

Early Test Shows Ricin In Letters To Obama

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a capital city on edge, letters sent to President Barack Obama and a Mississippi senator tested positive for poisonous ricin in preliminary checks, and authorities chased a stream of reports Wednesday of other suspicious-looking items sent to senators in Washington and beyond.

Two of the cases outside Washington, reported on a day when many people were already jittery after the Boston bombings, were declared false alarms. Authorities waited for more definitive results on others.

An FBI intelligence bulletin obtained by The Associated Press said the letters to Obama and Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., were postmarked Memphis, Tenn. Both letters said: "To see a wrong and not expose it, is to become a silent partner to its continuance." Both were signed, "I am KC and I approve this message."

Those letters were intercepted before reaching the White House or Senate. Obama was briefed on the situation Tuesday night, a White House spokesman said. The FBI said Wednesday that more testing was underway. Preliminary field tests can often show false positives for ricin.

As authorities scurried to investigate three questionable packages discovered in Senate office buildings, reports of suspicious mail or packages also came in from at least three senators' offices in their home states.

Texas Judge Implicated By Wife In Slayings

KAUFMAN, Texas (AP) — The wife of a former North Texas justice of the peace implicated her husband in the shooting deaths of a local district attorney, his wife and an assistant prosecutor, according to court records filed Wednesday.

An arrest affidavit revealed Kim Lene Williams told investigators Tuesday that her husband, Eric Lyle Williams, was the triggerman in the slayings of Kaufman County District Attorney Mike McLelland and his wife, Cynthia, and assistant prosecutor Mark Hasse. McLelland and Hasse prosecuted Eric Williams last year for theft of three computer monitors.

Kim Williams was arrested early Wednesday and charged with capital murder. Eric Williams has been in custody, charged with making terroristic threats. He has not been charged in the slayings.

The affidavit says Kim Williams "described in detail her role along with that of her husband." However, the document does not outline what Kim Williams' alleged role was.

After Eric Williams was convicted of theft, he lost his elected position as justice of the peace — a judge who handles mostly administrative duties — and his law license. He was sentenced to probation.

Assad Accuses West Of Backing Syrian al-Qaida

BEIRUT (AP) — Syria's president accused the West on Wednesday of backing al-Qaida in his country's civil war, warning it will pay a price "in the heart" of Europe and the United States as the terror network becomes emboldened.

Bashar Assad also lashed out at Jordan for allowing "thousands" of fighters to enter Syria through its borders and warned that the "fire will not stop at Syria's border."

The rare TV interview with the government-run Al-Ikhbariya channel marking Syria's independence day comes as the embattled president's military is fighting to reverse rebel advances, with a rocket attack killing at least 12 people in a central village on Wednesday.

"Just as the West financed al-Qaida in Afghanistan in its beginnings, and later paid a heavy price, today it is supporting it in Syria, Libya and other places and will pay the price later in the heart of Europe and the United States," Assad said.

Video Footage Shows Boston Bombing Suspect

**BY DENISE LAVOIE
AND RODRIQUE NGOWI**
Associated Press

BOSTON — In what could be a major break in the Boston Marathon case, investigators are on the hunt for a man seen in a department-store surveillance video dropping off a bag at the site of the bombings, a Boston politician said Wednesday.

Separately, a law enforcement official confirmed that authorities have found an image of a potential suspect but don't know his name.

The development — less than 48 hours after the attack that left three people dead and more than 170 wounded — marked a possible turning point in a case that has investigators analyzing photos and videos frame by frame for clues to who carried out the twin bombings and why.

