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Reagan called 'stable'

Press aide Brady in critical condition

WASHINGTON (AP) — Pres. Ronald Reagan is in "good and stable" condition today after being shot Monday in the left side of the chest. The president's press secretary James Brady was shot in the head and remained in "critical" condition early this morning.

A Secret Service agent and a Washington policeman were also shot.

Brady, 40, was shot in the left forehead. The bullet passed completely through his brain, and doctors at George Washington University Medical Center said he has suffered "extensive brain damage."

John Hinckley Jr., 25, of Evergreen, Colo., was arraigned Monday night in Washington on federal charges of attempting to assassinate a president and a local assault-with-intent-to-kill charge.

Secret Service agent Jack Warner said Hinckley fired a .38 caliber revolver. It was also reported that Hinckley had been arrested last fall in Nashville with three guns and 50 rounds of ammunition at the same time then-Pres. Jimmy Carter was campaigning in Nashville.

Hinckley's family also said the man was in the care of a private psychiatrist.

Vice Pres. George Bush, who was in Texas for an address to the Texas Legislature, rushed back to Washington aboard Air Force Two after the shooting.

Reagan underwent surgery to explore his abdomen and

remove the bullet Monday evening. Doctors proclaimed the surgery a success and said Reagan was "never in any danger."

The president reportedly walked from his limousine to the hospital, and was said to have been joking on the way to the operating room and following surgery.

The bullet entered Reagan's left side just under the armpit, ricocheted off the seventh rib and lodged in his left lung. The lung reportedly collapsed.

The bullet passed one inch from the president's heart.

Six shots — within two seconds — were fired at the president as he emerged from the Washington Hilton Hotel after delivering a speech to a union convention. The burst of gunfire sounded as he walked smiling to his limousine and turned to acknowledge the shouts of "Mr. President" from the press corps.

Reagan appeared momentarily stunned as Secret Service agents drew their weapons and hustled Reagan into the limousine. One shot apparently hit the auto before Reagan got in, blasting a hole in the rear window.

Initial reports issued by deputy press secretary Larry Speakes said "there was some pushing and shoving when the president went into the car, but the president was not seriously hurt."

After the shots were fired,



Emerald photo

Pres. Ronald Reagan, who visited the University last spring during his campaign, is reported in "good and stable" condition after being wounded by an assassin.

there was a scream and then agents shouted "back up, back up, get back, get back!" Brady was lying on the sidewalk several feet from the entrance to the hotel.

ABC TV cameraman Hank Brown, who was near the alleged assailant, said the gunman "just opened up and started firing," about 10 feet from Reagan.

"He just opened up and continued squeezing the trigger," Brown said. He said the assailant did not say anything. Brown said the man appeared to have "penetrated the press corps."

Hospital representative Den-

nis O'Leary said the president's operation was "a relatively simple procedure," aided by the president's excellent health. He said the president had come through "with flying colors."

O'Leary said "prospects for a complete recovery are excellent."

He said the president is likely to be hospitalized two weeks, and it may be three months before the president is back to 100 percent physical health.

Brady was reported "fighting for his life." Spokespersons said the damage to his brain was "extensive."

Secret Service agent Timothy McCarthy, 31, was listed in ser-

ious but stable condition. Washington D.C. patrolman Thomas Delacanty was reported in serious but stable condition.

Secretary of State Alexander Haig showed up unannounced at an afternoon press conference to pronounce himself in charge until the vice president returned from Texas.

Later, after arriving from Texas, Bush assured the American people and a watching world that the "American government was operating fully and effectively."

Bush was given extra security in an effort to guarantee his safety.

Assassin fits into 'pattern,' prof says

By GABRIEL BOEHMER
Of the Emerald

When University history Prof. Richard Brown learned early Monday afternoon that Pres. Ronald Reagan was a would-be assassin's target, he went to his Eugene home and waited for the phone to ring.

That was understandable.

Brown, chair of the University's history department, is one of the nation's leading experts on American vigilantism and violence. He is a frequent target himself — for hungry scholars and writers on the subject. And in the aftermath of the attempted assassination of the president, he was the target of the media.

Brown began studying violence in the late 1950's at Harvard University. He went on to publish several scholarly essays and books on the subject. And during 1968-69 he served as a consultant to two task forces of the Eisenhower Commission on violence.

"In one sense I'm not surprised by this (assassination attempt)," he said late Monday afternoon. "This fits into an historical pattern."

"If I was forced to make a guess, not only does this fit the prototype of presidential assassination attempts, it reminds me of the successful assassination attempt of John Lennon," he says. "There was no reason the person should have done this."

"I've had a historical perspective on assassinations. The pattern continues."

Presidents have been frequent targets of would-be assassins. Andrew Jackson was the first in the 1830's. Nine other attempts followed, four were successful — only one in the 20th century.

The key to that pattern, Brown says, is the would-be assassin has had some degree of mental instability and a superficial political motivation.

***'It's like a tree drawing lightning.
The biggest target you can find in
the United States is the president.'***

"I would be surprised if Hinckley (the 25-year-old gunman who allegedly wounded Reagan) was part of a political movement."

Why have presidents been such frequent targets of assailants?

"It's like a tree drawing lightning," Brown explains. "The biggest target you can find in the United States is the president."

"Our presidents are vulnerable targets. After the chief executive of the nation, the rate (of attempted

assassinations) falls off sharply."

Only one Supreme Court justice has ever been an assassin's target, Brown says. Two Senators have been victims of assassination: Huey Long in the 1930's, and Robert Kennedy in 1968. And Brown says Kennedy was more vulnerable because he was a presidential candidate.

Although Brown says there is a historical pattern in presidential assassination attempts, "by and large, political assassination has not become part of our political system."

He suggests comparing the United States to some Third World countries where assassinations and coups are part of the nuts and bolts of government.

Another perspective on Monday's presidential ambush was provided by Republican National Committeeman and Eugene businessman Peter Murphy, a friend of Reagan.

"When you're a person of that stature in the political arena, it's a liability — there's no safe place," Murphy says. "I've been around President Reagan enough to know his concern about working with the public at any cost."

And this incident should not change the president's visibility to the public, Murphy says.

"It's there when you're president," Murphy says. "Yet you can't run a government from a fishbowl."