

Attackers file missile at agency

■ The blast caused little damage to Britain's 10-story MI6 intelligence building.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON — Unknown attackers fired a "small missile" at the headquarters of Britain's MI6 intelligence agency in central London late Wednesday, causing an explosion on the eighth floor, police said.

The blast caused limited damage and no injuries at the 10-story structure at the heart of Britain's intelligence abroad. Witnesses reported hearing two explosions, large enough to send up a plume of white smoke and to rattle buildings across a railway. The blast brought firefighters, police and ambulances to the site on the south bank of the River Thames, and police closed the area around the headquarters.

Police Deputy Assistant Commissioner Alan Fry, in charge of the Anti-Terrorist Branch, said that at 9:45 p.m. "an object was fired at Vauxhall Cross, which is the headquarters of the Secret Intelligence Service."

"An examination of the exterior of the building showed that some form of small missile has hit the exterior at about the eighth floor," he told a news conference.

Asked if the object was like a mortar shell, he said he doubted it was that powerful. "In all probability I would doubt it is a mortar - I would have expected more substantial damage," he said.

Fry said it was too early to say if Irish republican groups might be involved.

"Clearly we have to keep in mind the capabilities of dissident Irish groups, but at this stage we will not be ruling out any group who might see the secret intelligence service as a target," Fry said.

The blast caused minimal damage and the work of the intelligence service was not disrupted, he said, adding that no claim of responsibility for the attack has been made.

Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, whose department is responsible for MI6, said there were no casualties.

The 10-story, cream and green modern-style structure was featured in the James Bond movie, "The World is Not Enough" and in one scene, was shown being blown up by a terrorist bomb.

Police immediately closed off roads leading to the area, located between Vauxhall and Lambeth bridges over the River Thames. Officers in yellow slickers cordoned off the building, barring even police cars from passing the barriers. The London Fire Brigade had two fire engines and crews at the scene.

"We just heard two God-almighty bangs, a loud one first, and then another one," said Theresa Harding, 68, who lives nearby. "We honestly thought it was fireworks."

One witness, Andrew Preece, told BBC News 24 he was driving home when he saw a flash of light coming from the top of the MI6 building.

"It looked as if it was internal from the center of the building but the flash of light was from the top of the building," he said. "It was followed by a large bang and the ground seemed to shake and my car was shaking."

Earlier this year, the Foreign Office said it was tightening security procedures after reported lapses.

In March, a laptop computer that contained missing training information for one of Britain's spy agencies was mislaid and recovered by police two weeks later.

News reports suggested that an MI6 agent left the laptop in a taxi after spending a night drinking at a bar near the agency's headquarters.

MI6, formed in 1921, is responsible for foreign intelligence. It is thought to cooperate closely with the domestic security service MI5 in keeping track of Irish terror groups.

The high-tech spy headquarters bristles with security features. Much of the complex is below street level to protect the most sensitive areas from terrorist attacks.

Bylaw change gives ASUN voice on issues

BY MARGARET BEHM

ASUN

With a change of a definition, the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska made it possible for student government to take a stand on issues.

The bylaw change will allow ASUN to voice its opposition to Initiative 416, a measure that would outlaw civil unions and gay marriages.

The bylaw passed redefined the word "candidate."

The new bylaw was necessary because the Student Court ruled that with the old definition of the word official "candidate," ASUN could not take stands on issues.

ASUN had requested the Student Court opinion because some members had wanted to take a stand against Initiative 416, the state-ballot measure known as the Defense of Marriage Act.

Committee for Fees

Allocation bylaws state any student fee user, which includes ASUN, is forbidden from taking positions on ballot initiatives.

The Student Court determined ASUN's previous definition of candidate would have precluded it from taking a position on ballot initiatives, which was the reason for the new bylaw passed Wednesday.

Vince Cogley, a Government Liaison Committee lobbyist, collected 50 signatures from students who thought ASUN shouldn't take a stand on initiatives, agreeing with CFA's definition and the Student Court ruling.

Cogley said he collected signatures to let students have a say in the decision process.

"The purpose of it was to inform ASUN (senators) that stu-

dents have a voice," said Cogley, a sophomore history major, "and that ASUN should listen to that voice."

ASUN senators debated on the bylaw before it passed with a vote of 20-7.

General Studies Senator Michelle Schrage said ASUN senators needed the authority to voice support or disdain for election issues, which is why the new bylaw was necessary.

Senators should trust future generations of ASUN to use this power wisely, she said.

"What happens if we tie the legs of a sitting man, and someday he needs to stand up and walk?" she said.

Committee for Fees Allocation Chairman Brent Stanfield disagreed and said ASUN shouldn't take stands on issues.

"There's no reason to stick our neck out and get it cut off

when the students don't agree with us, and they can vote for themselves anyway," Stanfield said.

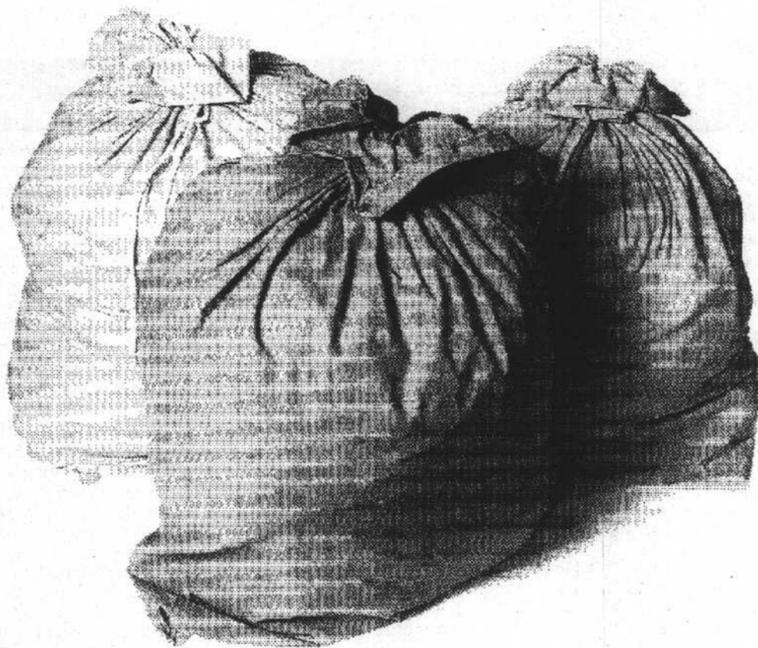
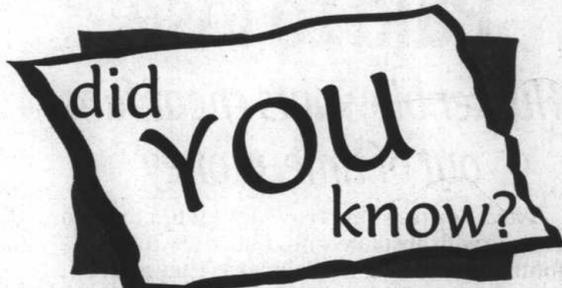
Special Topics Senator Urrvano Gamez said students could always oppose ASUN's views on issues.

"If ASUN takes a stand on an issue, any student here could form a group in direct opposition against ASUN," he said. "Nothing

stands in their way."

In other news: President Joel Schafer said he attended the first meeting of the Chancellor Search Committee on Monday. He said even though he couldn't say much about the meeting, he was optimistic.

"It seems like we're heading on the right track," he said. "Hopefully we'll come back with a good list of candidates soon."



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