

Trooper Tells of Wallace's Wish to

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MONTGOMERY, Ala., May 19—George Wallace was preparing to enter his car to leave the Laurel Shopping Center minutes before he was shot Monday, but he was lured back by the demanding crowd, Wallace's chief bodyguard said here today.

"I'd like to shake hands..." Wallace told Capt. E. C. Dothard, the Alabama state trooper in charge of the Alabama governor's security. Dothard said the statement was in the form of a question.

"I said, 'All right,'" Dothard told reporters in a news conference today. Dothard's description of the shooting was the first from any of the officials charged with protecting Wallace.

Dothard, who suffered a flesh wound during the assassination attempt, said he and Nicholas Zarvos, a Secret Service agent who was wounded in the throat, were at their assigned positions—Dothard at Wallace's left shoulder and Zarvos back-to-back with the governor.

Wallace's voice tired and cracked a little, Dothard said, and the speech had been cut short. "The people were massed behind a rope, just layer after layer," he said. "Those inside had been cleared."

The candidate had signed one or two autographs and shaken about three hands when he neared the car and the crowd called for him to come back, which Dothard said is not unusual.



CAPT. E. C. DOTHARD
... at Wallace's left

"The governor got up against that rope," Dothard said. "That way he could shake and touch a lot of hands with both hands."

Dothard said he remembers seeing the wounded Wallace falling back and being knocked backward himself by the governor.

Neither he nor others of the Wallace traveling guard remembered seeing the gunman before and he never got a look at him Monday, Dothard said. His first thought, Dothard said, was that "what had happened is what he had always been afraid might happen."

He and Wallace signaled to each other that they were all right as they were being placed in an ambulance, Dothard said. Dothard has been Wallace's bodyguard almost continuously since

1963, when Wallace was first elected governor of Alabama.

"In looking back," Dothard said, "I don't see that we could have changed anything" to improve security.

Dothard, 40, said the tension had been far less than that exhibited by Wallace crowds in 1968, but Maryland rallies had produced more incidents this year than Michigan.

One man was found with a gun at a rally in Baltimore "Saturday, a week ago" Dothard said, adding that a companion escaped, "and they suspected he might have a gun also."

Dennis Hill, the chief spokesman for the Baltimore City police, said yesterday that a thorough check of records and interviews with officers showed that no one had been arrested at the May 6 rally.

Hill quoted Capt. James A. Cadden, the commander of the police district where the rally was held—in the Fifth Regiment Armory—as saying a rumor circulated that someone had been arrested, but it was totally untrue.

Hill said that the only reported incident that night was when Wallace's own personal security guards had turned a man with a tear gas pen away from the rally.

"Dothard, who expects to return to duty in Maryland Monday, said he doubts Wallace has changed his opposition to stricter federal gun control. "He says a criminal could still get a gun and I feel the same way," the cap-

tain said after the formal press conference.

Other incidents in the few days before the shooting included finding another man carrying an open knife, Dothard reported. He said these people were turned over to local police and the governor's guard heard no more of them.

The shots Monday at the Laurel Shopping Center came at a time when the danger seemed less than it often had been, Dothard said. Only the previous Thursday, a crowd at a rally in Landover "had organized hecklers—rocks, tomatoes, eggs, oranges were thrown," Dothard said.

The governor on one occasion was hit by a rock, he said. Although Wallace "goes into crowds almost every day," he seeks and takes advice, the captain said. And at Landover no hands were shaken.

But Monday afternoon the crowd was friendly, and it was the hour for the Secret Service to change shifts. There were 12 men guarding the governor with both shifts there temporarily, not counting local police.

Dothard said an outdoor rally, where the candidate mingles with the crowd, provides so many opportunities that no amount of guarding could protect the candidate from a determined assassin.

Wallace has always refused to wear a "pretty bulky" bullet-proof vest the staff obtained for him.

As for what might be done to reduce the danger, Dothard had little hopes of changing the candidate's habits, if Wallace should overcome his paralysis.

He said his recommendations would be no more outdoor rallies and no more shaking hands in crowds, but he didn't think Wallace would agree.

Shake Hands