

Wallace's Attacker Remains Reclusive After 20 Months in Jail

BY AGIS SALPUKAS
Special to The New York Times

BALTIMORE—Except for a full reddish-blond beard, Arthur J. Bremer shows no other outward changes since he was convicted of shooting Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama at a political rally on May 15, 1972.

During the first 20 months of a 53-year sentence at the Maryland State Penitentiary near downtown Baltimore, Mr. Bremer has remained the private, mostly silent young man who dominated the news after his capture.

He has turned down many requests for interviews and has settled into the dreary routine of prison life. The only special privilege that he is allowed is a private cell, most of the other prisoners are doubled up.

He lives in a severely overcrowded and outdated prison with massive walls made of large hewn stones blackened by pollution and topped by dark tin turrets, resembling a medieval fortress. The prison, dedicated in 1894, was built for 500 prisoners but now holds about 800 inmates, mostly black.

One day recently, most of the inmates stood outside their cells on litter-strewn ramps while others sat in the sun in a dusty exercise yard, played basketball or stared at the blue sky framed by high thick walls and wire fences topped with barbed wire.

At a Dead End

In contrast to Governor Wallace, who, after a period of severe depression, is rallying his supporters for a possible 1976 Presidential campaign, Mr. Bremer has seemingly reached a dead end.

An appeal of his sentence has been unsuccessful. On July 6,

1973, the Maryland Court of Special Appeals upheld the conviction and the 53-year sentence. Last February the United States Supreme Court turned down a request to review his five-day trial by the state that ended in his conviction on Aug. 4, 1972.

He still faces Federal charges, based on the shooting, for violating the civil rights of a Presidential candidate; assaulting a Secret Service agent, Nicholas J. Zarvos, who was assigned to protect Mr. Wallace and was wounded at the rally held in a shopping center in Laurel, Md.; illegally transferring a firearm and using a firearm to shoot Governor Wallace.

George Beall, United States Attorney for Maryland, said in a recent interview that after reviewing the case again he had recommended to the Justice Department that the Federal charges against Mr. Bremer be dismissed. His recommendation, now going through processing at the Justice Department, is expected to be upheld.

Beall Tells Why

Mr. Beall, whose office prepared the income tax evasion case that led to the resignation of former Vice President Agnew, gave the following reasons for his decision:

“If Mr. Bremer were found guilty, the judge would let the sentence run concurrently and no additional time would be added to the current sentence. It made little sense to try the case again and open the ‘slight possibility’ that a jury could find him not guilty and therefore jeopardize the original conviction.”

It is the policy of the Justice Department not to try a person twice on essentially the same charges unless there

is a compelling new evidence that should be presented.

Mr. Beall said that after reviewing the evidence, he, his staff and the Federal Bureau of Investigation had concluded that there was no evidence that Mr. Bremer was involved in a conspiracy or that he had not acted alone.

Since the trial, questions have been raised about his involvement with other people who may possibly have aided him in the attempted assassination.

Reported With Radicals

In October 1972, Alan Stang, a television writer and consultant, wrote an article in a right-wing publication, saying that he had evidence that Mr. Bremer had attended meetings of Students for a Democratic Society at Marquette University in Milwaukee in November, 1969, and had been seen by an undercover agent with campus radicals.

Also, as a result of disclosures in the Watergate affair, when it became evident that the Wisconsin primary was a key target of a sabotage campaign approved by the White House to disrupt the campaigns of Democratic candidates, there was speculation whether any of the saboteurs had had any contact with Mr. Bremer.

The speculation intensified when Howard E. Hunt Jr., one of the Watergate conspirators, testified at the Senate hearings last year that Charles W. Colson, then special counsel to President Nixon, called Mr. Hunt on the day of the Wallace shooting and asked whether he would break into Mr. Bremer's apartment to determine if he had acted alone or was part of

a plot. Mr. Hunt testified that he got word later that day from Mr. Colson's office that a break-in was not necessary. But investigations by reporters and other private individuals have not established any evidence to link Mr. Bremer with any of the sabotage efforts.

Mr. Wallace, who for months after the shooting refused to talk about it, has in news conferences and interviews in the last year said that he is not satisfied that it had been shown conclusively that Mr. Bremer acted alone. In one news conference he asked where Mr. Bremer got enough money to travel around the country to stalk various candidates while staying in hotels after having earned the salary of a busboy.

He said then that he was not convinced that Mr. Bremer was alone and added, “I have no evidence but I think my attempted assassination was part of a conspiracy.”

Governor Wallace said last week that he would not comment on Mr. Beall's recommendation to dismiss the Federal charges since it was still before the Justice Department, but he added that he still had the same reservations about the shooting that he had expressed before.

“There do remain some questions in my mind that have not been answered,” he said.

Runs Printing Press

While the Governor gets up every morning for a round of painful, taxing physical therapy to keep up the muscle tone of his paralyzed lower body, Mr. Bremer spends most of his time running a press in the prison's print shop.

He has worked his way up

to the last job in the shop, starting as a wrapper, and is now running the press, which can turn out about 5,000 state forms an hour.

According to Charles Selig, the industrial foreman in the shop, Mr. Bremer likes the work but rarely initiates a conversation.

“He likes his privacy,” Mr. Selig said, “and wants to keep away from other people.”

The main diversions for the prisoner are The Baltimore Sun, which he gets daily, television and staying out in the prison yard, an expanse of yellow dust from which one can see the high office buildings and hotels of downtown Baltimore.

His main visitor has been his father, William, who flew in last week to see him. His attorney, Benjamin Lipsitz, who used to visit him almost every week when he first began his term because Mr. Bremer was severely depressed, now visits less often.

“He's pretty much the same,” Mr. Lipsitz observed. “He wants his privacy.”

In the courtroom when Mr. Bremer was sentenced by Judge Ralph Powers he was given a chance to speak. He said, “I suppose I have a world of words to say.” When he paused, Mr. Lipsitz muttered, “Don't be afraid to speak up.”

Mr. Bremer added: “I think what I have to say would run longer than the transcript of this trial. So I won't say anything at this time.”

After 20 months in prison he is still silent and turned down the most recent request for an interview with a shrug.

GIVE TO THE FRESH AIR FUND.

GIVE TO THE FRESH AIR FUND.