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White House Will Check Press Gear

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The White House is instituting a check of bags and briefcases of news media personnel because of the recent bombing at the State Department and the threat of unpredictable terrorist actions, it was announced yesterday.

Presidential press secretary Ron Nessen told reporters at his morning news briefing of the new Secret Service security checks.

Because President Ford "has more frequent and closer contact with members of the press," Nessen said

He emphasized that there is "no harassment here at all" but simply a security measure in requiring a check through bags and equipment at the gates.

The press secretary was asked whether the Secret Service feels the press corps constitutes a threat to the President.

He replied there is "absolutely no thought whatever" on that score but that the measures were instituted because of fear that some outsider might put something into a bag or briefcase of a member of the news media when they were not aware of it.

Associated Press