

Presley Gets Narcotics Bureau Badge

By Jack Anderson

By presidential dictum, Elvis Presley, the swivel-hipped singer, has been issued a federal narcotics badge.

The emotional Presley was so overwhelmed at getting his own genuine, gold-plated badge that tears sprang from his eyes, and he grabbed President Nixon in a Hollywood bear hug.

The rock 'n' roll star is a police buff who collects law enforcement badges and donates thousands of dollars to police charities. Hearing of this, Deputy Narcotics Director John Finlator a few months ago sought to enlist Presley in the anti-drug fight.

Finlator invited the singer to the Narcotics Bureau for a quiet visit and arranged for the guards to admit him under the pseudonym "John Burroughs."

Presley played the part of the anonymous John Burroughs like he does all his movie roles. He pulled up in front of the Narcotics Bureau in a gaudy Cadillac. Resplendent in purple suit and cloak, with a gold belt buckle and amber sunglasses, he sashayed through the door.

En route to Finlator's office, the elegant Elvis, alias John Burroughs, had half the secre-

taries in the building oohing and aahing.

Presley readily agreed to cooperate with the anti-drug campaign and offered on the spot to donate \$5,000 to the Narcotics Bureau. Finlator gently declined the money, explaining that the Bureau isn't permitted to accept donations.

Then Presley showed Finlator some police badges and asked whether he could have one from the Narcotics Bureau. Finlator suggested diplomatically that he try the FBI. But Elvis insisted he wanted a narcotics badge.

"I can't," said Finlator apologetically. "I absolutely can't let you have one."

Presley's face fell, then brightened again. He said he had an appointment at the White House. "Would you mind," he asked, "if I asked President Nixon for a narcotics badge?"

"That's the only way you'll ever get it, Elvis," replied Finlator good humoredly.

At the White House, Presley was ushered in to see the President. They chatted briefly, then Presley raised the question of the badge.

"See that he gets it," the President directed his top enforcement adviser, Egil (Bud) Krogh. Unable to suppress his

excitement, Elvis hugged the startled Nixon.

Krogh immediately called Finlator and asked him to bring a badge to the White House.

"You know how it is, John," Krogh greeted Finlator later at the White House. "I hear you turned him down."

"I sure as hell did," said Finlator, smiling. "Okay, I've been reversed."

When Finlator finally handed Presley the badge and promised to issue him "consultant" credentials, the singer was overcome with emotion, and his eyes became misty.

It was another happy ending for the swivel 'n' sway idol.

Footnote: Finlator recently retired from the Narcotics Bureau to write a book about his experiences.

The Labor Department has refused to allow the son of murdered United Mine Workers insurgent Jock Yablonski to speak to a group of department employees who asked to hear him.

The son, Joseph (Chip) Yablonski, is a Washington attorney who specializes in labor law. He had been invited to appear by the department's management interns. Previously, they had been allowed to hear whomever they wanted.

The young Yablonski was

expected to discuss the Labor Department's refusal to intervene when his father begged for help in his campaign against UMW President Tony Boyle in 1969.

When Labor Under Secretary Laurence Silberman heard of Yablonski's invitation he was apoplectic. He ordered that Yablonski be un-invited.

The labor official won't discuss the episode. His reticence is easy to understand. He is the architect of the department's disastrous "boys-will-be-boys" approach to the Boyle machine's crude and corrupt suppression of the reformers who, under the late Yablonski, tried to clean up the union.

Silberman, then the department's general counsel, advised against an investigation of the union election despite repeated documented pleas for action from the Yablonski camp.

Only after Yablonski, his wife and daughter were murdered in their beds did he consent that the department begin an investigation. The probe, of course, quickly turned up evidence of massive corruption and led to a lawsuit by the department to set the election aside. By then, however, it was too late for Yablonski.