

**People's Democratic Republic of Algeria**

**Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**

**8 MAI 1945 UNIVERSITY / GUELMA**

**جامعة 8 ماي 1945 / قالمة**

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**قسم الآداب و اللغة الانجليزية**



**Option: Civilization**

**The Impact of the Kennedy Assassination on the Evolution of  
the US Secret Service's Protective Mission**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language and Culture**

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**June 2018**

### **Acknowledgements**

I thank God giving me the patience and courage to achieve this level.

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Mr. ATY Mourad for the continuous support and assistance of my dissertation , for his motivation, patience, and immense knowledge. His instructions and guidance helped me in writing this research.

Many thanks to the jury member.

My inner gratitude to my teacher Mrs. BARES Meryem for encouraging me along of my studies.

I would also thank Mr. CHETTIBI Mouhammed Walid and Mrs. BENDJEMIL Khoula who provide me with considerable assistance. I express also my gratitude to all teachers of the English Department.

To all my Colleges thanks for the encouragement and friendship.

### **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my Parents who support me to achieve my dreams and ambitions. I dedicate this dissertation to my brothers Lockman and Fathi Abd Elghani for their motivation . Special dedication to my lovely sister Ilhem for her great assistance and patience. My special and unique dedication to my mother for her love, tenderness, motivation, and encouragement, despite her illness.

## **Abstract**

This research highlights the circumstances that led to the creation of the USSS and the evolution of its double missions. Besides, this work provides an overview of the new service of security that the agency offered to the U.S presidents throughout history. Besides, this research shows the effect of political figures' assassinations on the evolution of the USSS protective duty, particularly the Kennedy Assassination which changed the Agency to be more professional in dealing with threats and attacks against its protectees. This dissertation focuses largely on the USSS failure in protecting President JFK and the gradual change that the Agency was forced to make. This work also provides a description to the different security measures that the USSS depends on today to protect the President as well as other protectees.

## المخلص

يسلط هذا العمل الضوء على الظروف التي أدت إلى إنشاء الخدمة السرية الأمريكية و تطور مهمتها المختلفتين. بالإضافة إلى ذلك يقدم هذا البحث نظرة عامة حول تاريخ الخدمة الأمنية الجديدة التي وفرتها وكالة الخدمة السرية لرؤساء الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية. كما يظهر هذا العمل تأثير اغتيال الشخصيات السياسية على تطور مهمة الحماية الموكلة إلى الخدمة السرية و بالتحديد اغتيال الرئيس كينيدي الذي كان له تأثيرا كبيرا في تغيير الوكالة لتصبح أكثر احترافية في التعامل مع التهديدات و الهجمات الموجهة ضد الأشخاص المحميين من طرفها. يركز هذا العمل بشكل كبير على فشل الخدمة السرية في حماية الرئيس الراحل كينيدي و التغيير التدريجي الذي أجبرت الوكالة على القيام به. يقدم هذا البحث أيضا وصفا لمختلف التدابير الأمنية المعتمدة الآن من طرف الخدمة السرية الأمريكية لحماية الرئيس بالإضافة إلى أشخاص آخرين.

## Résumé

Cette recherche met en évidence les circonstances qui ont conduit à la création du Service Secret Américain et à l'évolution de sa double mission. Ce travail fournit un aperçu du nouveau service de sécurité que l'agence a offert aux Présidents américains à travers l'histoire. En outre, ce mémoire montre l'effet des assassinats de personnalités politiques sur l'évolution de la mission de protection de l'USSS, en particulier l'assassinat de Kennedy qui a changé l'Agence pour être plus professionnelle dans le traitement des menaces et des attaques contre ses protégés. Ce mémoire s'est concentré en grande partie sur l'échec de l'USSS dans la protection du président JFK et le changement progressif que l'Agence a subi. Ce travail donne également, une description des différentes mesures de sécurité dont l'USSS dépend aujourd'hui pour protéger le président ainsi que d'autres protégés.

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### **List of Abbreviations**

APITP: Advanced Pistol Instructor Training Program  
ASTITP: Active Shooter Threat Instructor Training Program  
BTITP: Basic Tactics Instructor Training Program  
CAT: Counter Assault Team  
CITP: Criminal Investigation Training Program  
CS: Counter Snipers  
CVCTP: Commercial Vehicle Counterterrorism Training Program  
DHS: Department Homeland Security  
ECSAP: Electronic Crimes Special Agent Program  
ERT: Emergency Response Team  
FAMTP: Federal Air Marshal Training Program  
FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation  
FLETC: Federal Law Enforcement Training Center  
HSC: House Select Committee  
ID: Intelligence Division  
JFK: John F. Kennedy  
JJRTC: James J. Rowley Training Center  
K-9: Canine Explosives Detection Unit  
LMPT: The Land Management Police Training  
NSSEs: National Special Security Events  
SSD: Secret Service Division  
SWAT: Special Weapons and Tactics Team  
TD: Treasury Department  
UD: Uniformed Division  
UPTP: Uniformed Police Training Program  
USB PI: United States Border Patrol Integrated  
US: United States  
USSS: United States Secret Service  
VIP: Very Important Person

WC: Warren Commission

## **Introduction**

The US Secret Service is one of the oldest law enforcement agencies in America. It was instituted as an anti counterfeiting Agency to save the financial system of the state. Over the years, the Agency succeeded to conserve the American Dollar which motivated the Congress to put more confidence and responsibilities on the newly established Agency. The US Secret Service duty was expanded to include the investigation of other kind of financial crimes. Besides, the technological development was an advantage for the US Secret Service to carry out its mission successfully gaining more time and effort. As time passed, the Agency controlled counterfeiting showing high skills and capabilities to preserve one of the most important symbols of the country which is the Dollar.

After a long history of violent attacks, murder, and assassinations against US Presidents and political leaders, the Agency was assigned to provide protection for the Commander in Chief in addition to other protectees. With their little experience in the protective duty, Secret Service agents were dealing with many potential threats as well as the Presidents who were refusing the protection since they needed their space. However, the Secret Service agents' presence around the country's leader became a must which he was required to cope with. The JFK assassination was a devastating incident for the USSS since it failed to protect the national leader. Secret Service agents could not believe that their tour with the President in Texas would end by accompanying his casket back to Washington. The murder of a US leader under the Secret Service protection was debatable and critical.