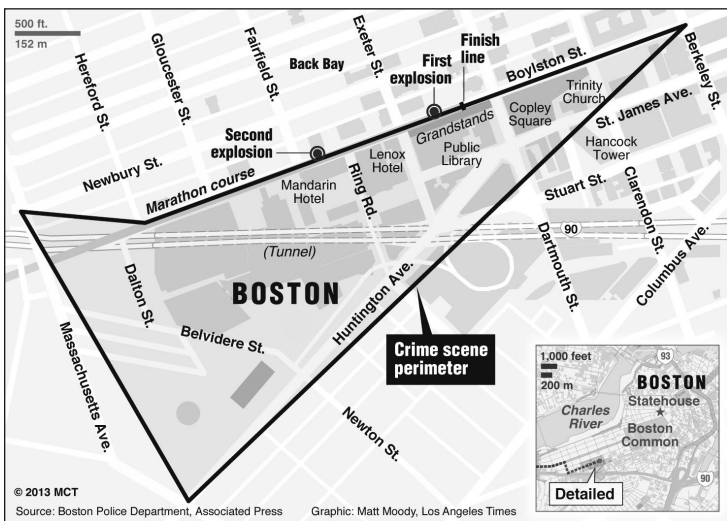
City Council President Stephen Murphy, who said he was briefed by Boston police, said investigators saw the image on surveillance footage they got from a department store near the finish line, and matched the findings with witness descriptions of someone leaving the scene.

"I know it's very active and very fluid right now — that they are on the chase," Murphy told The Associated Press. He added: "They may be on the verge of arresting someone, and that's good."

The bombs were crudely fashioned from ordinary kitchen pressure cookers packed with explosives, nails and ball bearings, investigators and others close to the case said. Investigators suspect the devices were then hidden in black duffel bags and left on the ground.

As a result, they were looking for images of someone lugging a dark, heavy bag.

One department store video "has confirmed that a suspect is seen dropping a bag near the point of the second explosion



and heading off," Murphy said.

A law enforcement official who spoke to AP on condition of anonymity and was not authorized to discuss the case publicly confirmed only that investigators had an image of a potential suspect whose name was not known to them and who had not been questioned.

The turn of events came with Boston in a state of high excitement over conflicting reports of a breakthrough.

A law enforcement official briefed on the investigation told the AP around midday that a suspect was in custody. The official, who was not authorized to divulge details of the investigation and spoke on condition of anonymity, said the suspect was expected in federal court. But the FBI and the U.S. attorney's office in Boston said no arrests had been made.

By nightfall, there was no evidence anyone was in custody. No one was brought to court. The law enforcement official, who had affirmed there was a suspect in custody even after federal officials denied it, was unable to obtain any further information or explanation.

At least 14 patients remained in critical condition. Dozens of patients have been released from

hospitals around the Boston area, and officials at three hospitals that treated some of the most seriously injured said they expect all their remaining patients to survive.

On Wednesday, investigators in white jumpsuits fanned out across the streets, rooftops and awnings around the blast site in search of clues. They picked through trash cans, plastic cup sleeves and discarded sports drink dispensers.

Boston remained under a heavy security presence, and some people admitted they were nervous about moving about in public spaces.

Tyler King, a personal trainer from Attleboro who works in Boston, said four of five clients

canceled on him a day earlier because they were worried about venturing into the city. He took the train in, but "I kind of kept my head on a swivel."

Kenya Nadry, a website designer, took her 5-year-old nephew to a playground. "There's still some sense of fear, but I feel like Boston's resilient," she said. "The fine men in blue will take care of a lot of it."

Police were stationed on street corners across downtown Boston, while National Guardsmen set up tents on the Boston Common and stationed tactical vehicles.

Dr. Horacio Hojman, associate chief of trauma at Tufts Medical Center, said patients were in surprisingly good spirits when they were brought in.

"Despite what they witnessed, despite what they suffered, despite many of them having life-threatening injuries, their spirits were not broken," he said. "And I think that should probably be the message for all of us — that this horrible act of terror will not bring us down."

President Barack Obama planned to visit Boston on Thursday to attend a service honoring the victims.

The blasts killed 8-year-old Martin Richard of Boston and 29-year-old Krystle Campbell of Medford, Mass. The Shenyang Evening News, a state-run Chinese newspaper, identified the third victim as Lu Lingzi, a graduate student at Boston University.

Britain's Iron Lady Laid To Rest With Full Pomp

LONDON (AP) — Margaret Thatcher was laid to rest Wednesday with prayers and ceremony, plus cheers and occasional jeers, as Britain paused to remember a leader who transformed the country — for the better according to many, but in some eyes for the worse.

