

parade

on the cover:
PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON &
SECRET SERVICE DIRECTOR JAMES ROWLEY

How The Secret Service
Has Strengthened
Protection of the President
by Fred Blumenthal





Even among children, as here in Chicago's Field Museum, the President is virtually surrounded by guard of Secret Service agents. Other personages protected by the service, such as an ex-President, have between ten and 20 agents assigned to them around the clock.

A STRONGER SECRET SERVICE: Better Protection for the President

by Fred Blumenthal

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Secret Service is confident that, had its new intelligence system been in effect in 1963, the activities of Lee Harvey Oswald would have brought him to the attention of the Secret Service before the fatal attack on President Kennedy."

That single sentence from the October, 1969, report by the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, headed by Milton Eisenhower, spotlights the dramatic change that has come over the United States Secret Service as it enters on a new era of radical unrest and angry political confrontation.

Director James J. Rowley has brought

a whole new look to the 104-year-old Secret Service, and he acknowledges frankly that the change was necessitated by the rising wave of lawless demonstrations in our streets, by extremist threats of violent revolution.

A grave danger

"The Secret Service has become concerned about the rising crescendo of national militancy and confrontation, and instances of the preaching of assassination and violent revolution . . . in my view, the militancy of the dissident groups in our midst will increase in fervor. The questioning of all authority and the frequency of attempts at the dis-

ruption of our society will continue. This activity could generate a greater propensity for attacks upon our leaders."

Since the assassination of William McKinley in 1901, the Number One duty of the Secret Service has been to protect the life of the man who occupies the White House. The history of the United States has been scarred by political murder to an extent far greater than most Americans realize. Eight American Presidents — nearly one in four—have been the targets of assassins' bullets: Jackson, Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley, the two Roosevelts, Truman and Kennedy. As we know, four were

fatal attacks.

It is central to Rowley's credo that Presidential protection demands the highest national priority, because no crime strikes so directly at the heart of the democratic process as assassination of the Chief Executive. It enables one man, with a single savage act, to nullify the will of the people.

To meet the ever present threat that has been escalated by the unrest of our times, the Secret Service is rapidly expanding its protective forces—it has more than twice as many agents today (760) as it had when John F. Kennedy took office in 1961 (353). Rowley has intensified the already rugged training

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his men must undergo, and his intelligence system now includes a computerized list of extremists and crackpots whose words or actions have marked them for special attention as potential assassins. The computer now has a record of more than 100,000 names and it is adding about 100 new ones each week.

To beef up his protective service still more, Rowley has asked Congress for new legislation that would make it a Federal crime to stage "disorderly or disruptive" demonstrations that could interfere with the President in the performance of his duties, wherever he might be.

White House moves

Officially, the White House is wherever the President happens to be, whether in San Clemente, Calif., or Key Biscayne, Fla. But once outside Washington, D.C., only local authorities today have the power to arrest unruly demonstrators who might try to block the President's path or otherwise interfere with him.

Only recently, when President Nixon was visiting a Midwestern city, Secret Service agents were confounded by a stubborn citizen who refused to move from an area in which the President's car was to be parked. The Federal agents were legally powerless to compel him to move until they located a city policeman.

The Secret Service is even more concerned by the fact that intruders have more than once sneaked into the grounds of Mr. Nixon's San Clemente, and Key Biscayne "White Houses," even though the areas are guarded around the clock. None of the intruders who were caught was armed, so they had to be released, because existing law does not specifically forbid unauthorized entry into Presidential compounds outside Washington.

While the Secret Service has been vastly strengthened in recent years, its responsibilities have also been greatly enlarged. Following the murder of Bobby Kennedy in Los Angeles, during the early stages of the 1968 Presidential campaign, Congress rushed through legislation charging the service with the duty of protecting all major candidates for the Presidency and Vice Presidency.