The JFK assassination is the worst crime of the twentieth century and the most shocking experience in the history of the USSS. After the tragedy, it was necessary for the US government to assign specialized committees to investigate the President's murder. The Warren Commission

and the House Select Committee had different conclusions and reports but they agreed that the USSS was deficient in performing its protective duty including, the poor preparation for the presidential trip, the inclusion of inexperienced agents in the motorcade, and the late response to the attack. The Committees' findings were an urgent call for the Secret Service to rethink its security measures.

Historians and former Secret Service agents have been analyzing the effect of the assassination on reshaping the USSS's protective duty. One of the major works that has discussed the evolution of the USSS protection mission is Shawn Reese's book, entitled *US Secret Service: An Examination and Analysis of its Evolving Mission*. This book shows the circumstances which lead to the changes in both the investigative as well as the protective mission throughout history. In addition, James Ohwofasa Akpeninor in his book *Modern Concept of Security* sheds light on the way Secret Service has changed and how tough the period following the JFK assassination was, but it did not highlight the change that occurred in the Agency.

Thus, former agent Clint Hill who served in JFK's detail and witnessed the assassination collaborated with Lisa McCubbin to write a book entitled *Five Days in November*, in which the agent talks about those days before the assassination and his sense of guilt because he failed to do his job. Among the major questions that drive this research work, the following will be profoundly examined: What are the US Secret Service missions? Under which circumstances the Secret Service became responsible for the president's protection? What is the impact of the Kennedy assassination on the US Secret Service evolution? What are the new ways adopted by the Agency to prevent harming the Commander in Chief? This dissertation will discuss the evolution of the protective mission since the JFK assassination and the strong impact of the

murder on the Secret Service protective duty. The study will provide an understanding to the circumstances that led to the failure of the Secret Service to protect President JFK and how they will overcome it. Further, this research will provide an idea about the Secret Service before and after the JFK murder. The work will also highlight whether the USSS is capable of holding two sensitive missions or not.

The research would be conducted through both historical and qualitative methods aiming at explaining the evolution of the US Secret Service protective duty throughout history. This study is based on the historical approach to explore different facts and reasons leading to the change in the protective mission by means of a detailed investigation of the JFK assassination case study. The qualitative method is used to collect data and provide interpretation of the reports and investigation done after the President JFK assassination. The dissertation is divided into three chapters, in which the historical background of the US secret service missions is discussed in chapter one. The JFK assassination is highlighted in chapter two, and chapter three is concerned with the change that the Agency forced to make after the JFK murder.

## Chapter One

### Historical Background of the US Secret Service

The United States Secret Service (USSS) carries out a double-mission, protection plus criminal investigations, both are commanded by the American legislative body. The USSS has developed from a small bureau to contest counterfeiting to one of the most powerful and vigorous law enforcement Agency in the country. Since its foundation in 1865, the USSS was a part of the Treasury Department (TD) then the Congress relocated the Agency to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2003. Agents hold the most sensitive duties in which the financial system and the American currency must be protected, crimes must be investigated, and they should be a human shield for the Commander in Chief who symbolizes the whole nation (Reese 2).

The Agency has two heavy, tough, and challenging missions which require deep ideals and principles. These principles are represented through the Agency's Star Seal which summarizes them into five gist values; Justice, Duty, Courage, Honesty, and Loyalty. Both USSS core values and motto "Worthy of Trust and Confidence" are key principles that all Secret Service agents have pledged the oath to defend. Today the USSS investigates financial corruption and protects the state's leaders, where both responsibility and accuracy are required (*US DHS 2*). The US government assigned the most trusted individuals to save both the American Dollar and President.

The USSS was instituted in July 5th, 1865 in Washington DC as the first domestic intelligence and counterintelligence Agency to fight and investigate counterfeiting. Its first responsibility was to secure the integrity of the state's financial system, because after the Civil War the bulk of approximately 1/3 of the American Dollar in circulation was forged. Over time,

the mission has stretched out to inquest fraud concerning electronic funds transfer, financial access device, telecommunication, identity, and telemarketing fraud, as well as computer plus electronic crimes (Akpeninor 155). The investigative mission is a back up for the protective one since it encompasses the investigation of threats against USSS protectees.

### **1- The Investigative Mission**

By the end of the American Civil War, one third of the US currency was fake. It is in 1865 where President Abraham Lincoln established the Secret Service as a division in the Treasury Department to stop counterfeiting and save the nation's economy. The Agency's first chief was William P. Wood, a superintendent of the Old Capitol Prison, and a veteran of the Mexican American War. Treasury Secretary Hugh McCulloch addressed the new chief stating that "Your main objective is to restore public confidence in the money of the country" (CW Production LTD). Counterfeiting was costing America a lot and the USSS was required to put an end to it (Reese 6). The USSS creation was a necessity to save the nation's economy.

Among the first responsibilities of the Secret Service Division (SSD) is to chase William E. Brockway alias the King of Counterfeiters who was proficient in faking the American Dollar, chief wood traced him to his dwell in New York. Brockway was sentenced and locked up. After two years of the hard work, the USSS had fundamentally dominated counterfeiting, which was not an easy task that is why the US press praised the Agency. "The professional criminal never willingly falls in the way of the Secret Service, the chase is as relentless as death, and only death or capture ends it" (qtd. in Kessler). The Secret Service success reflects its tough work as well as the agents averment that chasing criminals will end whether by arresting or killing them but never missing their target (Kessler). The newly established Agency proved its competency in dealing with financial crimes.



The Secret Service achievements led to the extension of its investigative duty. In 1871, it had started the investigation of the Ku Klux Klan terrorist activities. With eight agents and in a period of three years the USSS succeeded to arrest more than a thousand members and leaders of the Klan. In addition, the secret service was tasked to investigate smugglers, nonconforming distillers, mail robbers and other violations against the law. The investigation mission evolved to include the investigation of both the US neutrality violations that are related to the World War I and fraud of the western land. Due to the technological development the USSS started a new kind of probes involving telemarketing fraud, identity theft, and transgression linked to charge card using a highly developed technology (Butler 76). Through the investigative mission the Secret Service agents could control many crimes and arrest thousands of criminals.