Soaring hymns, Biblical verse and fond remembrances echoed under the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, as 2,300 relatives, friends, colleagues and dignitaries attended a ceremonial funeral for Britain's only female prime minister.

Queen Elizabeth II, current and former prime ministers and representatives from 170 countries were among the mourners packing the cathedral, where Bishop of London Richard Chartres spoke of the strong feelings Thatcher still evokes 23 years after leaving office.

Security for the funeral — the largest in London for more than a decade — was tightened after bombings at the Boston Marathon on Monday killed three people and wounded more than 170.

More than 700 soldiers, sailors and air force personnel formed a ceremonial guard along the route taken by Thatcher's coffin to the cathedral, and around 4,000 police officers were on duty.

But while thousands of supporters and a smaller number of opponents traded shouts and arguments, there was no serious trouble. Police said there were no arrests, and the only items thrown at the cortege were flowers.

Before the service, Thatcher's coffin was driven from the Houses of Parliament to the church of St. Clement Danes, about half a mile (0.8 kilometers) from the cathedral, for prayers.

Spectators lining the route broke into applause as the carriage passed by, escorted by young soldiers, sailors and airmen. A few demonstrators staged silent protests by turning their backs on Thatcher's coffin, and one man held a banner declaring "rest in shame."

Guests inside the cathedral included Thatcher's political colleagues, rivals and her successors as prime minister: John Major, Tony Blair, Gordon Brown and David Cameron. Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former Vice President Dick Cheney were among the American dignitaries.

The woman nicknamed the Iron Lady brought major change to Britain during her 11-year tenure from 1979 to 1990, privatizing state industries, deregulating the economy, and causing upheaval whose impact is still felt. She died April 8 at age 87.

Thatcher was given a ceremonial funeral with military honors — not officially a state funeral, which requires a vote in Parliament — but proceedings that featured the same level of pomp and honor afforded Princess Diana in 1997, and Queen Mother Elizabeth in 2002.



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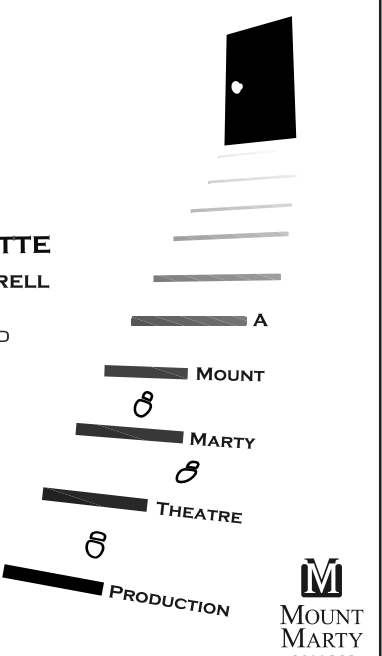
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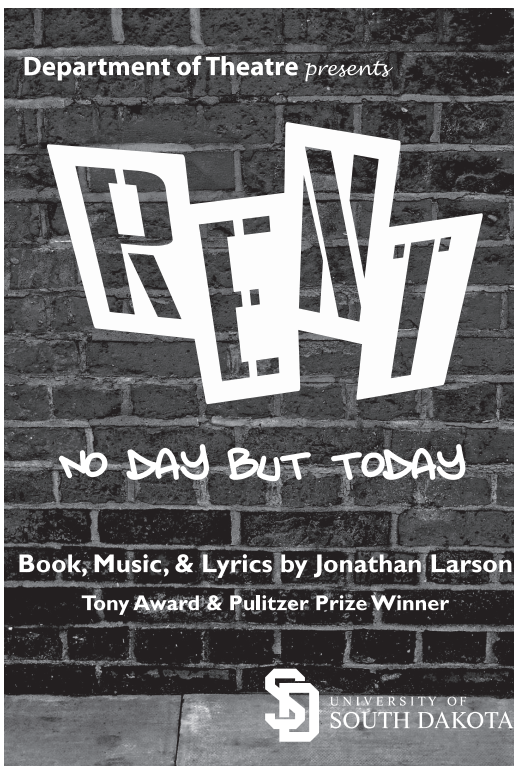


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