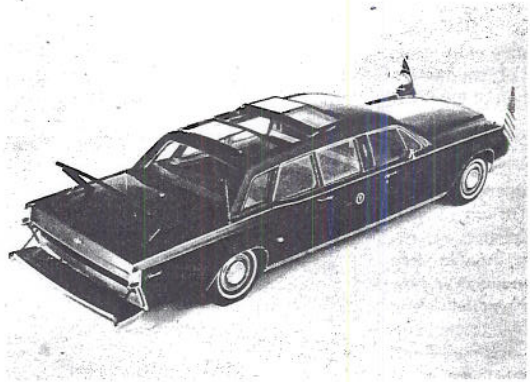
Busy life

In the ensuing months of that campaign, Rowley's agents seldom saw their families. Between June and Election Day, they put in a combined total of 270,384 hours of overtime duty guarding 11 candidates: Richard M. Nixon and Spiro T. Agnew, Hubert H. Humphrey and Edmund Muskie, George Wallace and Gen. Curtis LeMay, to say nothing of Senators Eugene McCarthy and George McGovern, Governors Nelson Rockefeller and Ronald Reagan, and the perennial Harold Stassen.

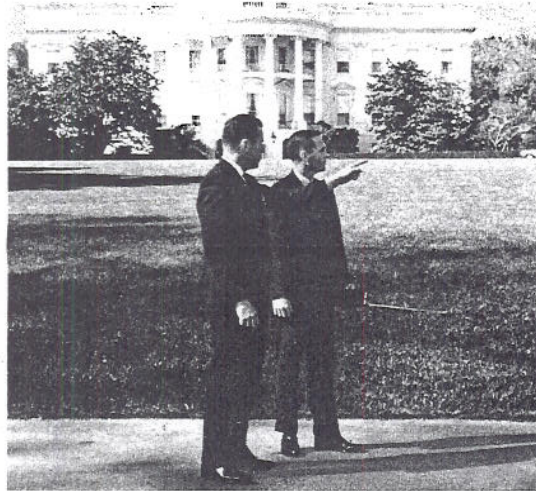
One special agent, Thomas K. Wooge,



Gun practice is vital in training men. Here, an agent shoots from a moving car. Israeli-made submachine guns are carried in attaché cases.



Presidential car's many security features include rear bumper that doubles as an agent's platform. Presidential boxes at the Kennedy Cultural Center may have bullet-proof glass.



A new Secret Service agent is receiving special instructions regarding the security in a particular White House location.



Through the communications center in the intelligence division of Secret Service, agents send or receive instructions.

died of a heart attack while making advance arrangements for a candidate; others were punched and kicked while escorting candidates through unruly crowds, and one was knocked down by a moving automobile. Some of the agents who accompanied General LeMay to Vietnam in October, 1968, returned home suffering from intestinal disorders and complete physical exhaustion which a doctor who had been a military flight surgeon described as comparable to combat fatigue.

Right now, the Secret Service is gearing up for the 1972 Presidential campaign, which Rowley anticipates will be even more arduous in the light of the steadily escalating militancy of extremist groups. Since it takes three years to train a Secret Service agent in both protective and investigative techniques, Rowley feels that now is none too soon.

Rowley estimates his budget for the

1970 fiscal year, which ends next June 30, at \$27,400,000, which is over \$5,000,000 more than the figure for the previous year and there is little doubt that still more funds will be needed in the future as the service expands its responsibilities.

Extend protection?

The National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence has recommended that Secret Service protection be extended to cover a limited number of Federal officeholders and candidates (beyond President and Vice President) whose lives might be considered in danger as a result of "threat, vilification, deep controversy, or other hazardous circumstances." That might include Government representatives sent abroad on Presidential missions, such as Nelson Rockefeller on his 1969 mission to South America, which was marked by violent anti-American dem-

onstrations in several places.

Still another workload may be developing for Rowley's forces as a result of the disturbances that attended French President Georges Pompidou's recent visit to the United States. President Nixon, disturbed by this, is said to be preparing a legislative recommendation that would extend Secret Service protection to high-ranking foreign visitors, such as prime ministers and heads of state.