One of the intelligent programs that is applied by the USSS is the Electronic Crimes Special Agent Program (ECSAP), during their training, special agents should deal with the basic investigations concerning electronic violations. The ECSAP program offers special agents with highly and advanced training through which they become technically competent agents to fight technical crimes. Moreover, the USSS investigative mission involves probes of threats against the first leader of the country, Secret Service agents are ready all the time to evaluate, react, and investigate any threat against the President. After the USSS victory to accomplish its investigative duty properly the Congress assigned the Agency with broader responsibility including the protection of the President (Patterson 336). Secret Service agents must acquire technological programs and techniques to deal with all kinds of financial crimes.

## **2. The Protective Mission**

The most noticeable and observable role of the USSS is to safeguard the President; the protection mission symbolizes the significance and the strength of the US highest office. Today,

the President of the United States of America cannot do his job without being accompanied with the USSS, but the President was not always safeguarded. Many incidents such as political assassinations had forced the Agency to carry out the most risky duty which is protecting the President.

Throughout the war against Britain, General George Washington commended the creation of lifeguard to shield him together with, the money and formal papers of the armed forces. The first condition for an individual to be a personal guard was that, he should have the desire to protect and guard the chief General plus being competent soldiers. Washington was not afraid of assassination but hijacking attempts were his main concern, because he himself had a series of failed plans of kidnapping the enemy's Generals. Moreover, the duty of those guards was to insure the safety of their General especially while checking his troops and to accompany him wherever he went (Ward 59-61). American Generals were not terrified from assassination since kidnapping was a major phenomenon.

### **2.1. President Abraham Lincoln's Assassination 1865**

On April 1st, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth. The President was in Washington DC watching a play at Ford's Theatre. While everyone was concentrating on the play, Booth sneaked to Lincoln's privet box which was unguarded and he shot the President in the head (Wallenfeldt). John Frederick Parker one of the Washington cops who were responsible for guarding the President's privet box, wanted to watch the play from a different location so he left his guard position and the way was clear for the assassin. Lincoln died in the early morning of the next day (Crighton 23). If Parker did not live his guard position Booth would not be able to reach the President's privet box and murdered him.

## **2.2. President James Garfield's Assassination 1881**

President James Garfield was also a victim of assassination. On July 2nd, 1881, Garfield decided to make a trip to New Jersey, while he was in the railroad station Charles Guiteau shot him. Guiteau blamed the president for not giving him an employment (Gunderson 28). The President did not die and doctors searched for the bullet in his back trying to locate it. Alexander Graham Bell also interfered to provide help through his metal detector, but the bullet was deeply imbedded in the president's body and it could not be located as such. Surgeons unwashed hands by which they probed the wound of the President caused an infection that killed him (*America's Library* 1-2). Protection was a necessity for the US Presidents since many of them were subject to murder and assassination.

In 1894, President Grover Cleveland was receiving menacing letters from a group of gamblers to assassinate him. The USSS appointed two agents to protect President Cleveland, they followed him wherever he went, after a short period of time the President refused the protection because of the criticism that he has received from his opposition. However, the threatening letters became greater than before, the President's wife saw that the White House should have extra protection making the President agree with her. The police officers were augmented from three to twenty seven in the Presidential residency. In the same year the Agency started to enhance the protection of the President (Kessler). Protection was not well accepted by President Cleveland Unlike his wife who tried always to convince him that in some situations protection was a must.

## **2.3. President William McKinley's Assassination 1901**

William McKinley was the third American President to be assassinated. On September 6th, 1901, President McKinley visited Buffalo in order to attend the Pan-American Exposition. Leon

F. Czolgosz was among the people who waited to see and greet President McKinley. When it was Czolgosz's turn to shake the President's hand, he pulled out a hidden pistol and shot McKinley twice. Eight days later the President died as a result of gangrene (*Biography. Com Editors*). President McKinley also was eschewing personal protection since he appeared many times in public alone. However, Congress asked the secret service to provide protection for both US Commander in Chief and vice President in 1901 after McKinley's murder (*CBS News*). The Congress did not act till a third president was murdered.

### **3. US Presidents after Receiving Secret Service Protection**

After the assassination of President McKinley, Theodore Teddy Roosevelt became the first American President to be guarded by the USSS. He decided to attend McKinley's funeral before taking the oath of office, when he went into his wagon he saw many guards ready to accompany him but he refused their protection. The guards respected his wish and he went alone without any protection. President Roosevelt preferred to be alone rather than being surrounded by many agents, since the nature of the American society and politics that looked for being unique could not be in accordance with the implications of the protective mission (Ayton 173-176). Roosevelt could not accept the fact of being watched all the time, this made the protective duty of agents more complicated and hard.

Such uniqueness of the American politics and politicians in which the President should be close to his people and not to resemble the British kingship, where the king should be covered by guards, was the reason behind keeping the Secret Service agents protective mission a secret, unlike today where they undertake their duty publically. Besides, the American Presidents could not feel at ease with the presence of the secret agents, at the same time they understood the difficulty and importance of their duty. President Roosevelt wrote to his friend Henry Cabot

Lodge about the Agency “Very small but very necessary thorn in the flesh [ ] they would not be the least use preventing any assault [ ] (qtd . in Ayton 177). The President did not deny the significance of agents’ presence around him, at the same time he thought that fear and extensive protection are a barrier that limits the freedom and the work of the nation’s leader (Ayton, “Plotting” 174-177). US Presidents were obliged to accept protection because their lives depended on it.

