

A36WX (BJT)

~~SECRET SERVICE~~ BUDGET (STORY-PICTURE PACKAGE) (1,250)

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WASHINGTON, DEC. 8 (AP)-SECRET SERVICE OFFICIALS HAVE SUGGESTED, PUTTING A COMPUTER TO WORK TO HELP DETECT, AND KEEP TRACK OF, POTENTIAL PRESIDENTIAL ASSASSINS.

THIS IS ONE OF THE FEW CONCRETE PROPOSALS TO COME OUT OF A SERIES OF MEETINGS BETWEEN SERVICE, TREASURY AND WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS, AN INFORMED SOURCE SAID TODAY, AND THERE IS SOME OPPOSITION TO IT BECAUSE:

1. IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED BEFORE AND TURNED DOWN, APPARENTLY BECAUSE OF FEAR THAT IT COULD BE USED TO SPY ON INNOCENT PERSONS;
2. IT PROBABLY WOULD NOT HAVE SPOTTED LEE HARVEY OSWALD, ACCUSED ASSASSIN OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY, UNLESS THE PRESENT MANUAL FILES WERE ENLARGED AND REVISED.

THE SERVICE HAS INTENSIFIED GREATLY ITS PROTECTIVE EFFORTS SINCE THE ASSASSINATION, BUT MOST OF THE ACTIONS TAKEN SO FAR APPARENTLY ARE ONLY EXPANSIONS OF EXISTING OPERATIONS, OR A RETURN TO PROCEDURES ABANDONED A YEAR OR TWO AGO.

FOR MORE THAN 60 YEARS THE SERVICE ENJOYED TOTAL SUCCESS DOING A JOB WHICH MOST EXPERTS SAY IS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE: KEEPING A PRESIDENT FROM HARM WITHOUT SHUTTING HIM OFF FROM THE PUBLIC. SINCE THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT WILLIAM MCKINLEY IN 1901 IT HAD A PERFECT RECORD--ALTHOUGH THERE WERE SOME CLOSE CALLS--UNTIL NOV. 22, 1963.

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WASHINGTON--FIRST ADD SECRET SERVICE BUDGET (A36) X X X NOV. 22, 1963.

THE SERVICE HAS NEVER BOASTED ABOUT ITS RECORD AND IT IS SILENT NOW IN THE FACE OF ITS FAILURE. LATE IN THE AFTERNOON OF THE FATEFUL FRIDAY KENNEDY WAS SHOT ON A DALLAS STREET, SECRET SERVICE CHIEF JAMES J. ROWLEY--WHO WAS APPOINTED TO THE JOB BY KENNEDY--PREPARED A STATEMENT FOR THE PRESS, BUT IT WAS NEVER ISSUED AND HE HAS NOT DIVULGED WHAT IT CONTAINED.

MANY AGENTS, MEN WITH TREMENDOUS ESPRIT DE CORPS AND DEDICATION TO THEIR JOB, FEEL THAT VERY FEW IMPROVEMENTS CAN BE MADE IN THE GUARD SYSTEM.

"WE'RE NOT GOING TO ABANDON PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES THAT WE HAVE BUILT UP OVER THE YEARS," AN AGENT SAID.

FOR YEARS THE SERVICE HAS OPERATED ON THE THEORY THAT NO RATIONAL PERSON WOULD ATTACK A PRESIDENT WITH ANY HOPE OF ESCAPING SINCE THE DEED WOULD HAVE TO BE CARRIED OUT IN THE OPEN IN THE PRESENCE OF POLICE. THEREFORE, THEY REASON, AN ASSASSIN HAS TO HAVE A CAUSE HE IS WILLING TO DIE FOR, OR HE HAS TO BE INSANE.

THE SERVICE, WITH THE AID OF THE FBI AND OTHER POLICE AGENCIES, CAN KEEP AN EYE ON MEMBERS OF ASSOCIATIONS WHO OFTEN REACH THE VERGE OF VIOLENCE.

HOWEVER, THE OTHER CATEGORY--THE MENTALLY DISTURBED--IS BY FAR THE GREATER DANGER, HISTORY SHOWS. IN A SURPRISING NUMBER OF CASES, PERSONS WHO HAVE ATTACKED PUBLIC FIGURES HAVE TIPPED THEIR HAND IN ADVANCE--USUALLY IN A ORAL OR WRITTEN THREAT.

A FEW YEARS AGO THE SERVICE HAD ON FILE THE NAMES OF 50,000 PERSONS WHO MADE SUCH THREATS, AND THE LIST GREW AT AN ACCELERATED RATE DURING THE THREE YEARS KENNEDY WAS PRESIDENT.

