

Posthumous Fame Sought by Hijacker

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Samuel Joseph Byck, the unemployed salesman who attempted to hijack a jet airliner early Friday and force it to crash dive into the White House, had spent weeks mapping out his plans and took steps to make sure that his role was well publicized after his expected death in the crash.

This conclusion emerges from an hour-long tape Byck mailed to columnist Jack Anderson and a letter, which came to light yesterday, that he had sent U.S. Magistrate Jean Dwyer here in Washington. Both the tape and the letter were apparently mailed only hours before Byck killed two persons and himself when the hijack attempt at Baltimore-Washington International Airport failed.

In the envelope of the letter to Magistrate Dwyer, Byck enclosed a copy of a Delta Airlines flight schedule with a circle penciled around the Atlanta-bound jet he tried to hijack. He also enclosed a page from an almanac that listed worldwide political assassination attempts since 1918.

With hand-written poems and spoken hyperbole, Byck used the letter to the magistrate and the tape sent to Anderson to speak from the grave about the planned deed



SAMUEL J. BYCK
... 'a grain of sand'

that he clearly hoped would give him after death the personal importance he lacked while alive.

"My name is Sam Byck, and I am hoping that some day — I'm hoping by now that you will have read about me in the newspapers and if I'm not successful you probably don't know who I am and it won't make much difference," Byck said at the beginning of the tape to Anderson.

"I call myself a grain of sand on the beach called the U.S. of A. There are over 211 million grains of sand and on the beach that we call earth

See **BYCK**, A10, Col. 4

BYCK, From A1

there are over 3 billion grains of sand. But, can one individual, one grand of sand, strike fear into the ruling classes so that they will become more compassionate and more understanding and cognizant of the needs of the populace, the many, many people," the tape went on.

In describing his assassination plans, Byck said in the tape, "If I'm lucky I will hit at least the White House area and if I'm unlucky I should hit at least Washington somewhere with the plane. This should prove to the ruling classes, to the powerful, to the affluent; to the wealthy, that the least grain of sand, the least individual, has in him the power to destroy them."

Byck, 44, an unemployed tire salesman from Philadelphia, shot to death an airport police officer at Baltimore-Washington International (formerly Friendship) Airport as he forced his way aboard an Atlanta-bound Delta Airlines jet early Friday.

He then shot and killed the plane's copilot and critically wounded the pilot. Byck shot and killed himself after he was gunned down by an Anne Arundel County policeman. The FBI said Byck had charged onto the plane carrying a crude gasoline bomb inside a small suitcase.

Apparently just before leaving Philadelphia to begin his hijack attempt, which he called "Operation Pandora's Box," Byck mailed the tape to Anderson and the packet to Mrs. Dwyer. Both items were received on Monday morning.

In the tape he sent to Anderson, Byck indicated that it was his intention to use the bomb so that the plane would dive into the White House and cause a "fiery crash."

Mr. Nixon was at the White House at the time of Byck's hijack and assassination attempt.

Jack Warner, spokesman for the Secret Service, said yesterday that "we are constantly evaluating our security procedures at the White House." Warner refused to comment on what, if any, precautions existed against an air attack such as the one planned by Byck.

U.S. News and World Report, quoting Secret Service

sources, said in editions this week that the Secret Service had "no foolproof system for safeguarding" the White House from an air attack.

Warner refused to comment on the article.

Federal Aviation Administration rules prohibit flying over an area of downtown between the Kennedy Center and Capitol Hill. The boundaries are not patrolled but are monitored by radar at National Airport.

"When an aircraft enters that area, it's always been an assumption that that aircraft is friendly," an FAA spokesman said yesterday. "There's no formal plan that I know of for immediate action (once an aircraft violates the prohibited airspace)."

On Sunday, Feb. 17, an Army private piloting an Army helicopter stolen from Ft. George G. Meade was forced to land on the south lawn of the White House in a hail of gunfire from security guards firing shotguns and submachine guns after the pilot had buzzed the White House twice that day.

Throughout the tape, Byck said that it was the Watergate scandals and the "inability of the government to monitor its corruption" that prompted him to make the assassination attempt.

"Whoever dies in Project Pandora Box will be directly attributable to Watergate scandals. Scandals of corruption and cancer in the government, by me doing what I have to do, I will act as a scalpel trying to cut out the cancers," Byck said in the tape.

"The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference . . . We no longer judge right from wrong, good from evil, what is proper from what is improper," Byck said.

"We have a national motto, 'E Pluribus Unum,' which must be changed to conform to the times to 'Let's Make a Deal,' and Monte Hall (master of ceremonies for the television show) would be the head dealer of this nation."

Byck had been investigated by the Secret Service during the 1972 election campaign for threats he allegedly made against President Nixon and he was arrested twice last fall for picketing in front of the White House without a permit. After both arrests, Byck ap-

peared before Magistrate Dwyer in U.S. District Court for trials on charges of unlawful assembly.

"He made one or two observations during the trial, but was not obtrusive," she said of a trial of Byck on Oct. 18. "There was nothing (on Byck's part) to suggest any profound psychological disturbance—but, of course, I'm not a psychiatrist."

She dismissed the charge against Byck the first time at the end of the government's case, ruling that an individual cannot be charged under the unlawful assembly statute.

Byck came before Mrs. Dwyer again on Dec. 3 after he was again arrested on the same charge for picketing the White House to call for Mr. Nixon's impeachment. The government dismissed the charge against him in the second arrest.

The letter Byck mailed last Friday to Magistrate Dwyer did not mention the planned assassination attempt but used language almost identical to letters received Monday from him by The Detroit Free Press and two Philadelphia newspapers.

