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The New York Times

To the Editor:

An AP dispatch datelined Dallas, May 17, appearing in the New York Times the following day, described the "elaborate security precautions" taken by the police for the visit of Vice President Humphrey. The Vice President, it appears, made the trip "to brief financial supporters of the Democratic party on current foreign policies." Mr. Humphrey held an airport news conference at which he affirmed the necessity for the United States to play the role of "world's policeman" pending performance of that task by "organizations such as the United Nations."

The Vice President "was whisked under heavy guard and in a hard top limousine to a downtown hotel" for a luncheon address. Scores of uniformed and plainclothes policemen roamed about the hotel during Mr. Humphrey's address which was closed to the press and the public. When he left, his car was in the middle of a phalanx of police motorcycles and automobiles."

Strong memories of the assassination of President Kennedy must have influenced the police who were "stationed on nearby rooftops and at the windows of office buildings. Officers wielding shotguns rode in the cars in front of and behind Mr. Humphrey. Some two dozen policemen, many wearing jackboots and riot helmets, secured the street the hotel is on in downtown Dallas." Police Chief Jesse Curry is quoted as commenting, "Let's just say the security was real tight." Thirty miles away in Fort Worth, Mrs. Marguerite Oswald, mother of the man alleged to be President Kennedy's murderer, was placed under police surveillance.

No reason is given in the dispatch for such elaborate police precautions. One wonders about the need for them. Is this now standard procedure in Dallas for the visits of ranking officials of the United States? Or was there specific reason to protect the Vice President against insult or assassination? From what source? If Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone crackpot killer as the Warren Commission found, what reason was there to anticipate the possibility of a recurrence of the murder done on November 22, 1963? What did Mrs. Marguerite Oswald have to do with it?

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