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WITH A COMPUTER SYSTEM, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO KEEP A VIRTUAL DAY-TO-DAY CHECK ON THOSE IN THE FILE CONSIDERED THE MOST DANGEROUS. ALSO, AGENTS IN THE SERVICE'S PROTECTIVE RESEARCH SECTION--WHICH KEEPS THIS FILE--BELIEVE COMPUTERS COULD BE USED FOR RESEARCH TO DEVELOP BETTER METHODS OF DETECTING DANGEROUS PERSONS AMONG THE DEMENTED.

AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES SAY THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT PRESENT METHODS COULD NOT HAVE WARNED OF OSWALD. HE APPEARED TO BE ON THE BORDER-LINE OF SEVERAL CATEGORIES; HE WAS NOT THE INSANE TYPE WHO SHOOTS WILDLY AT HIS TARGET IN THE MIDST OF A CROWD; HE DID NOT WRITE THREATENING LETTERS; HE SET UP HIS OWN FAIR PLAY FOR CUBA COMMITTEE, BUT IN GENERAL HE WAS A LONGER.

IT IS NOT KNOWN HOW CLOSELY THE SERVICE CHECKS ON DEFECTORS TO A COMMUNIST COUNTRY, A CATEGORY IN WHICH OSWALD FELL.

A COMPUTER SYSTEM COULD BE SET UP A GEOGRAPHIC BASIS SO THAT AGENTS COULD QUICKLY OBTAIN THE NAMES OF ALL POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS PERSONS IN A GIVEN AREA IN ADVANCE OF A PRESIDENTIAL VISIT.

HOWEVER, THIS SYSTEM PROBABLY WOULD HAVE FAILED IN THE CASE OF OSWALD SINCE THE LATEST FBI REPORT PLACED HIM IN NEW ORLEANS.

OSWALD APPARENTLY ESCAPED ANOTHER FORM OF SCRUTINY, AN "UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS" CHECK. HIS STATUS AS AN EMPLOYE IN THE WAREHOUSE LOCATED ALONG THE PRESIDENTIAL MOTORCADE ROUTE PERMITTED HIM TO ENTER WITHOUT BEING CHALLENGED. EVEN AFTER THE SHOOTING, REPORTS INDICATE THAT HE WAS PERMITTED TO LEAVE THE BUILDING FOR THE SAME REASON.

THE SERVICE, INCIDENTALLY, BELIEVES THAT OSWALD TOOK THE JOB A COUPLE OF MONTHS BEFORE ONLY BECAUSE HE NEEDED WORK, AND THAT IT WAS ONLY A COINCIDENCE THAT IT PUT HIM IN POSITION TO SHOOT THE PRESIDENT.

LIKE MOST POLICEMEN, THE AGENTS BELIEVE THAT ALL GUNS SHOULD BE REGISTERED. OF COURSE, EVERY GUN-OWNER COULD NOT BE CHECKED SINCE THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED 40 MILLION OR MORE, BUT THE SERVICE WOULD BE ABLE TO TELL WHEN A WEAPON REACHED THE HANDS OF A PSYCHOTIC. ALSO, SPECIAL CHECKS COULD BE MADE ON RIFLES FITTED WITH TELESCOPIC SIGHTS.

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AGAIN, REGISTRATION MIGHT NOT HAVE NETTED OSWALD. REPORTEDLY HE BOUGHT THE ITALIAN-MADE, 30-INCH-LONG CARBINE BY MAIL ORDER UNDER AN ASSUMED NAME. A STRICT REGISTRATION SYSTEM, HOWEVER, MIGHT HAVE SPOTTED THE ALIAS AND AROUSED SUSPICION.

THE SECRET SERVICE ALREADY HAS TAKEN THESE READILY DISCERNIBLE STEPS TO LENGTHEN THE ODDS ON PRESIDENTIAL SURVIVAL:

IT HAS RETURNED TO THE OLD SYSTEM--OFTEN ABANDONED AT KENNEDY'S ORDERS--OF PUTTING MOTORCYCLE POLICEMEN, IN FRONT OF THE PRESIDENT'S CAR; THE MOTORCADES WHICH CARRY PRESIDENT JOHNSON TO AND FROM THE WHITE HOUSE AND OTHER NEARBY POINTS NO LONGER OBSERVE TRAFFIC LIGHTS, AND THE TOP SPEED HAS BEEN RAISED FROM ABOUT 30 MILES PER HOUR TO 50;

THE PRESIDENT'S PHYSICIAN RIDES IN THE THIRD CAR INSTEAD OF FARTHER BACK IN THE CARAVAN;

ONLY SECRET SERVICE MEN ARE PERMITTED IN THE CAR WHICH FOLLOWS DIRECTLY BEHIND THE PRESIDENTIAL VEHICLE;

THE SERVICE ENLISTED THE AID OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO CHECK ON UPPER FLOORS OF GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS DURING THE KENNEDY FUNERAL.

BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION, THE SECRET SERVICE ALREADY WAS MAKING PLANS FOR A PROUD CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF ITS FOUNDING IN 1865.

IT WAS FOUNDED FOR THE PURPOSE OF CRACKING DOWN ON COUNTERFEITERS, WHO WERE TURNING OUT ABOUT A THIRD OF THE MONEY IN CIRCULATION IN THOSE DAYS.

IT HAS INVESTIGATED MAJOR SCANDALS SUCH AS LAND GRABS IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY AND THE TEAPOT DOME OIL SCANDAL IN THE 1920S, AND IT ENJOYED SUCCESS AS A COUNTERSPY AGENCY IN WORLD WAR I.

APPARENTLY, CONGRESS HAS ALWAYS FEARED THAT THE AGENCY MIGHT TURN INTO SOME KIND OF POLITICAL ARM, BECAUSE THE SERVICE HAS BEEN KEPT SMALL IN RELATION TO OTHER FEDERAL POLICE FORCES, AND ITS FUNCTIONS CONSTANTLY REVISED.

THE SECRET SERVICE SPENDS MOST OF ITS TIME AT PRESENT GUARDING THE PRESIDENT, CHASING COUNTERFEITERS, AND TRACING FORGED GOVERNMENT CHECKS AND GOVERNMENT SECURITIES.

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IT HAS ONLY 536 PERMANENT POSITIONS, INCLUDING OFFICE WORKERS AND OTHER NON-AGENTS, AND IN THE 1962-63 FISCAL YEAR SPENT ABOUT \$7.5 MILLION.

MANY OF THE AGENTS ARE SCATTERED ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN THE SERVICE'S 60 OFFICES. ONLY 75 TO 100 AGENTS ARE BELIEVED TO BE ASSIGNED TO GUARD THE PRESIDENT, ALTHOUGH THE NUMBER MAY HAVE BEEN STEPPED UP SHARPLY IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS.

THE SERVICE HAS PLENTY OF APPLICANTS FROM WHICH TO CHOOSE AGENTS, EVEN THOUGH OTHER, EASIER GOVERNMENT JOBS PAY BETTER. AGENTS, WHO MUST BE COLLEGE GRADUATES, MADE ABOUT \$6,700 ANNUALLY AT THE START AND PROBABLY AVERAGE SOME \$8,000 TO \$9,000 A YEAR.

ONLY LAST YEAR THE AGENCY WAS FORMALLY AUTHORIZED TO PROVIDE PROTECTION FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT, OR THE NEXT PERSON IN LINE OF SUCCESSION TO THE PRESIDENCY, AND HIS FAMILY.

EVERY AGENT MUST KEEP IN GOOD PHYSICAL CONDITION, LEARN JUDO AND OTHER FORMS OF SELF-DEFENSE, AND HE MUST PROVE HIS PROFICIENCY WITH FIREARMS EVERY MONTH.

AND EACH AGENT TAKES AN OATH THAT HE WILL SACRIFICE HIS LIFE, IF NECESSARY, TO PROTECT THE PRESIDENT.

FOR SUCH A TOUGH CREW, THEY GET SURPRISINGLY FEW COMPLAINTS.

A VETERAN WHITE HOUSE REPORTER SAID, "I'VE SEEN AN AGENT JUMP OFF THE RUNNING BOARD OF THE SECURITY CAR, GIVE A SHOVE TO A MAN WHO GOT TOO CLOSE TO THE LINE OF MARCH AND SEND HIM SPINNING INTO THE CROWD, AND THEN JUMP BACK ONTO THE CAR. AND, IT'S DONE SO FAST, EVEN THE MAN WHO WAS PUSHED HARDLY KNEW WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM."

THE AGENTS HAVE A LOT OF UNPUBLICIZED TRICKS THEY USE IN FINDING OUT WHETHER A SUSPICIOUS PERSON IN A CROWD HAS A WEAPON, AND THE PERSON IN QUESTION SELDOM KNOWS HE IS BEING CHECKED.

BESIDES THE CRANKS AND PLOTTERS, THE SECRET SERVICE MUST WORRY ABOUT FAULTY ELEVATORS, STRUCTURAL DEFECTS, FOOD POISONED BY ACCIDENT OR OTHERWISE, AND TRAFFIC MISHAPS.

THEY HAVE GONE FISHING WITH COOLIDGE, ROOSEVELT AND EISENHOWER, GOLFING WITH FOUR OR FIVE PRESIDENTS, AND THEY'VE PLAYED TOUCH FOOTBALL WITH THE KENNEDYS. THEY HAVE TAKEN A RIBBING FOR THEIR ROLE AS BABYSITTERS FOR THE KENNEDY CHILDREN.

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