

FAA Finds Airport Security Weak

By Jack Anderson

If Samuel Byck, who was foiled in his attempt to dive an airliner into the White House, had tried his home airport of Philadelphia instead of the more secure Baltimore, he might have carried off his fantastic scheme.

This is the chilling finding of Rep. John Murphy (D-N.Y.), based on confidential Federal Aviation Administration documents on Philadelphia and his own clandestine visit to the Philadelphia airport.

We have also had access to a confidential, nationwide FAA security survey which shows 80 per cent of the nation's airport weapon detectors don't work and half of these cannot identify small pistols concealed on a passenger.

Byck used just such a .22-caliber "Saturday night special" to kill a security guard, a pilot and himself on Feb. 22. Had the deranged Philadelphian passed quietly through a defective "magnetometer" in Philadelphia instead of staging a Wild West shootout in Baltimore, said Murphy, "Ironically enough . . . he might have succeeded."

For the thick sheaf of documents show that Philadelphia was precisely the place to pull off the escapade. States the FAA bluntly:

"The history of the attempt to obtain security and compliance with Federal Aviation regulations at Philadelphia is one of continuous and intentional delay and failure to comply . . ."

The FAA documents, substantiated by Murphy's undercover visit with an FAA inspector, reveal unknown persons drift back and forth through unlocked security gates, and vehicles enter "secure" jet areas without challenge.

"Trans World Airlines has officially complained of their inability to maintain the security of their 'sterile concourse' because of the failure of the airport to secure their doors," says the FAA report. "Aircraft are accessible (to) unauthorized people."

The nationwide FAA survey also found poor security at Albany, Buffalo, Fairbanks, Alaska; Lynchburg, Va.; and San Francisco.

In a letter to House Commerce Committee Chairman Harley O. Staggers (D-W.Va.), Murphy de-

scribed a recent forced landing by a United Air Lines jet caused by a passenger armed with an undetected knife.

"Based on past experiences, we can anticipate more such acts," he wrote. To head off "an exorbitant man-made aircraft disaster," said Murphy, \$7.5 million should be allocated immediately to beef up major airport security equipment.

Murphy also wants to train a federal airport protection force to replace the "untrained 'rent-a-cops'" now employed for security.

Footnote: At Philadelphia International Airport, operations manager Charles Rogers candidly admitted that "an immense rebuilding program" had left the airport less secure than he wanted and that the FAA had cited the facility for violations. Rogers said a financial squeeze prevented him from putting guards at every opening, particularly with some doors and fences now torn off because of the new construction. Rogers is asking FAA for more time to comply.

Mineral Embargo?—A confidential Senate study shows that if mineral-producing countries

follow the lead of the Arab oil embargo, American steel production could be stalled within three to 18 months.

The study, prepared for Sen. Lee Metcalf (D-Mont.), chairman of the Senate Minerals subcommittee, also concludes: "There are indications that some of our mineral suppliers are getting together with an eye toward price-fixing."

The study warns that overseas suppliers may withhold strategic minerals "until we come around to their way of thinking" on prices, import volume and the like.

The Metcalf study's ingenious solution is to open up the deep sea bed to American mining.

On the ocean floor, Metcalf reports, there are countless metallic nodules, looking like burned potatoes, rich with manganese, iron, copper and cobalt. Metcalf plans to hold two days of hearings and to press witnesses from the Departments of State, Interior, Treasury, Defense and Commerce to get an American deep-water mining effort under way before manganese, tin and chromium embargoes are organized.

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