

# Hijacker Arrested as Picket

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**SAMUEL J. BYCK**  
... threat to President

Samuel J. Byck, the 44-year-old Philadelphian who killed two persons and himself in yesterday's attempted hijacking, was arrested twice last year during a one-man picket campaign at the White House.

Byck, an unemployed tire salesman who described himself in a Philadelphia newspaper interview as a "manic depressive," was picketing for the impeachment of President Nixon.

According to a neighbor of the Byck family in Philadelphia, Byck also was investigated during the 1972 election campaign for allegedly making threats against the President's life.

"The FBI called people

about it, and they (the FBI) called me," said the woman neighbor, who asked not to be identified. A spokesman for the FBI in Philadelphia said they had no knowledge of such an inquiry.

But Jack Warner, spokesman for the U.S. Secret Service, said last night that Byck "first came to our attention in October of 1972, when it came to our attention that he had made an alleged threat against the President."

Warner said the investigation was resolved in January of last year, when the U.S. attorney's office in Philadelphia declined to prosecute

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Byck after he was committed to Philadelphia General Hospital for mental observation.

Warner declined to comment on the nature of the threats allegedly made by Byck against the President.

"I can't get into that," he said.

According to an interview published in the Philadelphia Inquirer on Nov. 30, 1973, Byck began picketing the White House last fall after reading a 1966 quote he attributed to Richard M. Nixon, who was then a private practice lawyer.

"I noticed the housewives have been protesting and picketing the supermarkets," Byck quoted Mr. Nixon as saying in 1966. "The difficulty is that they are picketing the wrong place. They ought to be picketing the White House."

"Since I'm on a limited income, Byck told the Inquirer, "I decided to take my commander-in-chief's advice. I painted a sign. It was very obscene. It said, 'Please slow down inflation.' Then I went down to Washington to picket."

Byck was arrested on Oct. 6 in front of the White House for picketing without a permit by the U.S. Park Police, according to Washington ACLU lawyer Ralph Temple. "They had three squad cars for me," Byck told the Inquirer. "You would have thought the White House was under siege. I was rather flattered."

A short, stocky man who was divorced from his wife last September, Byck was the father of four children and lived alone in the northeast part of Philadelphia. He collected \$189 a month in social security for a medical disability.

After the firing of special Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox in late October,

Byck returned to Washington to resume his White House picketing. Byck claimed to be outraged by the firing of Cox, and was arrested again for picketing with a sign that read, "There is a cancer on the Presidency — Impeach the cancer."

Byck's picketing came to the attention of the American Civil Liberties Union, which had been waging a legal battle to allow individual protesters to picket the White House without a permit.

"Sam Byck kind of wandered into this scenario from the sideline," said Ralph Temple, an ACLU lawyer, in the Inquirer interview.

"I've got a problem with Sam Byck's case. I don't know how to keep them from arresting him."

Reached at his home here last night, Temple said, "I'd rather not talk about him."

Temple said the charges against Byck in both arrests for picketing without a permit had been dismissed in court and that Byck had not been involved in any litigation for picketing at the time of his death.

"This was one act by a person, a man who obviously must have had a tremendous weight on his mind, if he wasn't mentally disturbed," said Thomas Farrow, FBI special agent for Baltimore, following yesterday's hijacking attempt.

The Maryland state medical examiner's office listed the cause of Byck's death as a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the right temple.

"He would have been a dead duck either way," said Farrow, referring to the two bullets fired by an Anne Arundel police officer that struck Byck in the chest.

For hours after the hijacking attempt was over, Byck was known to the FBI only

as a stocky, American caucasian—5 feet, 10 and weighing 250 pounds. He was fingerprinted, and the prints were sent to FBI headquarters here.

Although Byck was twice arrested last year for picketing the White House, the FBI found no criminal file or prints on him that would have given them his name.

A second fingerprint check of military service records provided the name the agents were looking for: Samuel J. Byck, a native of Philadelphia, who had enlisted in the Army in 1954. His fingerprints matched those of the dead gunman.

Contributing to this story were Washington Post staff writer B. D. Colen and special correspondent Aaron Epstein.