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Suspect Said to Have Shouted: 'Hey, George! Come Over Here!'

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LAUREL, Md., May 15 — George C. Wallace was shot while standing at the new crossroads of middle America today, between the drive-in bank and variety store of a suburban shopping center.

The suspected assailant, a young white man, called the Alabama Governor over to him after Mr. Wallace had stepped from behind his bullet-proof speaking stand and come down to shake hands with the crowd of about 1,000.

"Hey, George! Hey, George! Come over here, come over here!" the man shouted insistently, according to several witnesses. The man had been standing against the ropes that

cleared a space for security guards and reporters between the crowd and the small parking lot speaking stand.

Mr. Wallace heard the shouts and veered to his left, working his way down the line of admirers. He came first to Mrs. Brigitte Howkins of Hyattsville, a plump matron, who reached out for a shorter man in front of her, took Mr. Wallace's hand and said: "Good luck, Governor Wallace."

"He smiled at me," Mrs. Howkins recalled later, "dropped my hand and reached out for another when the man who had been standing on my

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right lifted his right arm and suddenly there were shots."

Mr. Wallace fell to the asphalt parking surface and lay on his back in the brilliant sunshine. Witnesses said he was bleeding from the chest and appeared also to have been struck in the right arm.

His wife, Cornelia, knelt over him.

Karen Yengich, a 25-year old reporter for The Laurel News Leader, said when she heard the shots "I thought it was tear gas for demonstrators or something like that. Then suddenly the crowd was surging toward me and people were shouting 'He's been shot, he's been shot.' I got scared, my legs got weak—I thought I'd get stomped to death. It was my first day on the job here."

Crowd Hovers

Miss Yengich said that when she got to the wounded candidate the crowd was hovering over him and blood trickled down his arm.

"His wife was crying, she had this grief-stricken look, and she had blood on the top of her suit. It seemed to me a long time before the ambulance came, but I looked at the

clock and it was only five minutes."

Miss Yengich added, "I never thought I would see anything like this, especially in Laurel. It's a small community. It's probably Wallace country. I mean, it's middle America."

Moments after the shooting, which witnesses said occurred shortly after 4 o'clock, the Laurel Rescue Squad, a volunteer organization, arrived at the shopping center with an ambulance. The Governor was put aboard and the ambulance sped away.

Others Wounded

Although reports were still uncertain in the evening, it appeared that three other people had been injured, two of them slightly and one perhaps seriously.

Al Steineker of Montgomery, Ala., a member of the Governor's staff, reported later that Capt. E. C. Dothard of the Alabama State Police, the head of the Wallace personal security detail, had been grazed in the side by a bullet.

Mr. Steineker also reported that a woman campaign worker, whom he tentatively identified as Dora Johnston, had been nicked in the leg by a bullet. He said a Secret Service agent in the detail assigned to Wallace, whom he knew only as Nick, had been wounded in the throat. State police identified him as Nicholas Zorvas.

The afternoon Wallace rally, which was almost over when the shooting occurred, had taken place in sparkling mid-summer weather in a setting that could have been any suburban shopping center in the country.

A small speakers' stand of red, white and blue, with a sign "Laurel Shopping Center" across the top, had been set up just behind the Equitable Trust Company, a white brick building in the center of the parking area.

Bullet Proof Podium

An hour after the shooting, the bullet proof podium that Mr. Wallace customarily carries to every rally he addresses, was still standing on the platform, with a large vase of red roses in front of it.

After the Governor had been rushed to the hospital by ambulance, the shopping center was full of eyewitnesses, many of them young people anxious to talk to reporters.

One of these, Gary Mills, a tall teen-ager with long blond

hair, said he had seen blood on the right arm of Governor Wallace immediately after the shooting. He described how the police had pounced on the alleged assailant and dragged him out of the crowd, amid shouts of "Get him!" and "Get that bastard!"

A number of those present at the shooting described the revolver fire as "like firecrackers," a description common among witnesses to the shooting of Senator Robert F. Kennedy in Los Angeles in 1968.

The onlookers who had seen the assailant described him as of medium height and with very light, almost white, short hair. One witness said "he was the kind of guy you would call whitey."

Immediately after the shots were fired Walter Houkins, the husband of the woman who had just shaken Mr. Wallace's hand, dove at the gunman and grabbed him by the leg. Almost immediately, four or five members of the Prince Georges County police department leaped upon the alleged assailant and some pummeling ensued.

At a news conference about two hours after the shooting, Capt. James Ross of the Prince Georges County Police Department told reporters "We removed the agitator."

Versions Differ

The police reported later that the shooting had taken place at between 4:20 and 4:30 P.M., but witnesses maintained that the time was only a few minutes after 4.

According to the police version, the gunman fired five bullets at very close range before he was wrestled to the ground. "We wanted to get him out of there as fast as we could because the crowd was menacing," Captain Ross said. "He was removed for his own protection."

Seconds after the gunman was seized and Governor Wallace fell to the pavement, a revolver was found lying on the ground between the two men.

Shortly after the shooting, the clear Maryland skies began to cloud over darkly, and in less than two hours a torrential thunderstorm descended suddenly on the shopping center washing discarded bumperstickers and buttons into the gutters and dampening multi-colored pennants that had hung over the parking space all afternoon.



AFTER SPEECH: Gov. George C. Wallace leaving podium and removing jacket on way to shake hands at Laurel, Md.