

WXPost  
**Motorcade**  
**Death Plot**  
**Reported**

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The Secret Service announced yesterday that it had uncovered a "possible conspiracy" to attempt the assassination of President Nixon while he was in New Orleans.

His 2½-hour visit there was without incident. He then flew to San Clemente, Calif., for a stay at the Western White House.

The Secret Service would provide no details of the investigation upon which it based its warning to the President. Spokesmen would only say that the investigation was continuing.

In New Orleans, a Federal warrant was issued for a former New Orleans policeman, Edwin M. (Punchy) Gaudet, who was described as armed and dangerous. It accused Gaudet of threatening to take the President's life by boasting: "Somebody ought to kill President Nixon. If no one has the guts, I'll do it."

Gaudet, police records show, burned an American flag in 1970 during another visit to the city by President Nixon.

Despite the warrant and the search, however, the Secret Service insisted all day long that it had no evidence linking Gaudet to the "conspiracy" about which Mr. Nixon was warned.

Spokesmen for the Secret Service and New Orleans Police Superintendent Clarence Giarrusso indicated they considered the Gaudet warrant to be unrelated to the plot under investigation. "There is no evidence now of any relationship," Secret Service spokesman Jack Warner said.

Mr. Nixon was informed of the Secret Service information about a possible plot on Sunday at Key Biscayne, Fla., through his chief of staff, Alexander Haig. Yesterday morning, the Secret Service recommended that the President change his route in New Orleans. The President promptly agreed to do so.

A two-paragraph announcement of the recommendation that Mr. Nixon not make the motorcade trip was made in

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Washington yesterday morning. When asked about it, the Secret Service issued a second statement saying: "Over the past week we have received information over a possible conspiracy to assassinate the President during his visit to New Orleans this date.

It is highly unusual for the Secret Service to announce publicly any suggestions it makes to the President on his security.

Warner, the spokesman, said that in this case it was done to "anticipate inquiries" that were certain to be made if the route were changed. Warner also said some inquiries were made even before the route was changed, apparently prompted by a series of events in New Orleans which became known to newsmen there.

One of these was the police lookout for Gaudet. Another was the theft early yesterday morning of Superintendent Giarrusso's car. Still another was the theft of a policeman's uniform from another car. The three incidents were linked in early news accounts yesterday, but by late afternoon they appeared to be totally unrelated either to each other or to the plot under investigation.

Mr. Nixon had been scheduled to ride past a four-block section of historic Canal Street on his way to the convention center. He took an alternative route.

Security was tight during Mr. Nixon's brief visit in New Orleans. During the trip from the airport into town, a car of

security agents sped away from the motorcade and halted a bare-chested, tattooed youth who carried a bag along the road. At another point, a motorcycle patrolman pulled over beside a picnicking family by a roadside canal and watched them until the presidential limousine had passed, UPI reported.

A spokesman for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, after first declining to talk about the case, described it as "a very real threat" to the President's life. He refused to provide any details. In New Orleans, Superintendent Giarrusso declined to comment on what he knew of the possible plot.

Gaudet, the ex-policeman being sought in an apparently unrelated case, was the sub-

ject of a warrant issued in mid-afternoon. It said he "knowingly, willfully, and unlawfully made a threat to take the life of the President."

Gaudet had been suspended from the police force in May, 1967, after being in a fight in the French Quarter during which he illegally fired a gun. He was allowed to resign two months later.

In 1970, Gaudet, known as "Punchy," was arrested for lighting an American flag and trying to throw it on President Nixon's limousine.

Investigations of threats against a President number 15,000 or 16,000 a year, according to a Secret Service spokesman. Investigations of alleged conspiracies, in which more than one person is involved, are more unusual, he said.