

Shooting Is the Sixth of a Violent Decade

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In less than a decade, starting with the murder of President Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963, the faith of many Americans in the reasonableness of their country's politics has been shattered by assassins' bullets six times, the latest victim being Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama yesterday.

The others who fell—and died—before the assassins in this period were Malcolm X on Feb. 21, 1965; George Lincoln Rockwell, the American Nazi leader, on Aug. 25, 1967; the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968, and Senator Robert F. Kennedy on June 5, 1968.

Starting with an attempt on the life of President Andrew Jackson, 10 American Presidents or Presidential aspirants, including Governor Wallace, have been assassins' targets.

Assassinated Governors

Of the nearly 1,350 men who have held the office of Governor since 1790, one—William Goebel of Kentucky—was killed by an assassin, in 1900. But six others, including Governor Wallace, were targets of political assassinations.

Two of these were wounded, the last being John B. Connally of Texas, who was riding with

President Kennedy when the President was killed.

In looking back over the history of violence toward Presidents or would-be Presidents, the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence concluded that "party affiliation, public policies, term of office and political strength provide few clues about the likelihood of assassination."

Abraham Lincoln, for instance, the first President to be killed by an assassin, was the head of a divided nation during the Civil War, but William McKinley, the third President murdered, was a popular man in a relatively stable and unified era.

No Pattern Evident

Nor, until recently, have assassinations been confined to Presidents or political leaders who have exhibited strong leadership qualities. Presidents Lincoln and Kennedy did fit this category, but Presidents James A. Garfield and McKinley did not.

Franklin D. Roosevelt was shot at three weeks prior to his first Presidential inauguration, before he had a chance to demonstrate his Presidential qualities.

The Presidents killed in office were Lincoln in 1865, Garfield in 1881, McKinley in 1901 and Kennedy.

Attempts were made on the

lives of Presidents Jackson in 1835 and Harry S. Truman in 1950. Neither man was wounded. Theodore Roosevelt, then a former President running again on the Bull Moose party ticket, was wounded in 1912.

Mr. Lincoln escaped assassination in February, 1861, when he was the President-elect. A plot to kill him in the railway station in Baltimore was foiled. It was to take place while the inaugural train was en route from Springfield, Ill., to Washington.

Times of Civil Strife

The political assassinations of the last decade have occurred during periods of increasing civil strife.

The assassination of President Kennedy, for instance, came during the civil rights era, several months after the fatal shooting, on June 12, 1963, in Jackson, Miss., of Medgar Evers, the black rights leader.

Malcolm X and Dr. King also were symbols of the black man's striving for a better life, as was Robert Kennedy. Governor Wallace was on the other side politically.

"We have not found a specific remedy for assassination and political violence in a democracy apart from the perceived legitimacy of the government and its leaders," the commission on violence concluded.