

BOMB DISCOVERED AT BUS STATION

By George P. Bristol
Staff Writer

Fears grew yesterday of a new wave of violence by disabled activists after 40 firebombs were found underneath buses at a depot in West London.

The discovery of the explosive devices came after one of the vehicles was set ablaze at the bus garage in Brentford, South West London, early yesterday morning. A search revealed bombs secreted in the wheel arches of other buses.

One bus was badly burnt, and the London Fire Service stated that most of the company's fleet would also have been badly damaged had the fire not been spotted by drivers who had turned up for work.

London Transport have been criticised by disability groups

for lack of access on London's transport system. Metropolitan police officers said one of the theories they were working on was that the attack was the work of disability rights activists. It is believed officers from the inquiry have contacted a Scotland Yard officer who monitors the activities of such groups.

Yesterday London Transport refused to comment, but a spokesman for the department of transport said that it "deplored attacks like this, especially where there is damage to property and a danger to life. This is an attack by a small minority, and it is totally senseless."

The Fire Service said both bus drivers and firefighters could have been in danger.

About a year ago, Reasonable Adjustment or RAD claimed there was a new mood of militancy among its members.

This followed the firebombings of a depot belonging to West Midlands Transport

in Bordesley Green, Birmingham and buses belonging to Stagecoach at Fratton near Portsmouth.

Last December, Trevor Yardley, a RAD disability rights activist, was jailed for 18 years at Lewes Crown Court on arson charges. He had been charged after an operation in which a team of 50 detectives had tracked him for six weeks.

Yardley was described by police as one of RAD's most accomplished activists. Scotland Yard's Special Branch believe disabled militants have been busy reorganising and preparing fresh campaigns since his imprisonment.

Peter Grater, a security consultant who has studied the modus operandi of disabled extremists, said: "We seem to have a steadily escalating situation. "The activists have been claiming they are getting in a position of doing something dramatic, and this could be the beginning."

DISABLED MAN DIES AT PROTEST

A disabled man died yesterday during a disability rights protest which turned violent.

Dave McCauley (33) of Oldham, Manchester was one of several protesters supporting disabled terror group RAD. Protestors had clashed with police, throwing stones and bottles.

Engulfed in Flames

An eyewitness says that she saw Mr McCauley lighting and then attempting to throw an improvised Molotov cocktail at police when he was engulfed in flames.

The family of Mr McCauley said that he had been crippled with cerebral palsy since birth and was angry at the lack of provision for disabled people. He had made many failed attempts to find work and was depressed.

Saddening

A spokeswoman for the charity the Spastics Society say that they were saddened to hear of Mr McCauley's death but they do not condone violence and urge other spastics with a similar condition to show restraint rather than resorting to violence.

Ongoing Enquiry

West Yorkshire police issued a statement that "This is an ongoing inquiry and we cannot comment on the details of Mr McCauley's death, however we strongly discourage the handicapped from protesting in ways which may endanger themselves and others".

The last year has seen a wave of attacks by disabled terror group RAD, whose actions have been condemned by the police.

LONDON EUSTON EXPLOSION: MANHUNT FOR BOMBER



Charred remains of escalators at Euston Station after blast

Britain last night raised its security threat level to critical, the highest possible, as the bomber who caused an explosion at Euston station yesterday evening remained at large.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said armed soldiers would take over some police duties as security chiefs concluded that another attack may be imminent.

Thirteen people were injured when the bomb partially detonated beneath the escalator at the Euston London Underground station in Central London at 10.03pm last night, luckily the station was quiet at the time and had been partially evacuated. Witnesses described scenes of panic as passengers sought to escape from a "wall of flame" created by the bomb, which was hidden in the mechanism of an escalator. Most of those injured, who included a boy aged around 10, suffered flash burns but some were hurt in a stampede in the station as passengers sought to flee. Police confirmed within hours that they were treating the incident as a terrorist attack caused by an improvised explosive device. The bomb, which is believed to have had a timer, appears to have failed to detonate fully.

Prior to the attack, the police received a coded warning from a group identifying themselves as RAD, or Reasonable Adjustment. A police spokesperson said they gave the warning approximately ten minutes before the blast and there was not enough time to properly evacuate the station.

RAD are a militant group protesting for better rights for disabled people. They have been responsible for a wave of attacks in the last two years including the attempted bombing of a bus garage in Brentford. They have targeted transport hubs to make the point that public transport is inaccessible for the handicapped.

Hundreds of detectives and intelligence experts were last night engaged in a massive counterterrorism investigation aimed at finding the bomber. Investigators were trawling through CCTV footage from the station before the attack but the Metropolitan Police last night dismissed a report that they had already identified a suspect.

The leader of the political wing of RAD, Bob Nelson has issued a statement warning that there will be more violence if the demands of RAD are not met.

