

U.S. Watches Joiners, Not Loners

By Jack Anderson

The Secret Service, in its desperate efforts to prevent political assassinations, keeps a close watch on more than 400 organizations, ranging from the Women's Liberation Movement to the Chinese Hand Laundry Alliance.

The only trouble: a federal study of 81 assassination attempts reveals that the assailants were loners, not joiners. For instance, Arthur Herman Bremer, who has been indicted for the point-blank shooting of George Wallace, doesn't appear in the Secret Service's computerized files of 180,000 potential assassins.

But the liberated ladies and the Oriental scrubbers are in the secret files, along with the Quaker Action Group, the Nonviolent Direct Action Group, the Gay Liberation Front and other organizations that the Secret Service considers "of protective interest."

Usually this means the group has written to the President, demonstrated at the White House, threatened harm to some official or adhered to a nonconformist political ideology.

The Nonviolent Direct Action group, for example, is watched because it has "urged members to write Pres and other govt. officials to protest war in Vietnam." But not even the Secret Service seems to know why the Gay Liberation Front is listed. Its "interest in

protectees," acknowledges the Secret Service file on the homosexual movement, is "unknown."

The file on the National Welfare Rights Organization, to cite another example, contains a similar notation: "Interest in Protectees—None." But the Liberation News Service is kept under observation because it has been "highly critical of Pres & Administration."

Postal Watch

Any group that demonstrates in front of the White House, apparently, is automatically added to the suspicious list. When the National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees picketed the White House on August 25, 1971, for example, the union probably had no idea that the Secret Service was lurking in the bushes taking notes.

In a confidential memo about the postal picketers, Special Agent Louis B. Sims wrote that "a group of about 40 persons arrived at the White House and commenced the demonstration carrying various signs concerning better wages and equal job opportunity." Sims attached to his memo "photographs taken of the group and a copy of one of the pamphlets handed out."

The National American Indian Youth Council was kept under similar surveillance outside the White House on July 17, 1970. "Apparently they had

placards under shirts," wrote Special Agent Robert R. Faison, "because they were not observed prior to the demonstration holding them up." He noted that "pictures of the demonstrators were taken by the Visual Intelligence Branch."

Not even the correspondents who cover the White House are free of suspicion. Back in September, 1967, representatives of the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians set up a lonely picket across Pennsylvania Avenue from the executive mansion.

A Secret Service report notes that at 1:20 p.m. the protesting radioman unfurled a sign stating: "ABC has a radio studio in the White House, and we are not permitted to walk across the street." The picketer, apparently, was banished to the opposite side of the street.

Eavesdroppers' Report

Secret Service eavesdroppers also reported overhearing a picketer "make a statement to persons on the sidewalk to the effect that they aren't getting enough; it's like the dark ages; any time the President wants to go on TV they have to run around and get him on prime time."

The Secret Service keeps the closest watch, however, on organizations of ethnics, students, blacks and other minorities. The Cuban Nationalist

Movement and Iranian Students Association, for instance, are among dozens of ethnic groups in the files.

Among the black groups under surveillance are the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Even a black-owned bookstore in Washington, the Drum and Spear, is listed.

The student groups watched by the Secret Service include the left-wing Students for a Democratic Society and right-wing National Youth Alliance. But even the National Student Association, which until recent years received financial aid from the Central Intelligence Agency, is on the list.

Here are a few other excerpts from the guarded Secret Service files:

- John Birch Society: "Accused Pres. Eisenhower of Communist affiliation."

- Federal Employees for a Democratic Society: "Led vigil at U.S. Capitol Bldg. to protest ABM System."

- Young Chicanos for Community Action: "Have sponsored demonstrations in support of Mexican-American causes."

- Quaker Action Group: "Opposed to war & the use of nuclear weapons."

- Congress of Racial Equality: "Participated in Martin Luther King's 1963 March on Washington."