



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK  
328 CADMAN PLAZA EAST  
BROOKLYN, N. Y. 11201

CHAMBERS OF  
JOHN R. BARTELS  
SENIOR JUDGE

May 6, 1991

U.S. Parole Commission  
Northeast Region  
Customs House, 7th Floor  
2d and Chestnut Streets  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Re: Zvonko Basic - 03941-158  
Lewisburg, Pa. 17837

Dear Sirs:

I have been told that in June Zvonko Basic will appear before the Parole Board for the second time. I have been asked to recommend Mr. Basic's release. Of course, I have no jurisdiction in this matter but since I was the judge that tried the case, I will try to give you my impression.

I am sure you know the story as well as I. Of course, his action was inexcusable and was condemned by the public and by the jury that found him guilty. For this offense he has already served more than fifteen years.

As you will recall, he completed the hijacking of an airplane through some scare tactics employed by the use of a fake bomb and a fake weapon. There was an amateur constructed bomb in a Grand Central Station locker which the police took, after notice from Basic, to the Bronx defusing plant. The evidence before me raised a serious question as to whether the police in defusing this bomb were negligent. At all events, one policeman lost his life. Therefore Basic must be punished for it.

From my recollection of the record, Basic never intended a death to result from his conduct, nor did he have a prior record of misconduct. His action was caused by some misguided patriotic emotion predicated upon Croatian failure to obtain independence from Yugoslavia.

I am not in a position to make a recommendation concerning his release and do not make such a recommendation. It is true, however, that ~~he has served a greater length of time than anyone involved in the hijacking and he has no record of violence of any kind.~~ Of course, I have no objection to his release subject to your condition. ] A

Respectfully yours,

JOHN R. BARTELS

United States District Judge

JRB/MFZ