Disabled Bomber Gets 12 Years

An extremist described as RAD's leading bomber was jailed for 12 years and placed on licence for life yesterday after a bombing campaign against people he believed were committing human rights contraventions against disabled people.

In what police described as a "devastating blow" to disability rights extremism, Matthew Baker, 40, was told he would be subject to parole conditions for the rest of his life, even after his release from prison, such was the danger to the public.

Baker, an unemployed former psychiatric nurse of no fixed abode, planted home-made bombs outside the homes of a geneticist and the former transport secretary, one of which ignited and could have caused serious injury, Bedford crown court was told. At least six separate but similar offences involving incendiary devices are being investigated across seven police forces.

In the first of two attacks for which he was convicted, Baker targeted the home of Simon Nelson, a senior geneticist in Radley, Berkshire, in October last year, placing a device made of matches, cigarettes and a bottle of white spirit on the doorstep. It exploded in what firefighters described as a "large fireball" shortly after being discovered by Mr Nelson's adult son at 11pm. He was away from home, but his wife and another son, aged twelve, were asleep inside at the time. The attack on the family followed years of phone calls and intimidation at their home.

On February 29th this year Baker attempted to bomb the car of Dame Claire Prentice, the former transport secretary. Her family had been the subject of a "virulent campaign of harassment and intimidation", the court heard, in which her cars had been damaged and she had been sent violently abusive letters.

On the evening of the attack, in Caversham, Reading, Mrs Prentice and her husband disturbed Baker planting a device under one of their cars. He fled, and a second bomb was found abandoned in a hedge.

The couple's three children were in the house at the time. Baker was arrested at the end of the family's street, close to a bicycle on which he planned to escape. He was carrying fire lighters and a cigarette lighter and wearing a mask.

Sentencing Baker, Judge Margaret Smith said: "You are entitled to hold strong views and to protest peacefully. But what you cannot do is enforce your views with violence."

His actions, she said, had devastated his victims and left Mrs Prentice "living in a state of fear". "I am of the opinion that you pose a significant risk to the public, and I am required by law to pass a sentence for public protection."

Baker has previous convictions for criminal damage, assault and threatening behaviour. His suffers from spina bifida.

DISABLED ACTIVISTS SENTENCED

Geoff McGarry



NINE MEMBER OF THE RAD TERROR GROUP that bombed Euston underground station have been jailed. Three of the disabled extremists, who planned to carry out a bombing campaign at stations across London's transport network, received indeterminate sentences for public protection at Bedford crown court.

David Norris, 27, was jailed for a minimum term of eight years and 10 months, while fellow Luton-based radicals Leigh Wright, 20, and Mark Nunn, 26, were ordered to serve at least eight years behind bars. The court heard that the trio planned to bomb up to 8 stations at a rate of one a month until their demands were met, the hearing was told.

Passing sentence, the judge, Mr David Goodfellow, said this was a "serious, long-term venture in terrorism" that could also have resulted in serious death and injury.

He noted: "It was envisaged by them all that ultimately they and the other recruits would change society for disabled people, but violence changes nothing."

The Bedford extremists talked about setting off pipe bombs in the inaccessible toilets of train stations, the court heard. The judge said the trio were more serious activists than their fellow defendants and observed that father-of-two Norris was regarded as the leader of the group.

The four who plotted to plant a pipe bomb in the toilets of Waterloo station all received extended sentences, meaning they will have to spend an extra five years on licence after they are freed from prison.

Mr David Goodfellow jailed Benjamin Tait,

25, from Luton, for 16 years and 10 months, noting that he was the leader of a branch of the terrorist network and set the agenda "by virtue of his maturity, criminal nous, experience and personality". His brother, Robert Tait, 30, from Bedford, and Peter Morrison, 28, from Chatteris, were jailed for 12 years, and John Phillips, 22, from Bedford, who was described as the lynchpin of the group, was sentenced to 13 years and eight months. He spoke about carrying out an "IRA Brighton-style" attack at the Houses of Parliament, the court heard.

A handwritten target list found at Phillips' home listed the names and addresses of Conservative Party chairman Norman Tebbit, the director of London Underground and former secretary of state for transport Norman Fowler. The judge noted that Tait was a "compulsive self-publicist", Peter Morrison failed to impress the Bedford members, Phillips was "criminally experienced" but repeatedly failed to conceal his wrongdoing, and Robert Tait was "very much subordinate" to his brother.

Asif Khan, 28, from Bedford, was jailed for 10 years and four months, with an extended period on licence of another five years, for attending meetings with the intention of assisting others to prepare or commit acts of terrorism. The judge said: "By his presence at those meetings he was contributing by encouraging the others to form the intention to commit those terrorist acts and to prepare for them."

Barry Davies, 27, from Bedford, received a five-year prison sentence for possessing two copies of material designed to inspire terrorism. The men who are all handicapped have spent a total 327 days on remand and this will be deducted from their sentences.