

Man kills 8, wounds 30 in council shooting

NANTERRE, France (AP) — A man opened fire with automatic pistols at the end of a city council meeting in a Paris suburb early Wednesday, killing at least eight people and wounding about 30 others, including 14 seriously.

Police arrested the suspect, who was described as someone who was active in local politics and had attended several council meetings.

The man did not speak during the shooting and did not make any clear statement when he was arrested, officials said.

The attacker used at least two automatic pistols, said rescue worker Laurent Vibert, and 50 shells were scattered inside the meeting room. Vibert said the suspect, said to be in his 30s, was apparently a member of the leftist Green Party.

"It's apparently a case of furious dementia," said Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, who rushed to the scene. "A horrifying tragedy that harms democracy — a city council meeting in action," he said.

Dozens of police vehicles and more than 100 rescue officials rushed to the scene. A rescue helicopter took some of the wounded to a nearby hospital.

The bloody rampage took place at about 1:15 a.m. as about 40 people attending the meeting put on their coats to leave. Nanterre is a middle-class neighborhood near a business district of western Paris.

Local Mayor Jacqueline Fraysse said she did not know the attacker. There had been no heated debate and the meeting was ending quietly when the shooting began, she said.

"I ended the session," she said. "A man got up. He had been sitting in the public area. He shot straight in front of him, and then he moved to where the council members were sitting."

"He said nothing," she said. "It was long. It lasted many minutes."

Rising crime is at the top of France's political agenda ahead of presidential elections in the spring.

Thousands of police officers held nationwide strikes in December, saying they deserve more pay and better equipment because their jobs have become increasingly risky. The protests started after two officers were shot and killed during an armed robbery in a Paris suburb in October.

In October, a masked gunman

France shoots

A man opened fire at a council meeting with automatic pistols in a Paris suburb Wednesday, killing eight and wounding 19 others.

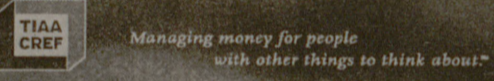


SOURCES: Associated Press

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Scalded McDonald's patrons 'should have known better'

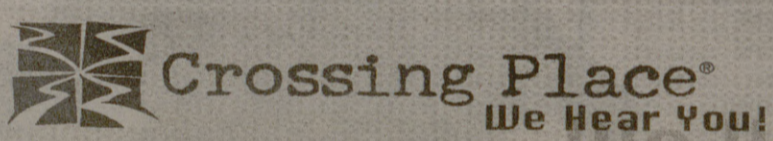
LONDON (AP) — McDonald's customers should know that coffee and tea are served hot and can burn them if spilled, a British judge said Wednesday in a ruling against 36 people who claimed they were scalded by drinks bought at the fast food chain.

High Court Justice Richard Field said McDonald's has no obligation to warn customers

about the risk of scalding.

Timothy Horlock, a lawyer for the plaintiffs, had argued that McDonald's served drinks that were too hot, used inadequate cups and not warn customers of the risks. At least 14 of the plaintiffs were under 5 years old when they were injured, he said.

Field said that McDonald's customers would accept coffee and other drinks if they were served at temperatures low enough to prevent scalding. He said the safety of hot drinks sold by McDonald's met the general expectations of the public.



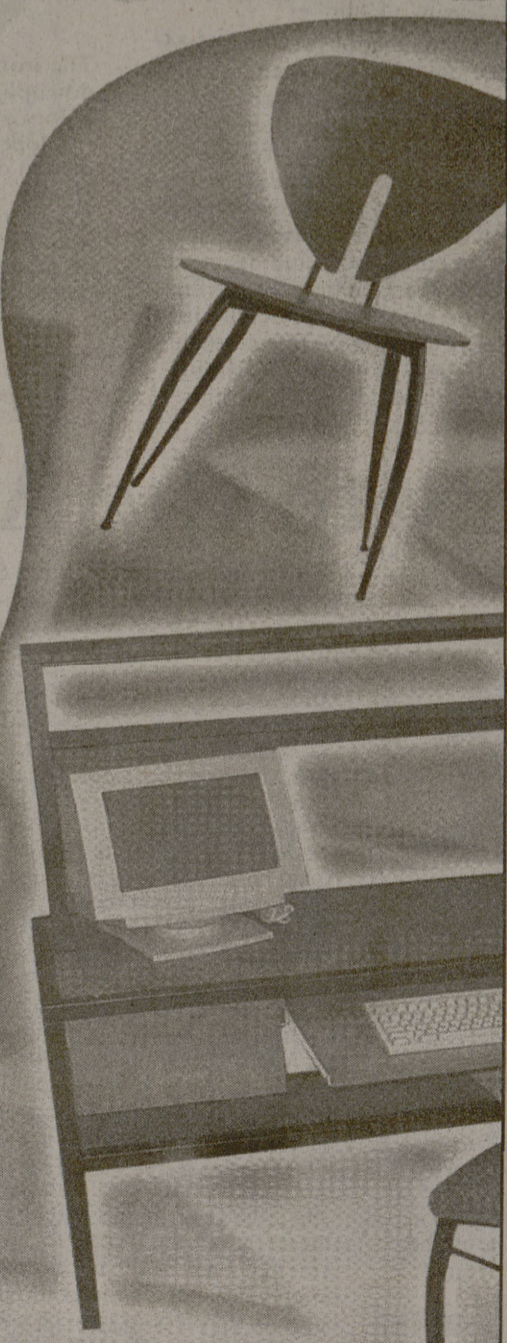
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