

# 'His Eyes Were Fixed in Blank Stare'

By Lawrence Meyer  
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I was sitting on the tailgate of the light blue Ford station wagon the Wallace staff was using to get around Maryland.

The governor had come off the speaker's stand after addressing the crowd for about 40 minutes at the Laurel Shopping Center. He went to his right to shake hands with some of the crowd over there and I noticed that he had taken his coat off and that the blue shirt had the sleeves rolled up once or twice.

Then he came over after a minute or so to about four feet from where I was sitting. The crowd pressed forward to reach him and the restraining rope behind my back started pressing into me. I looked down at the rope and then I heard a sharp report like a firecracker.

Then two more and then perhaps another one. My first thought was that it was firecrackers. Then the crowd started screaming and scattering as though a sudden rush of air was blowing them away.

There's no way to make clear sense of the confusion. People screaming, shouting at the top of their lungs, running in every direction.

Then I realized—and this was only a matter of sec-

onds—that it had been gunfire, not firecrackers.

George Wallace was lying on the ground. One of the Alabama state troopers, his own personal bodyguard, was lying at his feet. When I could see Wallace his eyes were fixed in a blank stare straight up. His wife, Cornelia, so carefully made up with her ink-black hair combed back from her forehead, so well-dressed in a beige suit with yellow, was kneeling beside him, crying, holding his head in her hands.

Wallace's shirt had been ripped open and I could see white blue boxer shorts over the top of his trouser belt. In the crowd, I could see the gray shirts of Prince George's County police who were shoving their way forward.

I ran around the side of the crowd and found about 10 policemen carrying a man with red, white and blue socks, a red, white and blue striped shirt, a "Wallace in '72" button on his suit. There was blood on his gums and one policeman had his arm so tightly around the suspect's neck that his face had turned a dark red.

A man in shirtsleeves, a Wallace supporter, ran up to the police and yelled at the man, "You nut! You must be crazy!" Somebody else said something about, "I knew

this would happen," or "This had to happen here." It was more of a lament than a statement of fact.

I came back to where Wallace and his bodyguard were on the asphalt. His wife's suit now had a streak of blood on it and I could see blood on the governor's right arm. Prince George's police and the Secret Service agents picked Wallace up like an unwieldy package and tried to stuff him into the rear of the blue stationwagon. Mrs. Wallace tugged and clawed at a tall, thin Secret Service agent so that she could get in with her husband.

Then a van from the Laurel rescue squad pulled up and Wallace was pulled from the stationwagon, put on a stretcher and placed in the van. George Mangum, the tall, husky coordinator-master of ceremonies who has been with Wallace throughout the campaign, was pleading with the crowd over the public address system to clear a patch.

The police also were laboring to clear a patch for the ambulance. They took Wallace away, then they took Capt. E. C. Gothard, the plainclothes Alabama state trooper, who also was hit, away. Gothard was shouting, "Take care of the governor. Take care of the governor first"

Billy Grammer, the musi-

cian who has accompanied Wallace throughout the campaign to entertain the crowds, said, "I've said all along if they wanted to do something like this, they'd do it under these circumstances."

