

National

President's accused attacker indicted

Hinckley transferred to Virginia

United Press International
John Warnock Hinckley Jr., whose once-seemingly aimless travels gave him the image of a drifter, came back into public view last week, looking slimmer and clean cut.

The occasion was his transfer from a federal prison in North Carolina back to the Marine base at Quantico, Va., to await indictment on charges of trying to kill President Reagan.

The 13-count indictment was returned Monday. If convicted, Hinckley could face life in prison.

Hinckley, 26, has been held in seclusion by federal authorities since March 30, the day a barrage of explosive "Devastator" bullets outside a Washington hotel cut down four men — Reagan, presidential press secretary James Brady, a Secret Service agent and a Washington policeman.

As the crackling sound of .22 caliber reports faded, Hinckley was grabbed by Secret Service agents — the end of what investigators say was a convoluted chain of events that ran from coast to

coast and apparently highlighted by a bizarre obsession with a teenage actress.

In the aftermath of the shooting, Hinckley was seen only in fuzzy tourist photos, old family pictures or remote television scenes. Last week, accompanied by guards to a waiting helicopter at Butner, N.C., he appeared trim and fit. His sandy hair was neatly cut, his clothes natty.

The impression was far from that of the plump, troubled youth who sipped peach brandy last New Year's Eve and tape recorded a monologue linking his grief over the murder of Beatle John Lennon to his infatuation with actress Jodie Foster.

Hinckley, the son of a wealthy Evergreen, Colo., oilman, was born in Ardmore, Okla., on May 29, 1955. His family, described as devoutly Christian, soon moved to Dallas.

He was outgoing in junior high school, friends recalled — he was elected homeroom president in seventh and ninth grades, and managed the eighth grade basket-

ball team — but he seemed to withdraw in high school.

During his seven years after high school, he dabbled with higher education. He enrolled at Texas Tech, switched majors from business administration to English, never got a degree. His life seemed to lose direction.

He served a brief stint as a "storm trooper" in a neo-Nazi group in 1978, but was booted for being "uncontrollable, unstable."

He continued to drift, unsuccessfully seeking work. He suffered psychiatric troubles and was treated with Valium, his family said. During his confinement at Butner, where he was undergoing psychiatric evaluation, Hinckley took an overdose of Tylenol, but was quickly treated. Authorities said his life was not in danger.

Before the Washington shooting, Hinckley had been arrested only once — on gun charges. He was picked up Oct. 9, 1980, in Nashville, Tenn., but released after posting bond. Federal authorities said Hinckley may have been stalking President Carter.

Four days later, back in Dallas, he bought the gun authorities say was used to shoot Reagan.

Beneath his aimless exterior, Hinckley seemed to be driven by an obsession with Foster, and investigators say the attack on Reagan may have been modeled after the movie "Taxi Driver," in which she appeared.

Last New Year's Eve, drinking alone, Hinckley made a tape recording that was found in his Washington hotel room after his

arrest. He lamented the death of Lennon, who was fatally shot outside his New York home in December.

"My life is all screwed up," he said. "The world is even more screwed up. I don't know why people want to live."

"It was such a shock to me. It blew my mind. Now Jodie is the only one in the world that matters."

Officials have traced Hinckley's travels to New Haven, Conn., where Foster is a student at Yale. He slipped notes under her door in early March, and tried to speak with her on the phone.

Then he was back to Denver, abandoning his car for a flight to Los Angeles. There he started a three-day cross-country bus trip that brought him to Washington the day before the assassination attempt.

Searching Hinckley's hotel room after the shooting, federal agents discovered a letter addressed to Foster.

"Jodie, I would abandon the idea of getting Reagan in a second if I could only win your heart."

"I will admit to you that the reason I'm going ahead with this attempt now is because I just cannot wait any longer to impress you. I'm doing all of this for your sake."

The letter, neatly written on lined paper, was signed "John Hinckley."

It was dated Monday, March 30. The time was 12:45 p.m. One hour and forty minutes later, the president was shot.