### **3.1. President Harry Truman’s Assassination Attempt 1950**

On November 1st, 1950, President Harry S. Truman was staying in the Blair House<sup>1</sup> since the White House was under renovation, Oscar Collazo and Griselio Torresola a Puerto Rican nationalists tried to murder the President in order to separate their Island from the US when They reached the building they started to shot the Secret Service agents and the police men who were responsible for the President protection at the Blaire House. During the gun fight a Secret Service agent and Torresola were killed. The President was taking a nap, when he heard the gun shot he run toward the window to see what was going on, but his Secret Service agents quickly asked him to stay far from the window (Foley and Cronkite 86). The agent who was killed was Coffelt, Leslie William who sacrificed his life to protect the President being the only US Secret Service agent to be killed while doing his duty (Wilson 144). The assassination attempts against US Presidents did not stop even though they were receiving Secret Service protection.

### **3.2. President John F. Kennedy’s Assassination 1963**

Unlike Truman, President John F. Kennedy (JFK) was not lucky and his assassin succeeded to murder him. On November 22nd, 1963, the Americans were shocked by the murder of their

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<sup>1</sup> Blair House: Operated by the Office of the Chief of Protocol, U.S. Department of State ([www.state.gov/s/cpr](http://www.state.gov/s/cpr)), Blair House provides accommodations for visiting foreign delegations and office space for State Department protocol, security, facilities and curatorial representatives, as well as for the Blair House Restoration Fund.  
<http://www.blairhouse.org/about>

President who was visiting Texas, in order to gain more popularity for his party as he ignited passion for the elections of 1964. His visit started on November 21st, when he went to San Antonio and Houston accompanied with his spouse Jacqueline, the next day his destination was the Trade Mart to deliver a speech but before, he had to round in Dallas business zone. When JFK rode the Presidential limousine the journey began throughout the road, the President stopped to greet people who showed their happiness and support. The President's limousine arrived at the Elm Street where JFK was suddenly shot three times by Lee Harvey Oswald, the Secret Service agents took the President quickly to the hospital where he passed away (Kurtz 3-8).

Losing another President in such a horrible way under the protection of the USSS was both, a sad event in the history of America and a trauma for the Secret Service agents. Agents who witnessed the crime that day in Dallas could not forget that they failed to protect the President, they felt shame and guilt, the assassination reflected the Agency's weakness and its incapability to safeguard the nation's leader. Moreover, the JFK assassination was the turning point that changed the USSS Agency including the training of agents and their equipments, in addition to that, the presence of agents became more acceptable by the American Presidents who liked to be open and close to their people. Although the incident was sad and tragic, it reshaped the Agency to be smarter and stronger than any assassin.

After the JFK assassination, Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy as well as her children received protection that was authorized by the legislative body for two years. Congress also took into consideration Former Presidents and their wives and gave them protection in 1965. For the rest of their lives their sons too received protection especially those under the age of sixteen. During the same year, the Secret Service agents' duties were expanded to include the immediate arrest when the offense is committed in front of them without the need for a mandate from the court.

Another assassination was committed in 1968, but the victim Robert F. Kennedy was not a President but rather a Presidential candidate, the USSS responsibilities and duties expanded this time to include major Presidential candidates (Reese 9). The USSS duties expanded in response to the occurring events.

### **3.3. Senator Robert F. Kennedy's Assassination 1968**

Robert F. Kennedy was the Attorney General of his brother President John F. Kennedy and after the murder of his brother he remained in his post for a period of ten months. On September 2nd, 1964 he resigned because he had ambitions to be a senator. He was nominated from New York by 719,693 votes. Then, Kennedy started to have a bigger ambition which was the participation in the presidential elections of 1968. During that long and tiring campaign Kennedy got exhausted. The night that his party was waiting for the results of the vote count of California, Kennedy needed some rest, he was convinced to drive to Los Angeles since the press would not go to Malibu in order to interview him in case he won the elections. Kennedy agreed and went to the Ambassador Hotel where he relaxed in the Royal Suite (Donnelley 96-98). Kennedy did his best during the campaign to win the elections.

At 11.40 pm the news announced that Kennedy surprisingly won California. Accompanied with his party members he went down toward the Embassy Ballroom to deliver a brief speech to thank the team of the campaign. Kennedy said, “ We are a great country, an unselfish country, and a compassionate country, and I intend to make that my basis for running over a period of the next few months [ ] My thanks to you all” (qtd. in Donnelley 98). Then he had a press conference in the Colonial Room where he was heading through a hug crowd. Frank Mankiewicz Kennedy's press secretary interfered to take him away from the crowded route. Moving from the kitchen Kennedy greeted the cooks and shook their hands, then, a man walked from the ice

machine vicinity and pulled a gun from his jeans' belt and opened fire on Kennedy who was hit with other five people. Kennedy died after suffering from serious wounds. Kennedy was assassinated by Sirhan Sirhan, a Palestinian student who moved to the US with his family in 1956 (Donnelley 98-103). A security breakdown costed the US another political figure.

The protection mission expanded this time to include the country's diplomatic guests, for instance, special foreign visitors and leaders of foreign countries taking into account the President's instructions. Under the President directions in 1986, the USSS assumed the responsibility of safeguarding foreign Presidents' wives that might visit the US In 2000, a congressional act was signed by President William J. Clinton which gave authority to the USSS to secure National Special Security Events (NSSEs) if the President directed it to do so. From that time agents can be seen during presidential inaugurations and significant sport juveniles plus other important national events. Recently Congress prevented persons who are not authorized to step inside premises that are under the security of the USSS (Reese 10-12). The expansion of the USSS's second mission implied new responsibilities for the agents.

#### **3.4. President Ronald Regan's Assassination Attempt 1981**

March 30th, 1981, was the exam day for the USSS to check its developed skills, training, and readiness to protect the President. Ronald Wilson Regan the 40<sup>th</sup> President of the US had delivered a speech on March 30th, 1981, in his seventieth day of leadership, the press published the location and the timing of his speech. Any potential assassin could know that the President was in Hilton Hotel Washington D.C that day so as any other citizen. The reason behind that speech was to build a Trade Council in that hotel. While exiting the hotel the President was waving to his people before getting into his car, surrounded by Secret Service agents and meeting some journalists, reporters, and photographers who were standing behind a red rope.



