

EA53WX

(600) PMS BUDGET

SECRET SERVICE

BY JOSEPH E. MOHBAT

ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON, NOV. 24 (AP)-JACQUELINE KENNEDY CALLED THEM "THOSE POOR MEN IN THE FRONT."

THEY WERE THE SECRET SERVICE MEN IN THE FRONT SEAT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE THE DAY HER HUSBAND, JOHN F. KENNEDY, WAS KILLED. AND THEY HAD LOST, IN A FLEETING MOMENT, THE MAN THEY WERE CHARGED WITH DEFENDING TO THE DEATH.

THE NIGHTMARE OF SPECIAL AGENT ROY H. KELLERMAN, IN CHARGE OF THE TEXAS TRIP, AND WILLIAM GREER, HIS DRIVER, EMERGES IN VIVID DETAIL IN THEIR TESTIMONY TO THE WARREN COMMISSION, MADE PUBLIC YESTERDAY.

SO DOES THAT OF AGENT CLINTON P. HILL, WHO SPRINTED FROM THE CAR BEHIND TO PUSH MRS. KENNEDY BACK INTO THE PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE FOR THE BREAKNECK TRIP TO PARKLAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL.

AND SO, TOO, DOES THAT OF SECRET SERVICE CHIEF JAMES J. ROWLEY, WHO INSISTED TO THE COMMISSION THAT PRESIDENTIAL PROTECTION BY ANYTHING OTHER THAN A SMALL, ELITE GROUP MIGHT RESULT IN A POLICE STATE.

KELLERMAN, RIDING IN THE FRONT PASSENGER'S SEAT WHEN LEE HARVEY OSWALD FIRED AT KENNEDY, HAD TO MAKE A DECISION: TO STAY PUT AND GET THE MOTORCADE AWAY, OR TO VAULT INTO KENNEDY'S SEAT AND SHIELD THE PRESIDENT'S BODY.

"IF I THOUGHT IN MY OWN MIND THAT I WAS NEEDED BACK THERE, THERE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN AN OBSTACLE STRONG ENOUGH TO HOLD ME," KELLERMAN SAID. "WHY? BECAUSE MY JOB IS TO PROTECT THE PRESIDENT, SIR, REGARDLESS OF THE OBSTACLES."

A54WX

BUT KELLERMAN, A 23-YEAR VETERAN OF THE SECRET SERVICE, DIDN'T MOVE. HE ORDERED THE LEAD CAR AND GREER TO GET GOING, AND THE BIG LIMOUSINE "JUST LITERALLY JUMPED OUT OF THE GOD-DAMN ROAD."

"WE ARE HIT," HE RADIOED THE LEAD CAR. "GET US TO THE HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY."

TWO CARS BACK, AGENT RUFUS YOUNGBLOOD HAD HURDLED THE SEAT AND WAS PINNING VICE PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON DOWN.

KELLERMAN WAS ASKED WHY HE DIDN'T ATTEMPT TO REACH KENNEDY.

"AFTER I HAD HEARD PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S VOICE SAY, 'MY GOD, I AM HIT,' I VIEWED HIM, WHICH WAS ENOUGH FOR ME THAT HE WAS. MY DECISION WAS

TO GET THIS MAN TO A HOSPITAL, BECAUSE HE NEEDED MEDICAL TREATMENT. . . ."

THE WARREN COMMISSION, IN ITS REPORT SEPT. 27, PRAISED THE RESPONSE OF THE SECRET SERVICE AGENTS ON THE SCENE. BUT IT CRITICIZED THE SERVICE FOR DEFICIENT ADVANCE PREPARATIONS FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO TEXAS.

AND THERE WAS TESTIMONY THAT 10 AGENTS VIOLATED REGULATIONS BY DRINKING AT A FORT WORTH PRESS CLUB AND THEN ATTENDING A NIGHT CLUB IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THE FATAL DAY.

ROWLEY CONCEDED THAT IF THEY HAD NOT BROKEN THE RULES, THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN ALERT ENOUGH TO SPOT A MAN WITH A RIFLE ON THE ROUTE OF THE MOTORCADE--AS SEVEN EYEWITNESSES DID.

"BUT I DON'T BELIEVE THEY COULD HAVE PREVENTED THE ASSASSINATION," ROWLEY ADDED.

ROWLEY TOLD THE COMMISSION THAT UNDER PROCEDURES IN EFFECT SINCE THE ASSASSINATION, LEE HARVEY OSWALD WOULD HAVE BEEN CALLED TO THE SECRET SERVICE'S ATTENTION AS A POTENTIAL MENACE TO THE PRESIDENT'S SAFETY.

A55WX

THE SECRET SERVICE CHIEF SAID THE AGENCY'S PROTECTIVE RESEARCH SECTION--RESPONSIBLE FOR INVESTIGATING POTENTIAL THREATS--HAS BEEN THOROUGHLY OVERHAULED SINCE THE ASSASSINATION.

BUT WHILE REPORTING ON THE SERVICE'S EXPANDED ROLE, ROWLEY CAUTIONED:

"I THINK YOU WANT TO KEEP THE CONCEPT OF PRESIDENTIAL PROTECTION BY A SMALL, CLOSELY KNIT GROUP, BECAUSE OF THE INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP. BUT IF YOU WANT TO EXPAND IT AND GIVE IT TO ANOTHER GROUP, TO TAKE THE LONG-RANGE VIEW, YOU DO NOT KNOW WHAT MAY DEVELOP FROM SOMETHING LIKE THAT--WHETHER A POLICE ORGANIZATION COULD LEAD TO A POLICE STATE OR A MILITARY STATE"

THE COMMISSION IMPLIED IN ITS REPORT THAT THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION MIGHT BE BETTER EQUIPPED TO TAKE OVER THE SECRET SERVICE PROTECTIVE RESEARCH FUNCTION.

A COMMITTEE HEADED BY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY DOUGLAS DILLON IS STUDYING THE REPORT AND WILL RECOMMEND PROTECTIVE MEASURES TO PRESIDENT JOHNSON SOON.

PB404AESZ