"I, for one, can't (sic) live in a controled (sic) society and I would prefer to die as a free man," Byck's letter to Mrs. Dwyer stated.

The packet Byck mailed to Mrs. Dwyer included an appendix from an almanac that gave a dictionary definition of assassination and the list of historic assassinations dating back to 1918.

The package also included a flight schedule for Delta Air-

lines flights leaving Baltimore-Washington International last Friday, with the 7:15 a.m. Delta flight to Atlanta that he attempted to hijack circled.

A second flight, scheduled to leave for Bangor, Maine, at 8:20 a.m., was also circled on the flight schedule.

Also included was a poem by James Henry Leigh Hunt entitled "Abou Ben Adhem," a quotation from Shakespeare's Hamlet, and a fortune cookie inscription that read, "Sometimes the best gain is to lose."

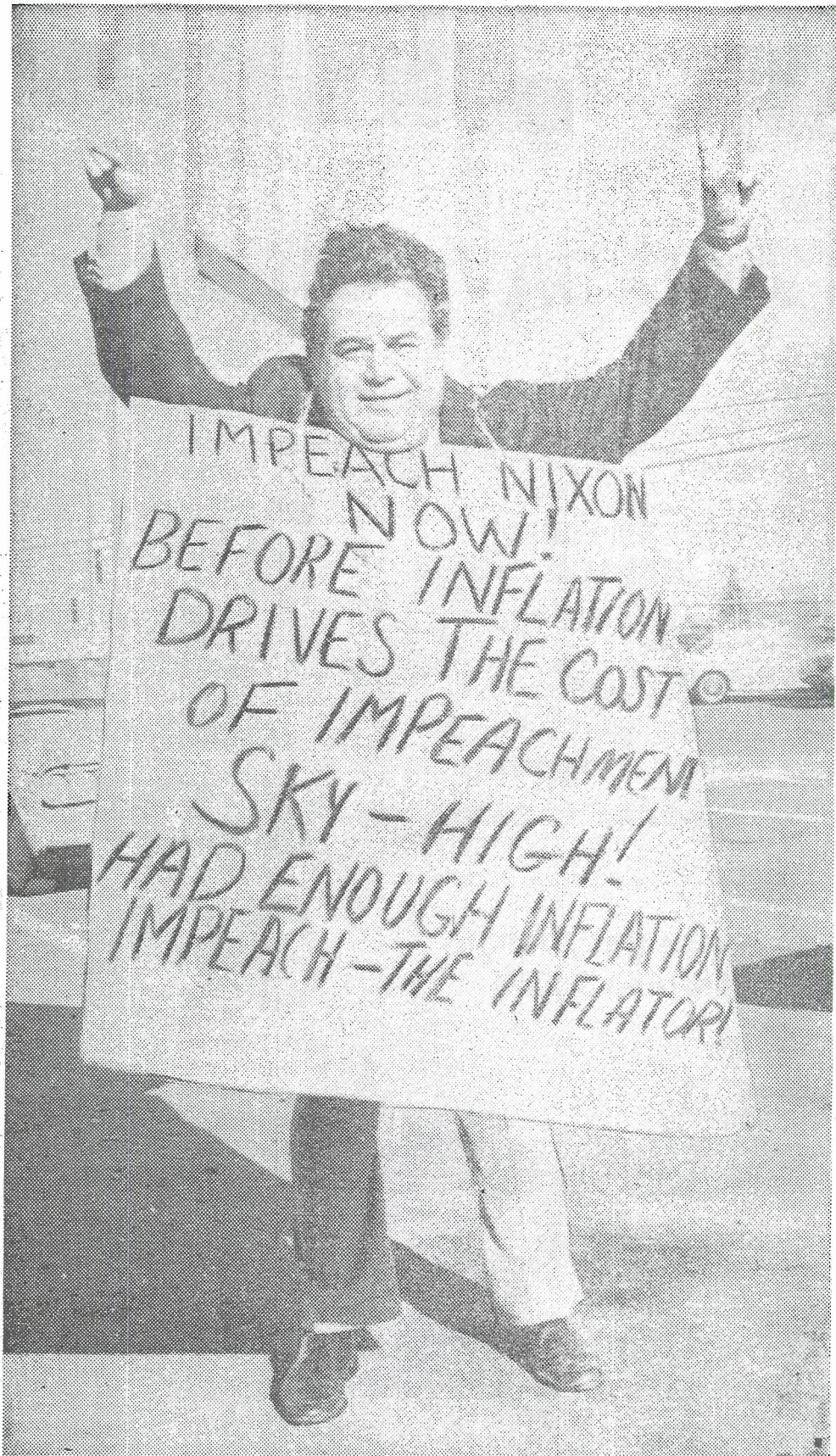
Byck also included a poem he wrote himself that contained the lines, "I'd rather live one day as a lion than 100 years as a sheep."

In the tape to Anderson, Byck said, "I intend to show

many people—if I'm successful — the whole world, that there is something anybody can do about anything if he has enough desire and he is not afraid to die for his cause."

"Now I realize that it's a longshot, that it's maybe a million or a billion to one shot. "I don't know what the odds are. I'll have to check with Jimmy the Greek in Las Vegas. Anyhow, that's my thoughts."

In a note to Anderson, Byck asked Anderson to "share" the tape with five other persons: Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, film personalities Faye Dunaway, John Mills, and Bill Cosby, and former Atomic Energy Commission Commissioner David E. Lilienthal.



United Press International

This photograph of Samuel J. Byck was made last November when he staged a demonstration in Philadelphia calling for the impeachment of President Nixon.