

Bremer Labeled Self 'Assassin', Jury Told

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Arthur Herman Bremer wrote in his diary that he was an "assassin" who had a "design to kill President Nixon," according to testimony of two psychiatrists yesterday. But he ended up shooting Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace instead as the fulfillment of a schizophrenic fantasy, they said.

Dr. Eugene B. Brody termed it "the hunt for the President" in relating the contents of Bremer's diary and psychiatric interviews with the suspect. Recounted Brody: "The destruction of (the President) would be followed by (Bremer's) own death, (and) offered the only opportunity (to Bremer) of being number one, represented the translation into action of some fantasy..."

Another defense psychiatrist, Dr. Sheila Gray, of Chevy Chase, said Bremer's "idea to assassinate the President, which was his original idea for which Gov. Wallace was a substitute," was an attempt to "get his mother to love him."

The testimony came in the third day of Bremer's trial in Prince George's County Circuit Court on state charges of shooting Wallace and three other persons at a Wallace political rally May 15 in a Laurel shopping center.

Canadian government sources had previously said that Bremer was "stalking" President Nixon during the President's official state visit to Ottawa several months ago. Yesterday's trial testimony confirmed this and went further, showing that Bremer himself detailed his "crisscrossing the country (the U.S.) in pursuit of President Nixon," in the words of Brody.

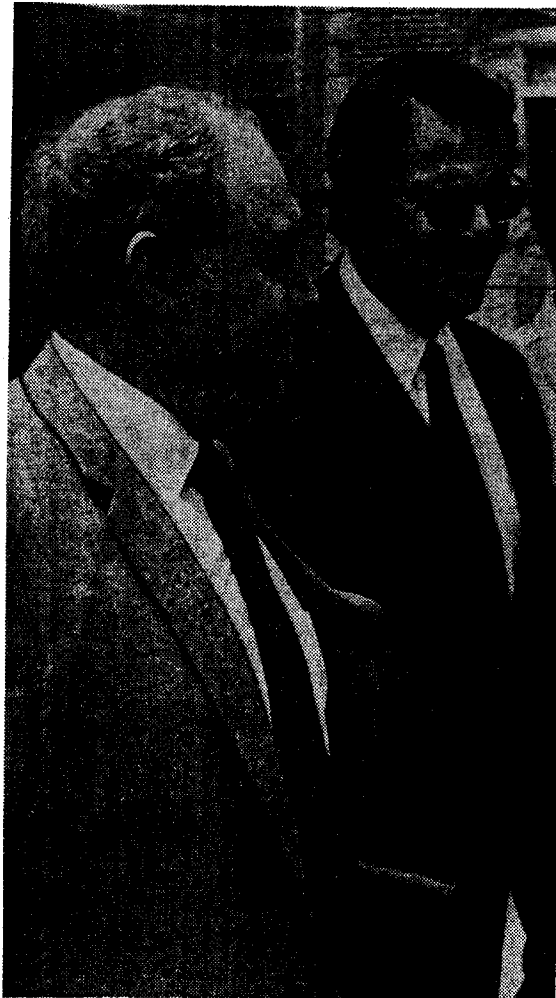
Both psychiatrists testified that Bremer is schizophrenic—the classical "split personality" that is one of the worst of human mental disorders.

Both said it is possible that Bremer was going through a schizophrenic attack at the time he is alleged to have shot Wallace.

Pressed on cross-examination by prosecutor Arthur A. Marshall Jr. as to whether Bremer actually told them in interviews that he shot Wallace, both defense psychiatrists said they could not be absolutely sure about what Bremer had said in that regard.

"Very honestly I could not determine . . . whether he had actually committed the acts or had simply gone to the shopping center . . . thinking he might," said Dr. Gray. She said this was so because basically she could not be sure if anything Bremer told her were fact or fantasy.

"Did he tell you how he enjoyed shooting Gov. Wallace or not?" asked Marshall of Brody.



By Joe Heiberger—The Washington Post
Defense attorney Benjamin Lipsitz, left, and psychiatrist Dr. Eugene B. Brody leave court for lunch.

See BREMER, A6, Col. 1

BREMER, From A1

"We didn't focus on the question," said Brody. "He told me about being there. He told me about having a gun in his hand. He did not tell me that he shot Gov. Wallace."

Brody is chairman of the department of psychiatry at the University of Maryland Medical School.

In dramatic testimony before a hushed courtroom, Brody, one of the world's leading experts of schizophrenia, told how the several acute crises in the 21-year-old Bremer's life had culminated in early March of this year when "he decided to assassinate either Richard Nixon or Gov. Wallace."

