

Quick FBI Arrest in Threat on Johnson

By David Wise
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WASHINGTON.

A 27-year-old Air Force veteran whose first name is Oswald was arrested aboard a Washington-bound train by FBI agents yesterday on charges that he telephoned an anonymous threat to kill President Johnson.

Hours later, at the arraignment in Philadelphia of the suspect, Oswald S. Pick, the FBI said: "He tells us he discussed this or was put up to it by two Cubans he met in Greenwich Village early this (yesterday) morning while he was drinking heavily." The Cubans were not identified.

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover announced the arrest in Philadelphia of Pick, whose alleged threat to assassinate the President with a beretta (the type of pistol favored by the fictional James Bond) touched off a widespread manhunt up and down the East Coast.

Scores of FBI agents fanned out at rail and bus terminals in New York, Philadelphia, Newark and Washington after FBI headquarters here received a pre-dawn telephone call from a man in New York who said he would board a train for Washington and kill Mr. Johnson.

NAME ON LIST

Mr. Hoover said the caller challenged the FBI to "see if they could find him."

How FBI agents spotted Pick, a former mental patient who lives in Clifton, N. J., was not made clear, since the man who telephoned the FBI at 5:45 a. m. yesterday did not give his name. The FBI said Pick was not armed when arrested aboard the train in the Philadelphia station.

But about four hours after the FBI announcement at 2 p. m., the FBI revealed at the arraignment that Pick, who has a record of two arrests on minor charges, was "well known" for telephone calls to law enforcement agencies in

the Newark area. At times he made the calls anonymously, and at times he identified himself, the FBI said. This suggested that very possibly Pick's name was on a list of suspects for the FBI's possession when it searched the train.

Apparently the FBI was able to tell from the conversation that the caller planned to take the next train out of Penn Station for Washington with what he described as a .25-caliber Beretta pistol. Agents swarmed into Penn Station but were apparently unable to spot Pick.

The morning Congressional is the first train scheduled to leave New York for Washington around that hour. The train leaves at 6:30 a. m. and is scheduled to arrive in Philadelphia at the 30th St. Station at 8:09 a. m. Pick was arrested aboard the train at 8:10.

CONFESSES

Agents were watching all stations and some were aboard the train, the FBI said. At the arraignment before U. S. Commissioner Edward Furia, an FBI agent testified that the blond, six-foot suspect had signed a confession in which "he admitted making the call" threatening the President.

Pick was the first person arrested and charged under a statute passed by Congress last July 23 making a Federal crime to assassinate, kidnap, or assault the President—or to attempt to do so. The law specifies that the FBI shall have jurisdiction to investigate such cases.

If convicted, Pick could face up to life imprisonment under the new statute.

The law was passed as a direct result of the assassination of President Kennedy in Dallas, on Nov. 22 1963, by Lee Harvey Oswald, who in turn was slain by night club owner Jack Ruby.

The Warren Commission which investigated the assassination found that Oswald had been "acting alone," and rapped the FBI and the Secret Service for "insuffici-

ent" co-operation. Specifically, the report criticized the FBI because it knew three weeks before the murder that Oswald worked along the parade route, but failed to tell this to the Secret Service.

Yesterday, an FBI spokesman said the Secret Service had been notified "immediately" after the 5:45 a. m. telephone call was received by the FBI here. A spokesman for the Secret Service, which is responsible for protecting the President, confirmed that it had been notified of the call by the FBI.

The Secret Service declined to say whether it had agents on the train or watching the stations, but the spokesman said Secret Service agents were present when Pick was questioned after his arrest by the FBI.

Mr. Hoover said the Air Force veteran was married and lives at 76 E. 11th St. in Clifton. He has been employed as an assembler at a manufacturing company in Hackensack.

The FBI testimony that Pick may have been "put up to it by two Cubans" was given by an FBI agent at the arraignment. The agent testified that when arrested Pick "was very belligerent."

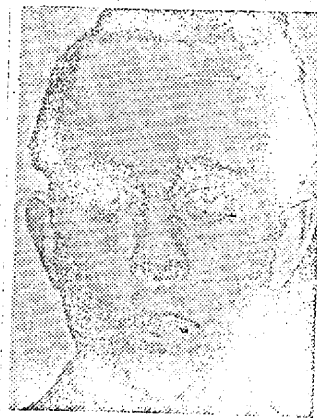
The FBI said Pick had been arrested twice, and had been confined to Greystone mental institution in Morrisville, N. J. from March to June, 1963, after being admitted voluntarily. The bureau said Pick was readmitted from Nov. 5 to Sept. 9, 1964, and that the diagnosis in both instances was the same: "Personality trait disturbance; aggressive personality."

The complaint against Pick was filed by the FBI in New York, the source of the telephone call, although he was being held in Philadelphia for a hearing March 11. Robert Morgenthau, U. S. Attorney in New York, was the source of the allegation that Pick told the FBI in the phone call that he would take a Beretta with him.

Mr. Morgenthau also said that the anonymous caller had described himself, had told the FBI that he received an undesirable discharge after serving in the Air Force from January, 1956 to October, 1959, and had been confined to mental institutions for three months. This information could also have been useful to the FBI in zeroing in on Pick, although there was little time to check it between the telephoned threat and his arrest.

The FBI said Pick had been arrested twice for disorderly conduct and petit larceny. Clifton police said he was known as "a local character" who paid a \$25 fine for abusive language and resisting arrest in 1963, spent 30 days in Passaic County Jail last year for disorderly conduct and was arrested last June in Clifton for unlawful use of a motor vehicle.

President Johnson flew to Texas for the weekend yesterday. His Air Force jet left Andrews Air Force base at 3:27 p. m., an hour and a half after



Associated Press

Oswald S. Pick

the alleged threat on his life was disclosed by Mr. Hoover.

The President's plane touched down at San Antonio at 6:50 p. m. Half an hour later he took off by helicopter for the 60-mile hop to the LBJ Ranch at Johnson City.

The President was accompanied by Mrs. Johnson and their beagle "Him."