Regan was supposed to wear a bullet proof vest but the weather was humid and warm that day, he was to give a speech to an audience of 35,000 people. Since he liked to involve his body language while delivering his speech particularly his arm, the vest would be an obstacle that annoys the President. Further, Regan thought that he would not last long outside the hotel, just a few steps between the hotel hallway and his car. Besides, the Secret Service agents would cover him so no need for the vest (Brown3). President Regan's refusal to wear the bullet proof vest, his reliance on the Secret Service agents to protect him proved that the protection mission became more acceptable by the US Presidents.

When the President was about to reach his limousine, John Hinckley Jr. opened fire on him and on those who were accompanying him with his 22-shooter, it took him just six shots and two seconds to fulfill his mission. Secret Service agents who worked that day did their best to protect the President, among them Timothy McCarthy who covered Regan with his body and took a bullet instead of the President which hit him in his rib cage. The last bullet wounded President Regan in his chest, Jerry Parr was the leader of the Secret Service team that day, he quickly casted down Regan into the limousine to make him safer. The car driver, Drew Unrue was ordered by Parr who was yelling to go back quickly to the White House. While in the car the President was suffering from a terrible pain but, neither him nor agent Parr who was checking his body recognized that he was wounded. Suddenly, the President started to cough up blood Parr knew that Regan was harmed and asked the driver to change his direction toward George Washington University Hospital (Brown 3-6). Fortunately, the attempt of assassination failed and the President survived. Besides, the USSS succeeded to fully accomplish its mission.

The Secret Service agents who served in Ronald Regan's detail were smart and accurate, they took the right decisions at the right time. McCarthy and Parr acted without thinking, they were

doing their job as it should be done, and they were ready to sacrifice their lives to keep the President unscathed. During their training Secret Service agents had learned an important rule, whenever there is an attack against the President the first thing that should be done is to get him out of the risk area and the Regan agents successfully did the same thing. If the agents did not respond quickly, Hinckley would achieve his plan with a weird motif, which was impressing the actress Jodie Foster since he was obsessed by her (Brown 3-14). Although the motif was silly but the attack was serious and dangerous.

### **3.5. President Bill Clinton's Assassination Attempt 1994**

The Regan attempt of assassination was not the last episode in the history of assassinations and attacks on American Presidents, besides the protection mission became tougher. Many incidents and assassination attempts threatened the life of President Bill Clinton one of them took place in 1994, when Frank Corder flied with a stolen Cessna plane toward the White House where he crashed it into a tree of magnolia near Clinton's bed room. Corder lost his life in the crash, luckily Clinton and his family were in Blair House while the White House was renovated and they were unscathed. In fact, the White House is the most secured place for the President, but Clinton was attacked several times in his Presidential residence. Another aggression against him was on October 29th, of the same year, Clinton was in the White House watching television when Francisco Duran opened fire on the north side of the Presidential residence. When assassins and attackers dared to threaten the President in his Presidential mansion, the USSS was forced to rethink and review its tactics of securing the White House (Nelson 439).It was a huge concern for the USSS that the President's safety was threatened even at the White House.

#### 4. USSS Recent Security Breakdowns

Decades have passed and the USSS became more experienced in dealing with threats against the Commander in Chief, but, the Agency still suffers from breaches of security. Responding to the circumstances and the tragic events that the US have witnessed from assassination attempts to the attacks of 9/11, the number of the Secret Service staff grew from 6.700 workers in 2007 to 7.055 in 2010, the majority of them were directed to the task of protection since the number of protectees have been increased. In 2009, Barack Obama took the challenge as a black man to be the President something that never happened in the history of America. The USSS was certain that Obama would be threatened by racial haters or racists, the first African American President of US knew that risks were part of his job. During Martin Luther king's fortieth assassination anniversary, Obama claimed "Stop worrying [ ] I think anybody who decided to run for President recognizes that there are some risks involved just like there are risks in anything [ ] but neither Bobby nor Martin Luther King had Secret Service protection"(qtd. in Ayton 226). President Obama believed that no assassin dares to threaten his life with the presence of the Secret Service agents around him (Ayton, "Hunting" 221-226). Today, the American Presidents are more aware about the importance of the protective mission.

On November 11th, 2011, the White House was attacked for the purpose of assassinating President Obama. Oscar Ortega Hernandez opened fire on the Presidential residence the President's little daughter Sasha and the mother of the first Lady Marian Robinson, neither President Obama nor his wife Michelle were in the White House. Besides Malia, the elder daughter was outside with her friends but she could be at home soon. The gunman shot a window and could break it, while escaping he made an accident with his car and continued his way running on foot leaving his pistol. Secret Service agents who were on the roof "snipers" started

to scan the area from where they heard the shots, before a supervisor informed the officers that nothing is happening. He claimed that the noise was caused by the vehicle of construction which was near to the White House (Leonnig). The White House still definitely has some security breakdowns.

The USSS failed to detect and investigate the attack, realizing lately that there was a hole of a bullet in one of the Presidential mansion's windows, in addition to the bullets they found in the south area of the White House days following the attack. The Secret Service agents detected Oscar Ortega just because of his papers that he left in the crash. The White House chief of staff at that time William Daley said, "It was obviously very frightening that someone who didn't really plan it that well was able to shoot and hit the White House and people here did not know about that until several days after" (qtd. in Leonnig). The Secret Service agents found the absence of the President and his wife who were in San Diego and preparing to go to Hawaii an opportunity to take a rest and forget about their duty. Ortega was caught five days after the attack and was judged to stay in prison for 25 years (Leonnig). the Secret Service hesitation could cause a disaster at the White House.

The USSS two missions have been improved over the years, because of the growing threats against both the financial system and the President. Today, the investigation mission's challenges are the fast evolution of technology plus the internet that requires the Agency to be updated with the most developed materials and technologies. As one of the most powerful nations in the world the US tries always to protect its currency from counterfeiting in order to keep its economy on the top. However, the deficiencies of the protection mission are more critical since, there were many gaps, mistakes, and failures throughout the protective mission's history. The real shock for the USSS was the assassination of President Kennedy in Dallas, who was guarded by the Secret

Service agents but they failed to keep him safe. It was a shame for the Agency that the President was an easy target for an assassination. The tragedy changed the USSS and the protection mission. Further, the USSS agents are now aware that they must protect the President as well as the American currency whatever it takes.

