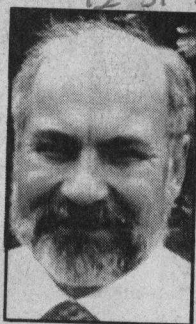


Lawyer had enemy, court records show

Crime & Criminals - 1990-1999
Bomb victim was involved with bitter divorce case

By ROBERT GAMMON
Sentinel staff writer



SANTA CRUZ — The divorce lawyer who was maimed by a gift-wrapped package bomb had sworn in court as recently as two years ago that he was afraid that his girlfriend's estranged husband would come after him, court documents released Monday show.

However, the Santa Cruz man named in the documents has not been identified as a suspect in last week's near-fatal bombing of Santa Cruz attorney Jack Jacobson.

"I can only say that we have interviewed at least two dozen people in this case. We're checking on all the folks that have the logical connection with him (Jacobson)," Santa Cruz County District Attorney Art Danner said.

Voluminous Santa Cruz County court documents unsealed Monday showed that Jacobson, 50, sought

Because Jack Jacobson has been sedated, detectives have been unable to talk to him since the bombing.

Please see **LAWYER** — BACK PAGE

A-8 — Tuesday, Dec. 31, 1996 — Sentinel

Lawyer

Continued from Page A1

and received a restraining order against a 45-year-old man who was going through a bitter divorce with Jacobson's 35-year-old live-in girlfriend.

"I do, however, fear for for my safety and the safety of my family due to the incidents that have occurred in the past," Jacobson said on Oct. 18, 1994, in Municipal Court. "(He) had been stalking us."

The Sentinel does not publish names of possible suspects in crimes until they are named as such by law enforcement.

Neither the man nor Jacobson's girlfriend were at their last known addresses Monday, nor could they be reached by phone.

Jacobson was embroiled directly or indirectly in a four-year legal battle that went to Oregon and back.

The conflict was over the two children the Santa Cruz man had with his wife before Jacobson began a relationship with her, and the estranged couple's finances, court records show.

The case is not over, but as it stands today, the man Jacobson said he feared has lost his wife, his \$300,000 Scotts Valley home (which is paid off), most of his \$500,000 inheritance and his children, according to court records.

His last known address is a small dilapidated house in Santa Cruz. He gets to visit his children every other weekend and some holidays, according to court records. And, he was laid off from his engineering job at a Silicon Valley firm less than two months ago.

"His level of frustration is very high," said one of the man's lawyers, David Mannix of Klamath Falls, Ore.

Last week, Santa Cruz County Municipal Court Judge Richard McAdams sealed court files relating to the divorce case. The judge, who handled most of Jacobson's cases including this one, has not returned phone calls as to why he sealed the files or why he opened them Monday. District Attorney Danner also declined to comment.

But according to Mannix, Santa Cruz authorities interviewed his client for three hours on Christmas Eve and then released him. He remains in Santa Cruz, Mannix said.

Deputy Bud Wilson of the Klamath County Sheriff's Department also said "California authorities" informed him that the man had been in custody in Santa Cruz and

then released.

But Danner would not confirm Monday that the man was questioned or that he was even a suspect in the Dec. 23 bombing at Jacobson's second-story Eastside office.

It's also unclear whether warrants issued the day of the bombing included a search of the man's residence, because those warrants remain sealed.

Danner said a major stumbling block in the bombing investigation is that detectives have been unable to talk to Jacobson since just after the bombing. At that time, police said the injured attorney mumbled a few names, but he has been under heavy sedation since.

Doctors don't want to wake up Jacobson, who is under tight security at Stanford University Medical Center, because he may damage the work they've done on his hands, Danner said.

Jacobson has undergone at least four surgeries in the past week, including delicate efforts to restore use of his hands and fingers, some of which were blown off in the blast, Danner said.

In addition, the attorney known for helping local non-profit organizations still has shrapnel from the pipe bomb in his body, even after he underwent intestinal surgery last week.

Danner said they hope to be able to talk to Jacobson sometime today.

Asked if people close to Jacobson — including his two sons from a former marriage — are being protected, Danner replied, "We are convinced that these folks are safe."

Meanwhile, agents from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms have been studying what's left of the package bomb for clues.

"There's a very real potential for us learning a great deal about where to go in the investigation after those lab tests results," Danner said.

However, the ATF has been hampered by the recent death of one of its top fingerprint specialists at the Walnut Creek lab, said Mike Morrisey, head of the ATF's San Francisco office.

The story of Jacobson's connection to the man he feared and that man's wife began in early 1992. According to the wife, her husband of seven years had an alcohol problem and began being verbally abusive with her and the children,

court records say.

The woman hired Jacobson and filed for divorce in April 1992. The couple soon reconciled on the stipulation that the man seek substance abuse help and the couple move to southern Oregon to start over. They left behind their Scotts Valley home, which he had bought two years earlier with his \$500,000 inheritance.

The man purchased a house in Klamath Falls, Ore., the following month. But the couple's relationship soon soured, culminating in the man taking his 4-year-old son back to Santa Cruz to file for divorce with the hope of gaining joint custody under California law. California law is also more stringent when it comes to inheritance law.

But the wife beat him by a few days by immediately filing for divorce in Oregon, which bases custody and inheritance on a judge's decision.

The case got ugly when the husband, who is a firearms collector, was arrested in June 1993 on suspicion of assaulting his wife. That charge was later dropped.

Three months before, Jacobson had stopped being the wife's lawyer when they began having a relationship.

Once in a letter to a Santa Cruz judge, the man expressed his frustration with his estranged wife and Jacobson. "They have been trying everything they can to drive me from my children, my home and my financial resources," he wrote to Judge Robert Attack on April 14, 1994.

After years of wrangling over whether the divorce case should be in Klamath Falls or Santa Cruz, a court ruled that Oregon was the proper jurisdiction.

The case ended up in the Oregon Court of Appeals, where Jacobson's girlfriend basically won everything, court records show.

She got custody of the children, child support, spousal support, the Scotts Valley home and a restraining order that ruled that her ex-husband could not come close to her or Jacobson.

In addition, she has filed for payment of legal and medical bills for her and at least one of the children, Mannix said.