Brody said that Bremer began on March 4 the 114-page diary that was read to the jury last night. Brody and Bremer's defense attorney, Benjamin Lipsitz, called the document a diary while prosecutor Marshall called it a "book," noting that the document contains the words, "copyright, 1972, Arthur Herman Bremer" two times.

Here is a summation, drawn from the diary and the two psychiatrists' accounts, of the alleged acts and thoughts of Bremer as the part-time bus-boy and sometime college student apparently rearranged his drab life in a rundown Milwaukee neighborhood to encompass new drives:

- Bremer carefully studied the lives of famous assassins like Lee Harvey Oswald and Sirhan B. Sirhan and also studied the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, which became a factor in triggering World War I. Gray testified that Bremer "wanted to be an important, world-famous person and said, 'I want to be a big shot, as important as the man who started World War One.'"

- Bremer drove up and down country roads near the Ottawa airport where Nixon was to arrive April 13, disregarding the possibility that he might be apprehended.

- When he crossed the border into Canada, he also hoped to be caught and carried a handgun in his pocket. The psychiatrists testified that he was disappointed when he was not even searched at the border.

- Bremer had been within seconds of firing at Gov. Wallace at a rally in Dearborn,

Mich., through a glass window, when, according to his own words in the diary, "Two 15-year-old girls had gotten in front. Their faces were inches from the glass. They were sure to be blinded and disfigured. I let Wallace go only to spare those two stupid, innocent, delighted kids."

Asked by the prosecutor later whether this quote didn't indicate that Bremer was sane in that he was apparently able to conform his actions to meet a stressful situation, Gray said that instead, the action only "conformed" to one of Bremer's fantasies.

"He wanted to be loved by a beautiful women," she said. "He had a hope one of them (the girls before the glass) might turn to him. He would not want to destroy this possibility."

Gray said near the end of her testimony, "I believe he (Bremer) should be confined to a mental hospital to protect himself from his suicidal tendencies and to protect society from his homicidal ones."

Brody said that Bremer "fantasied that when he fired his gun at the President or Gov. Wallace he would cry out, 'A penny for your thoughts.'"

This "silly" or "pseudo-humor" type of comment was typical of Bremer's responses in many situations, the psychiatrist said. He characterized Bremer as a "loner" who was never in his life able to form any close emotional feelings even though he had a superior intelligence that would place Bremer in the top 10 percent of the nation's population intellectually.

He described the essence of Bremer's schizophrenia—a word that comes from an ancient Greek word meaning

"split mind"—as being an inability to have feelings to go along with his intellectual thoughts.

Thus, the psychiatrist said, Bremer might think of killing someone but he did not have any emotions to go along with such an awful thought, nor any real appreciation of the consequences for himself.

In intense cross-examination, prosecutor Marshall tried to paint a picture of a man not insane at all, but someone who had carefully plotted out the killing in an effort to make money from his "book" and to

make himself famous.

It came out in testimony that Bremer wrote in the diary that he hoped to be paid \$100,000 for the publication rights to the diary by Time-Life, Inc.

With that money, Gray testified, Bremer believed he would be able to prove his worth in the eyes of his mother.

Defense attorney Lipsitz drew out details of Bremer's home life designed to show that it had been unhappy and that he had been emotionally undernourished from birth.

"He's an eccentric loner, a guy with an inappropriate smile," said Brody.

He quoted a poem that Bremer wrote in the diary: "I wonder if the joys and torture and boredom of death/are beyond my weirdest dreams,/ and who among the dead can say they don't dream?"

Brody summed up what he called Bremer's "inner loneliness" and "emptiness" with another quotation from the diary:

"My future was small, my past an insult to any human being."

He also noted the persistent suicide attempts during his life that Bremer had told him about.

He added fresh details to testimony Tuesday that told of a Bremer plan to go to a busy downtown Milwaukee bridge and commit mass murder with pistols.

Bremer had been dissuaded from the plan, according to the earlier testimony, because a waitress had smiled at him and been nice to him.

Brody said the mass murder plan was very close to being carried out. He said Bremer told him he had carried two handguns and hundreds of rounds of ammunition with him in a heavy overcoat when he went for his last dinner to the restaurant where he met the waitress.

Brody testified that Bremer told him he had a rope knotted around his neck hidden under his overcoat and had written the word, "killer" on his forehead with a felt pen. A knit cap pulled low hid the word.

A third defense witness, Eugene Stammeyer, testified yesterday that Bremer showed "basic schizophrenic reactions of the paranoid type" on several written examinations that Stammeyer gave him.