## Chapter two

### The Kennedy Assassination and the Failure of the USSS

November 22nd, 1963, the black day in the history of the US when two shots hit President John F. Kennedy and killed him. Those unforgettable shots have wept all Americans who lost their beloved President in such a dramatic way, no one wanted to believe that the President was assassinated. In fact the USSS shock was deeper since the Secret Service agents who served in the JFK detail failed to protect the Commander in Chief. The young President died but his memory is still alive for both the American nation and the USSS Agency. Moreover, the whole world witnessed the crime through the media coverage which was supposed to report the President's visit to Texas, later on the reporters found themselves covering every detail of the JFK assassination. While the US took the President's assassination as a sad remembrance, the USSS took it as a tough lesson that caused a radical change inside the Agency.

#### 1. JFK Reelection and the Trip to Texas

John F. Kennedy the thirty fifth President of the US had ambitions to be reelected in 1964, he was sure about his popularity all over the US since he could win the elections of 1960. But, what concerned him a lot was the tension within the Democratic Party in Texas, that's why he planned to go there to reunite the party. Besides, Texas had a significant number of electoral votes that President JFK wished to win in the next elections. Through his trip the president would visit San Antonio, Houston, Fort Worth, Dallas and Austin. For the President to win the hearts and the trust of his people, the visit was a necessity (*JFK Presidential Library Museum*). Politics and the election campaign motivated JFK to make a tour in different American states.

## 1.1 Day One in Texas

The Presidential trip to Texas started, the first destination was San Antonio. When the President and his wife Jacqueline arrived at the International Airport of San Antonio, many local officials were there to welcome them. As it was scheduled, JFK made a tour in the city through a motorcade where massive crowds were there to welcome and see him. Then, the motorcade and the President's open car went directly to Brooks Air Force Base in which the President gave a speech at the Aerospace Medical Health Center where he said in his speech,

I have come to Texas today to salute an outstanding group of pioneers, the men who man the Brooks Air Force Base School of Aerospace Medicine and the Aerospace Medical Center. It is fitting that San Antonio should be the site of this center and this school as we gather to dedicate this complex of building (qtd. in *JFK Library and Museum*).

Houston was the President's next destination where he attended an event that was prepared by the League of United Latin America Citizens (National Geographic 2013). Through the trip the President would accomplish some of his duties in addition to having an opportunity to see his supporters who were waiting for his coming.

During the United Latin American Citizens League Event the first lady gave a speech in Spanish that made the event more special, the musician Fernando Herrera was there playing music he said about the first couple "I was standing right behind both of them, I heard him say I am having a wonderful time, she said it is so nice to be away from the political arena" (National Geographic 2013). The honoring dinner for the representative Albert Thomas was the President's last activity in his first day visit program, later at that night the President and the first lady traveled to Fort Worth to spend the night in Texas Hotel where many people were waiting for them (National Geographic 2013). The first day of the trip was successful people were so happy

welcoming the President arrival, they were excited to see and greet JFK and his spouse, what was noticed also that day, was the open Limousine that was carrying the President.

## **1.2. Day Two in Texas**

The early morning of November 22nd, started with the President addressing the crowd that was waiting for the Kennedys despite of the drizzling, President JFK said, “There are no faint heart in Fort Worth, I appreciate your being here this morning. Mrs. Kennedy is organizing herself. It takes longer, but, of course, she looks better than we do when she does it we appreciate your welcome” ( Byrne). Before the President went back to the hotel, he walked toward the excited people to shake their hands. Then, A breakfast of the city’s Chamber of Commerce was waiting for the President to deliver another speech, in which he claimed, “We are still the keystone in the arch of freedom and, I think we will continue to do as we have done in the past our duty” (National Geographic 2013). The beginning of the day was happy and supportive for the President and his wife. The presence of the crowds in the early morning to see the President confirmed that he succeeded to win their hearts.

The President left Fort Worth by another motorcade then he flied to his following destination Dallas. When the President and the first lady arrived at Love Field where the weather was good and a crowd was waiting for them, they greeted people for a while. John Connally the Texas Governor and his spouse Nellie, were in the convertible waiting for the first couple to join them (*JFK Presidential Library and Museum*). The President was happy to see the huge crowds coming just to see him, wanted to be close to them, he was enjoying the trip moving forward to the next activities that his schedule was full of.



## 2. The Assassination in Dallas

When the President was about to reach the convertible, he decided to go back to the crowd followed by his spouse, agent Hill and Paul went with them to provide the protection for Mrs. Kennedy while agent Kellerman and Roberts did the same for the President. People were happy and excited yelling, “Over here, Mr. President! Over heeere!” “Jackie! We love you!” “Welcome to Dallas!”. In addition to that, the photographers were trying to get the best photos for the first couple. The President rode in the limousine within a long motorcade that was consisted of many cars and motorcycles as Hill declared:

It begins with a group of motorcycles, followed by a pilot car, more motorcycles, the lead car, the Presidential limousine, and the Secret Service follow-up. Four motorcycles, two on each side, are positioned alongside the rear tires of the presidential limousine and the front tires of the secret service follow-up car, so as not to impede the movements of the follow up car agents nor block the crowd’s view of president and Mrs. Kennedy. Then comes the vice president’s leased convertible, a leased Secret Service follow-up car, followed thirteen more official cars, three buses, and some additional media cars. Finally, a police car and more motorcycles bring up the tail end (89).

The motorcade moved toward Dallas city center where huge numbers of people were gathered along all the streets waiting for JFK (Hill and Mc Cubbin, “five Days in November”84-89). The Secret Service agents work became tougher and complicated when the President headed toward the crowd, they were puzzled between covering the President from the massive crowds and scanning the area in which he was located.

The advanced preparation for the trip did not include checking the city buildings and roads, the Secret Service agents did not have any idea about it. In the book *Five Days in November*, Hill talked about being unfamiliar with the city:

For most of us, this is our first time to Dallas. The route has been mapped out by the advance agent, Win Lawson, with the help of the Dallas Police Department, but the streets, the buildings, the geography, are completely unfamiliar to the rest of us. Each time we make a turn, we have no idea what's around the corner (92).

