Monday: “It’s like Shakespeare said. He’s protesting too much. I consider the source. I would have been shocked if he hadn’t called me a liar.”

“He’s working to hard to discredit me,” Waits added. “What’s he trying to hide? He has motive to call me a liar. I wouldn’t expect anything else from him. Nobody likes being called a liar. If you read the book, Ted doesn’t like to be exposed, either.”

Trying to shoot down Waits’ credibility, Kaczynski cites these three main points:

- Waits claims to have seen Kaczynski’s property while his cabin was still on it, writing that an aluminum pipe ran through the cabin wall to the garden as a convenient means for the hermit to funnel human waste to fertilize his garden. Kaczynski said no such pipe passed through his cabin, and Waits was fooled by a photograph in the book. What looked like a pipe passing through the back wall of the cabin was the support for one of the corner posts of his garden fence, Kaczynski said.
- Kaczynski said he never used McClellan Gulch as often as Waits wrote, entering it at most 36 times in all of his years around Lincoln, but instead took a different route that took him up Fields Gulch.
- Kaczynski disputes Waits’ contention that he smeared human excrement on Waits’ dogs. Kaczynski noted that dogs can run much faster than humans and he wouldn’t have been able to catch them. He maintains he wouldn’t have been able to coax them near him because Waits said the dogs hated him. The only way Kaczynski would have rubbed excrement on them, he wrote, would be to capture the dogs using steel traps, which would have angered the dogs and caused them to bite him.

“In such circumstances, it would be much easier and safer to simply kill the dog and get rid of a pest,” Kaczynski wrote, acknowledging that he killed a dog that sneaked into his garden at night, but it wasn’t one of Waits’ dogs.

In response, Waits said Kaczynski skirts the most important allegations in the book by raising three “irrelevant points.” Kaczynski never addresses serious points raised in the book: whether he shot the miner, poisoned Waits’ dogs with strychnine (although admitting for the first time he killed someone’s dog), and trashed Waits’ machinery.

“There is a credibility factor here,” Waits said. “He denied doing the bombings and pled innocent and then all of a sudden he pleads guilty. I should have a better credibility factor to the public than an admitted killer. The book is accurate, it’s true; the things in it were true.”

“The truth will prevail in the end,” Waits said. “It may take awhile. The truth always has a way of coming out. You sow violence, you’re going to reap the rewards of your violence.”

The Ted K Archive

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