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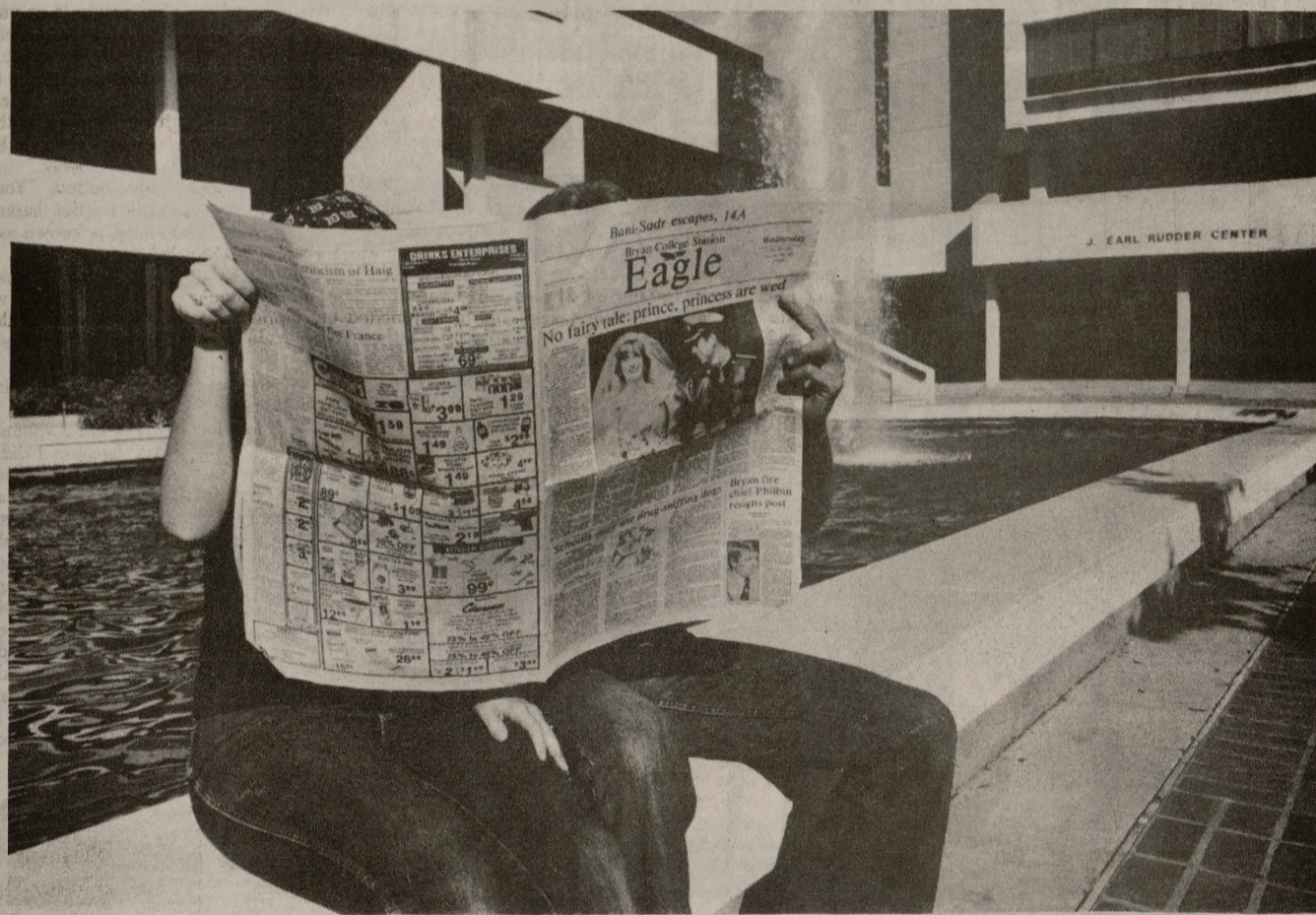


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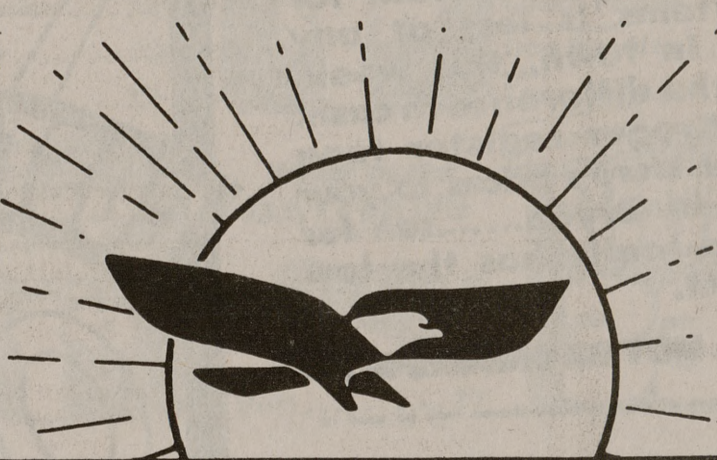
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Pilot re-creates historic flight

United Press International
MANCHESTER, N.H. — Calvin Pitts kissed the ground after he landed his single-engine plane at the end of a grueling round the world flight meant to retrace a historic trip made 50 years ago.

The 1931 flight by Wiley Post in the single-engine Winnie Mae took a record eight days, 15 hours, 51 minutes. It took Pitts two months and one day.

Despite sophisticated navigation equipment and weathertracking satellites, and despite Charles Lindbergh's thermos bottle Pitts carried for luck, the Spirit of Winnie Mae fell victim to bureaucracy, religious holidays, unfriendly guards, Russian tenacity and Mother Nature.

"There were delays you couldn't have invented if you sat down and planned it," Pitts said Monday after he eased out of his Beechcraft Bonanza at New Hampshire's largest airport.

"I had no perception that the air travel system could be as complicated and demanding as it was," he said. "At times it took us as long to get out of an airport as it did to fly the next leg."

Pitts, of Severna Park, Md., left from Grenier Field with navigator Joseph Cunningham of Tulsa, Okla., June 23 after drinking a toast from the same thermos carried by Lindbergh, Post and other famous aviators.

Problems began almost immediately, he said. Cunningham developed chest pains. Pitts picked up another navigator in Newfoundland.

Over the Atlantic, a special radio broke, forcing the first change from Post's original itinerary. Instead of England, Pitts flew to Germany where he could get the equipment repaired.

It took weeks to obtain clearance to fly in Soviet airspace and the Russians refused to allow Pitts to land for refueling. It was impossible for the small aircraft to travel 4,000 miles on one tank of gasoline.

The crew detoured south to avoid the Soviet Union and landed in Athens, where they were met by armed guards, Pitts said. Before granting takeoff clearance, which took nearly a day, Greek authorities locked up the plane's propellers.

Pitts then landed in Egypt during the Moslem "Id" holiday with nary a chance of getting any fuel for two days.

At last, Pitts said, he departed for India, where monsoons forced him to detour further south toward Australia and island hop his way across the Pacific.

Pitts covered 10,000 miles more than the 15,000 miles he had expected.

Post was killed in a 1935 plane crash. In addition to his pioneering flight, Post developed the first spacesuit with engineers from B.F. Goodrich.

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