The Kennedys arrived to Dallas, the huge crowds were waving, screaming, and smiling to the guests of the city, the motorcade slowed down to give the massive crowds the opportunity to see their Leader, and to avert the critique that they have been received from the San Antonio crowds about the speed of the motorcade (Hill and McCubbin 92-98). The preparation for the trip had many gaps and the agents had no idea what was next just the huge number of people and the route of the next destination. JFK asked the secret service agents to stay far from his limo's back their actual positions, plus keeping the bubbletop of the car off. He made this decision to enable his people see him and his wife (Fruktin and Kranz). The trip to Texas was so risky since the President's Democratic political party was not welcomed there, and not all people in Dallas loved JFK, plus giving him more space by the Secret agents to be close and open to the public.

When the Presidential motorcade was moving toward a place called Dealey Plaza coming from Main Street turning to Houston Street, the crowd's number decreased gradually. Then the motorcade made a left turn to the Elm Street, where the President's limousine override the school book depository and started to slow down (Shono Jr. 242). The Secret agents felt no more pressure William Greer the driver of the Presidential Limousine testified " When they got to Houston from Main street, he felt relieved. He felt they were in the clear, the crowds were

thinning and [ ] he did begin to feel relieved” (Waldron 350). Pierce Allman was there as a reporter to cover the event he said, “I took position on the corner right across the street from the depository building [ ] they just looked great, they look like a first couple should look, and then as they turned the corner there was this loud explosive sound”(CNN 2003). Moreover, Robert Mac Neil argued that, “we turned into Dealy Plaza and I looked at my watch, I was going to have to do a radio piece for the news on air at one o’clock, so I begin making a couple of notes thinking what I would use from the speech in the radio piece and then there was a bang”(CNN 2003). Many people heard something but they did not know what it was exactly. The agents thought that everything went fine and they succeeded to control and protect the motorcade, but that sudden crack will change the motorcade’s destination and the whole trip program.

The sound was of a bullet that Lee Harvey Oswald shot from the six floor of the book depository to kill the President, but he missed his target, Mr. Connally who was with the President and the first lady in the Limousine heard the sound and he recognized that it was gunfire. Oswald shot a second time hitting JFK on his neck and Connally’ s back , Mrs. Kennedy tried to help her husband who was leaning toward her putting his hands in his throat. Suddenly, she heard a third shot that exploded her husband’s head. Hill the Secret agent who was standing on the follow-up car running board noticed that they were under an attack, so he jumped to JFK’s car in order to save the President and his wife. He recalls what happened and how he dealt with the situation that day in Dealy Plaza stating in the book *Five Presidents: My Extraordinary Journey with Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Ford* by McCubbin that,

I was nearly there running as fast as I could. And then came a third shot. I heard it and felt it.

The impact was like the sound of something hard hitting something hollow like the sound of a melon shattering onto cement. In the same instant, an eruption of blood, brain matters, and

bone fragments exploded from the President's head, showering over Mrs. Kennedy, the car, and me (154).

The attack was so aggressive especially the last shot which caused a real tragedy (Gibbons 77-82). Oswald hit the President twice and the Secret agents have done nothing to prevent the attack, since they were far from their positions respecting the President's instructions.

When agent Hill jumped into the Presidential Limousine and positioned himself on its back, the third shot hit JFK head, he viewed the President's spouse coming up from her seat on the boot of the car to get a brain matter of the President's head that had dispersed there. The agent brought her back to her seat, the limousine speeded toward Parkland Memorial Hospital while Hill was covering the President and the first lady. Medically speaking The fatally wounded President reached the hospital alive because, the doctors noticed a heartbeat and he was trying hardly to breath. But there was no hope for him to live. At about 1:00 p.m the President passed away (Gibbons 82-83). A scenario that neither the Secret Service agents nor the public imagined, the President died leaving behind him sad supporters, an unfinished trip, an undelivered speech and Secret agents full of guilt wishing if they could do better.

Before leaving the airport of Love Field the Presidency oath was taken by the vice President Lyndon B. Johnson in Air Force One, which was carrying the body of the assassinated President. Lee Harvey Oswald the new worker in the Book Depository Building, was arrested the same day of the attack as the main culprit in the killing the President of the US and the officer J.D. Tippit . On November 24th, country jail was Oswald's next destination after being in the police station, while transferring him suddenly a man shot the prisoner. The shooter was an owner of a nightclub named Jack Ruby, Oswald passed away while in Parkland Hospital (*JFK library and*

*Museum*). America witnessed a series of quick and unexpected events that the history would record for the next generations.

### **3. Investigating the Assassination**

After the assassination immediate investigations took place in order to answer many questions. Specialized Committees were responsible for investigating the President's murder and providing the government with its conclusions. The Federal Bureau of Investigation initiated the investigations relying on the available evidences.

#### **3.1. The FBI Investigation**

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) started its investigations about the President's murder, former agent Robert Frazier was assigned with other two experienced inspectors to begin their investigation, he remembers the laboratory chief saying, "I want each of you men to make separate comparisons and examinations, and then compare your notes and see if they are agree". The Washington FBI Laboratory received evidences about the assassination and Oswald's gun by which he murdered JFK was one of them. The JFK limousine was also examined Frazier argues, "We examined that car the very thoroughly that same night". It was difficult for Frazier and his partners to inspect that car in which they found the President's blood thinking how terribly the attack was (*United States Federal Bureau of Investigation*). The FBI started its investigation after the assassination immediately in order to collect evidences and to find out who killed the President.

Frazier went to Dallas examining the six floor of the book depository trying to find out how Oswald shot the President. "We re-enacted the entire thing very, very carefully, I stood up there and we took Oswald's rifle, with the scope on it, and set it up", Frazier claimed. The investigation findings were testified later on by Frazier a ballistic examiner and a lead firearms in

the FBI many times before the Warren Commission begin its investigations (*United States Federal Bureau of Investigation*). The investigation was made to answer many questions and to understand what went wrong in that tragic day in Dallas.

