

Presidential Security Remains a Major Problem

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 11 — Measures to protect a President when he travels have been significantly tightened since last Nov. 22, when President Kennedy was assassinated, and further changes are being studied.

But two incidents in Phoenix today showed the difficulty of protecting a President as gregarious as Lyndon Johnson. One young man in the crowd near Mr. Johnson was arrested for carrying a revolver concealed under his coat, another for striking the President with a sign.

The report of the Warren Commission on President Kennedy's assassination made the point repeatedly that there is no such thing as absolute security for a President. That could be achieved only by wholly insulating him from the people.

President Johnson loves to mingle with crowds, and he said on Sept. 30 that he saw no unnecessary risk to his safety in the practice. Others have urged him to be more cautious, but his open style of campaigning has shown no change.

On Alert for Weapons

In a crowd situation, the Secret Service agents who guard the President are always alert for concealed weapons. They work on the plan of forming rough concentric circles around the President.

This circle approach is the same whether the President is addressing a meeting in a ballroom or is outside grasping hands. They are mostly in-

2 Incidents in Phoenix Show Difficulty of Protection Despite New Measures

visible circles, since the agents are supposed to remain inconspicuous and mingle with the crowd.

If anyone near the President is seen to have a bulge in his clothes suggesting a concealed weapon, agents are expected to nudge the person and find out. They react in a similar way to any sudden movement in a crowd.

Should a woman near the President suddenly reach into her handbag, for example, the agent is not supposed to wait for the sight of her lipstick. If he cannot reach her immediately, he is to place himself between her and the President or signal other agents to do so.

Secret Service Gets Aid

All Secret Service agents on White House duty are sworn to protect the President with their bodies, if necessary.

Persons frequently near the President, such as reporters, learn not to fold their hands in front of or behind them in a way suggesting that they might be concealing something. One Ambassador attending a White House reception had his folded hands tenderly parted by a Secret Service man.

One step that has been taken to improve security since Nov. 22 has been to give the overburdened Secret Service some

help from other agencies in the job of physical protection.

There are fewer than 400 agents in the Secret Service. In the last year, thousands of man hours have been logged by men from other police agencies, notably the Federal Bureau of Investigation, working with the Secret Service detail.

The President's limousine has been redesigned so that two agents sit facing the President from jump seats. In Dallas on Nov. 22, no agent was near enough to President Kennedy to protect him from the second, fatal bullet.

Both the F.B.I. and the Secret Service have greatly broadened their criteria for labeling persons potential risks to the President. They would now include, for example, any one-time defector to the Soviet Union, such as Lee Harvey Oswald, the assassin of President Kennedy.

Agents assigned to a Presidential trip carry pictures and physical descriptions of all such suspect persons. The local police in the city being visited are also given the names of any suspects there, and these suspects presumably are watched.

But there is no conceivable way to take precautions in advance against all the disoriented persons who might attack a President. Today's incidents again demonstrate that.

The whole question of further Presidential security measures is being studied by a hour-man committee led by the Secretary of the Treasury, Douglas Dillon. The committee is expected to report to President Johnson in December.