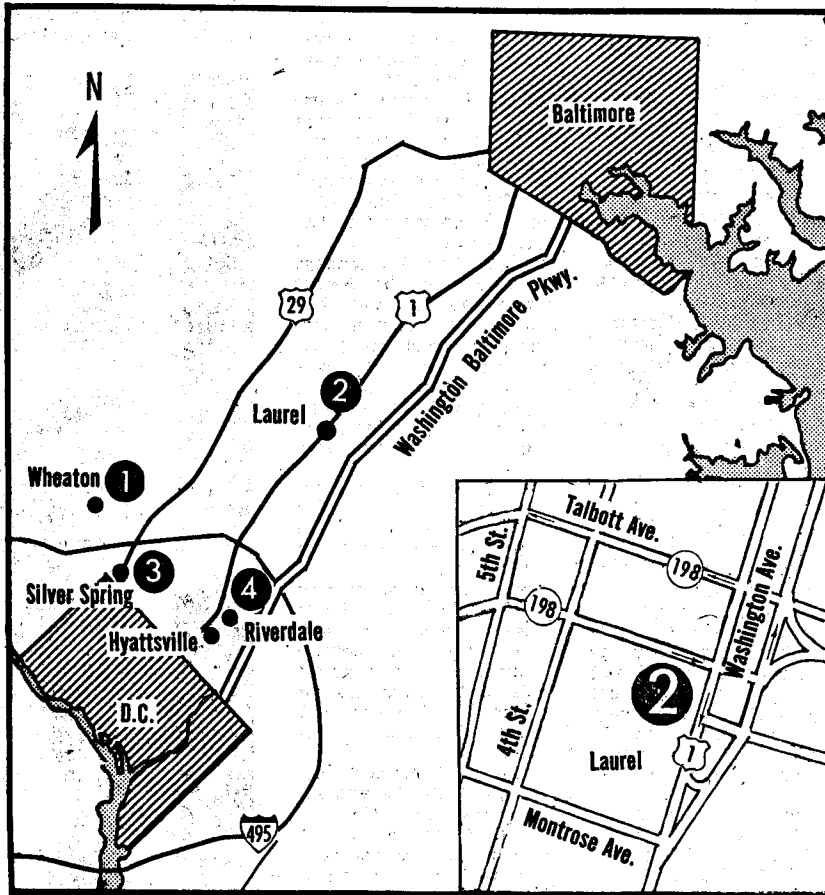
What he meant, he explained, was that it would be someone posing as a Wallace supporter. Then Grammer resplendent in his maroon suit, pink shirt and fancy cowboy boots, started to cry.

## 'I Heard Five Shots' . . . Like Firecrackers'

James L. Hubbard, 3615 Gallatin St., Hyattsville, collapsed possibly of a heart attack after the shooting and was taken to Leland Memorial Hospital. From a hospital bed, wearing an oxygen mask, he told of the shooting:

"I was standing just a couple of feet from Wallace after he stepped down from the platform, but couldn't see him. I had a \$100 check for him and was trying to give it to him when I heard five shots. They sounded like firecrackers. The crowd scattered and I got to him. I knelt down beside him and saw blood on his chest and stomach. . . . I saw blood on Mrs. Wallace's dress and thought she'd been shot."

Phyllis Chambers, 9609 Meadowlark Ave., Upper Marlboro, cochairman of the Wallace campaign in Prince George's County, had descend-



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Shooting of Gov. Wallace occurred at Laurel Shopping Center, 2 on map; he was taken to Holy Cross Hospital, 3;

Secret Service agent was taken to Leland Hospital, 4. Earlier in day, suspected gunman was seen at Wheaton Plaza, 1.

ed from the platform behind Wallace, Mrs. Wallace and *Dora Thompson of Hyattsville, a Wallace worker who was wounded in the leg.*

"He was reaching into the crowd—there were some women trying to shake his hand. When he came off the stage he stopped, took off his jacket. He was going toward his car, but the women were yelling 'Please come shake our hand' That's when he was shot. He clutched himself. I remember going toward him, and his wife was there and he clutched himself."

*Jack Ingram, 27, of Huntington, Md., a civilian employee at Ft. Meade, Md., said Wallace had been shaking hands with the crowd for five seconds.*

"I was standing to the governor's right trying to get my hand in there... A man who had been yelling earlier for Wallace to come over, thrust his hand out with a gun in it... It looked like one of those cheap foreign imports. It went off like an automatic but looked like a revolver."

*Angie Mangum, Selma, Ala., a member of Women for Wallace and wife of George Mangum, coordinator of the rally in Laurel:*

"I was standing about five feet away when I heard the shots. I don't know how many there were. I thought it was firecrackers and I thought what a terrible thing to do at this time."