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The Washington Merry-Go-Round

# Secret Service Laxity

## Confirmed

By Drew Pearson

It is never pleasant to criticize such agencies as the FBI and the Secret Service, and last December this writer



Pearson

was subjected to considerable newspaper criticism for doing it. On Dec. 2, I reported that six Secret Service men charged with protecting the President were

in the Fort Worth Press Club the early morning of Friday, Nov. 22, some of them remaining until nearly 3 o'clock. They were drinking. When they departed, three were reported en route to an all-night beatnik rendezvous, The Cellar.

"Obviously men who have been drinking until 3 a.m. are in no condition to be trigger-alert or in the best physical shape to protect anyone."

Publication of this column brought an angry call from Pierre Salinger, then in charge of White House press relations, plus concerted queries from some editors. The statement was made by Salinger and others that the members of the White House detail who stayed up late did not have to work next day.

The Warren Commission, after exhaustive investigation, has now reported to the contrary. It bears out the column of Dec. 2 except that nine, not six agents were involved, with seven going on to The Cellar.

"Most of the agents were

there from about 1:30 or 1:45 a.m. to about 2:45 or 3 a.m.," the Commission reported. "One agent was there from 2 until 3 a.m."

### Work Next Morning

"Each of the agents who visited the Press Club or the Cellar Coffee House had assignments beginning no later than 8 a.m.," the Commission found. "Four had key responsibilities as members of the complement of the follow-up car in the motorcade. Three of these agents were on the run."

The Commission quoted rules against drinking liquor and wine and removal from duty.

The Commission noted that the men were not disciplined, and that the mission was a violation.

The Commission stated that the President's personal conduct is the salutary goal to which the Secret Service regulation is directed when it absolutely forbids drinking by any agent accompanying the President.

"Nor is this goal served when agents remain out until early morning hours and lose the opportunity to get a reasonable amount of sleep. It is

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- The Worker
- The New Leader
- The Wall Street Journal
- The National Observer
- People's World
- Date

DeLoach's signature ENCLOSURE

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