Stammeyer, a clinical psychologist for St. Elizabeths Hospital in the District, noted

as had another psychiatrist witness on Tuesday, that Bremer gave hundreds of answers to the 10 ink blots making up the Rorschach test—one of psychiatry's most reliable and widely used tests of mental disorder.

He said most people would give less than 45 responses on the 10 cards, which the subject is asked to look at and tell what the meaningless blots remind him of. Bremer gave 126 answers on the first card alone, the psychologist said.

Prosecutor Marshall demanded to know what Bremer's first response had been. Stammeyer said: "A hooded, comic character; a butterfly; the head of a Picasso sculpture in Chicago; a flying bat; a on each of the 10 cards.

catfish; two hands giving the thumbs-up sign; dogs or lizards; flying or shooting stars; and seahorses."

"On the basis of responses like this were you able to strip Mr. Brewer of his inner soul?" asked Marshall, a short, gray-haired man who customarily wears an air of worried concentration in the courtroom.

The defense attorney objected to the question and Stammeyer left the witness stand.

Through most of this testimony Bremer, a blond, stout, short young man, sat facing the witnesses with his elbows on the table, his face not visible to the audience.

He rarely turned to look at the audience. On the first two days of trial, he turned frequently and smiled and several times stuck out his tongue.

Nor did he joke extensively with his husky guards yesterday, although on the first two days of trial he had done so invariably during breaks, appearing jaunty and carefree.

But as the testimony yesterday centered around the contention that this very sort of activity could be indicative of deep personality disorders and possibly severe mental illness, Bremer's demeanor became more solemn.

He once turned around and looked at the spectators with a somber, unsmiling face—the first time most reporters who have covered Bremer since he was apprehended at the shooting had ever seen him without at least the trace of a smirk forming on his lips.

Marshall, who is thought by legal observers to have strong

evidence against Bremer based on a television film of the actual shooting of Wallace that was shown to the 12-member jury on Monday, brought out in cross-examination that Bremer's diary said he read the book, "R.F.K. Must Die," a full account of the assassination of the New York senator and the trial and life of Sirhan B. Sirhan, who was convicted of the crime.

The book contained the 10 Rorschach cards that Sirhan responded to. Sirhan also gave an "inordinately high" number of responses to the test and Bremer knew that before

he took his tests, Marshall said.

The testimony of the psychiatrists did not confirm whether Bremer had actually studied the tests, but it did reveal that he has long studied psychiatric or psychological journals.

Beyond the Rorschach tests, however, Marshall did not draw any other possible parallels between Sirhan and Bremer—the nation's only two major accused political assassination suspects ever to be brought to trial in modern times.

Brody testified that the first crisis in Bremer's life came at age 11 when the family made a move and Bremer felt dislocated.

At that time, Bremer wrote in his diary, "There were times when I thought about killing myself every day for months at a time."

Bremer also said in the diary, "I remember pacing back and forth at age 11 swearing that I would not live until I was 13."

He worried about brain tumors, the state of his heart, and other health matters to an obsessive degree, according to testimony.

The second crisis in his life came at age 18 when, according to Brody, "He became more irritable with his parents . . . slovenly . . . refused to eat . . . made comments directed at his mother's failure to fulfill a maternal role . . . He locked himself in the bathroom for long periods daily . . . began demanding fresh towels and new sheets and pillow cases . . ."

The third crisis came after a motorbike accident and the fourth came in October, 1971, when Bremer slapped his

father in the face and left home, the psychiatrist said.

It was after he left home and began living in his own Milwaukee apartment that he apparently began the wide spread travels that were a prelude to the assassination attempt of which he is accused.

It was also during this time that Bremer courted and was rejected by a girl, Joan Pemrich. Bremer wrote in his diary that the "happiest days of my life" were spent with Miss Pemrich in the two weeks that they dated.

Brody testified that when he lost Miss Pemrich, it was a personal loss of such magnitude that it triggered the plan to assassinate the President.

Brody testified that each of these crises were "acute psychotic episodes" in Bremer's life, and that other times he may have appeared to act normally but it was a facade.

He said Bremer's decision to kill the President and begin the diary were "important (because) with this decision and the beginning of action (his travels) and moving toward a goal" tended to "reduce his anxiety."

Asked by Lipsitz if the shooting of Wallace was done in a schizophrenic frenzy of a fifth "acute psychotic episode" in Bremer's life, Brody said this "might be."



Prosecutor Marshall cross-examines Dr. Brody in sketch made in court. Sketch by Betty Wells



Photos by Joe Heiberger—The Washington Post

Dr. Brody enters court after lunch break yesterday at Prince George's County Circuit Court.