The White House police force, which is the uniformed arm of the Secret Service, is already being expanded from 250 to 850 men to take on its new duty of guarding the more than 130 foreign embassies and chanceries in Washington. That responsibility is now handled by Washington's metropolitan police force which will be able to release more men to patrol the capital's crime-ridden streets when the transfer of duties is completed.

SECRET SERVICE CONTINUED

A key feature of the new look in the Secret Service is the accelerated program of training and refresher training introduced by Rowley. Every agent, no matter how long he has been in the service, must train constantly to update his proficiency in all phases of Secret Service work, from investigation of counterfeiters to protection of the President.

Secret Service training includes both classroom (psychology, for example, to help agents spot disturbed persons in a campaign crowd), and field work (how to jump on and off a moving car, how to shoot accurately and quickly with handguns, shotguns and submachine guns), and their proficiency in all subjects is constantly checked. An agent must also be a driver of far above average skill, and the men who drive in Presidential cavalcades undergo continuous re-evaluation and re-training.

'In our back seat'

"We've got plenty of motivation to improve," says one agent. "The President of the United States rides in our back seat."

Construction is under way now on a new outdoor training facility near Beltsville, Md., where outdoor firing ranges are being provided, along with a one-street "town" which Rowley likes to refer to as "Hogan's Alley," consisting of two rows of false-front buildings lining a single street. The idea is that an agent rides down the street in an automobile, a figure pops out of one of the buildings, and the agent's reaction is determined: how fast did he fire, did he hit the target?

The Beltsville facility will be used by all Federal enforcement agencies, except the FBI, which maintains its own training grounds at Quantico, Va., but the Secret Service will be its Number One "customer."

Every agent has been schooled in the history of political murder, both here and abroad. They know, for instance, that in Japan political assassination is almost always carried out with the knife or sword, in America with the handgun, save only for the rifle-slaying of President Kennedy. America has seldom witnessed an assassination conspiracy—only the killing of Lincoln and the unsuccessful

attempt on Harry S. Truman's life involved organized conspirators.

The Commission on Violence notes that there is no discernible pattern of political assassination in America which might serve as a guide to the men who must protect our leaders:

"To the extent that a pattern exists at all, it exists in the personalities of those who have been Presidential assassins. In the biographies of these lonely, demented men we may discern common elements that help to explain their actions. From those common elements we may begin to draw a picture of the

archetypal assassin":

- Comes from a broken home, with the father absent or unresponsive to the child.
- Withdrawn personality, a loner, no girlfriends, unmarried or a failure at marriage.
- Unable to work steadily in the last year or so before the assassination.
- White, male, foreign-born or with foreign-born parents, short, slight of build.
- A zealot for a political, religious, or other cause, but not a member of an organized movement.
- Kills in the name of a specific issue related to the principles or philosophy or his cause.
- Chooses a handgun as his weapon.
- Selects a moment when the President is appearing amid crowds.

The next attempt on a President's life — and unfortunately it is a statistical inevitability — could, however, come from a wholly different source. This, obviously, is what makes the job of the Secret Service so difficult.

One thing is certain: Rowley is not going to rely on the method of Presidential self-protection that Harry S. Truman once described to this reporter.

Back in 1948 I was interviewing him on the subject of security, and the salty old Missourian told in vivid detail how he would handle a would-be assassin.

Recalls Jackson

Mr. Truman recalled that one of his favorite American heroes, Andrew Jackson, was attacked by a deranged house painter named Richard Lawrence, whose pistol misfired twice at point-blank range. Jackson wrested the gun from his assailant's hand and beat him to the ground with his cane.

Seated behind the huge table in the White House Cabinet room, Mr. Truman reflected a moment and said:

"I'm the best-protected man in the world. But if, through some freak accident, an assassin were to burst through that door with a gun in his hand, I know what I would do.

"He'd expect me to duck down and hide under this table. But I'd throw him off base. I'd do what Andy Jackson did. I would rush him, grab the gun away from him, and shove it down his throat."

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