### **3.2. The President's Commission (Warren Commission)**

The President's commission was assigned through an Executive Order by President Lyndon B. Johnson on November 29th, 1963. In order to investigate JFK's assassination, besides examining the murder of Lee Harvey Oswald. Further, the Commander in Chief instructed that the commission findings should be reported to him. The commission members were governors and lawyers who had the authority which the legislative body guarantees to check any investigative conclusions or evidences. The commission's Chairman was Earl Warren the US Chief Justice in addition to other members, Senators Richard B. Russell and John Sherman Cooper, Representatives Hale Boggs and Gerald R. Ford, Lawyers Allen W. Dulles and John J. McCloy (*US National Archives ,Warren Commission*).

Before initiating the most important investigation in the American history the warren commission first checked the conclusions of the FBI investigation. Robert A. Frazier who had the experience of twenty three years working in the identification of firearms came to the conclusion that the bullet shrapnels detected in the Presidential limousine, in addition to the other three cartridges founded in Texas School Book Depository were shot from the weapon that the police found in the School Depository building. But, it was unattainable to conclude all those bullets belonged to the same gun. Josef D. Nicol, another expert in the domain had the same conclusions as Frazier, the results were also confirmed by two additional FBI's experts. The conclusions were testified in the President's commission (*US National Archives, Warren*

*Commission 84-85*). The primary investigations were about the rifle and the bullets which came under a careful examination by skillful experienced experts.

### **3.3. The Warren Commission (WC) Investigations**

The President's Commission formulates the general conclusion about the JFK assassination taking into account every detail, but the main concern of this chapter is to analyze the failure and incapability of the Secret Service to protect the Commander in Chief. So, the chapter deals with the findings concerning the Secret Service insufficiency. The FBI's files contained information about Lee Harvey Oswald but they did not provide them to the agent who was responsible for forward Preparation of the Presidential trip in 1963, besides Dallas was one of the areas that JFK would not visit while Oswald was there. For the Secret Service Such serious information should be discussed with them, and considered Oswald as a menace to the President's life whereas the FBI did not agree with it. The PRS chief Robert I. Bouck argued that if the PRS had Oswald's name in its files, the Secret Service would be more knowledgeable about him. Bouck testified to the Warren Commission:

I would think his continued association with the Russian Embassy after his return, his association with the Castro groups would have been of concern to us [ ] I think all of those, if we had them altogether, would have added up to pointing out a pretty bad individual, and I think that, together, had we known that he had a vantage point would have seemed some what serious to us (440).

For the commission all those information about Oswald were sufficient to conclude that he should be registered as a menace to the President. Further, the cooperation between the USSS and the FBI was not adequate (*US National Archives, Warren Commission 429-444*). It was the

FBI's duty to inform the Secret Service agent about all the data that it had about Oswald even though it did not consider him as an extreme threat.

Two agents were supposed to make the forward preparations of the Presidential trip but the number of agents was not enough to assign two members for the advance job. Since the President's schedule did not include just the visit to Texas but also other states were JFK's destination before Texas. Agent Lawson as it was stated before was responsible for the task of the forward preparations with agent Sorrels' help. In fact the preparations were held by Lawson alone for six days then David B. Grant the agent who was busy with the Tampa trip advance preparation joined Lawson on November 18th. The Warren Commission found that the Agency did not identify clearly the responsibilities of the agents tasked with the advance duty, Lawson was not provided with a checklist that indicated what he should accomplish by himself or collectively with other local law enforcements. The instructions of the Dallas visit were transmitted to the agent orally (*US National Archives, Warren Commission 445*). The efforts of one agent were not enough to make the whole forward preparations for a Presidential visit. Besides, no specific and precise directions were established to help the agent fulfilling his duty.

Moreover, one instruction was given to the agent that he was required to make interim reports about each stage of the forward preparations, in addition to the concluding report which summarizes everything concerning the trip. It was a must to deliver the report to the agent in charge of the whole trip a long period before the scheduled date of the Presidential visit in order to inform him about any encountered troubles and the appropriate response to it. Lawson sent his report only one day before the President's arrival (*US National Archives, Warren Commission 446*). If Lawson was accompanied with extra agents his report would not be delivered too late.



The Agency was not able to cover the President's tours since the number of agents was not enough.

The visit's advanced preparations did not include the buildings inspection, since this task was done by the Secret Service only in inauguration and some other cortege that include foreign politicians and the President in Washington. But, if there was an inspection of the apparent points in the route that the motorcade would pass through, the building of the book Depository might be included. With few agents the USSS could not prepare well for the Presidential trip. Furthermore, the Dallas police officers who were responsible for the crossroads of Houston and Elm street did not receive directions about scanning the buildings in the area. They were just concerned with the controlling of the traffic and to deal with the huge crowds. They were concerned with the President's safety and the prevention of any potential danger (*US National Archives, Warren Commission 447-448*). The scanning of the building was limited to particular occasions but, the President's safety should be insured all the time and not be associated with particular areas or ceremonies.

### **3.4. The Investigation of the House Select Committee on Assassination (HSC)**

In September 1976, the Congress authorized the establishment of the House Select Committee to investigate the assassinations of both JFK and Martin Luther King. The conclusions of the committee investigation were reported and addressed to the House of Representatives (*US National Archives, House Select Committee*). Concerning the JFK murder, this chapter is dealing with the Secret Service failure to accomplish its protective duty in that faithful and dark day in the history of America.

President JFK's personality was so different as state leader since he made more tours than the other previous American Presidents, besides, he liked the fact of being close to the crowds and

his public. The Secret Service protection mission was difficult to be implemented with such a President, his desire to be open and close to the public contradicted the security measures. Kenneth O'Donnell the assistant of President JFK said to Gerald Behn, who was responsible for the White House that, "Politics and protection don't mix". Politics requires the leader to be within his people and supporters, whereas the President's safety limits his nearness to the public. The committee found that, "The Secret Service possessed information that was not properly analyzed, investigated or used by the Secret Service in connection with the President's trip to Dallas, in addition Secret Service agents in the motorcade were inadequately prepared to protect the President from a sniper". The Committee checked the Warren Commission results and conclusions before initiating its work, and it recognized that particular points should be addressed in addition to those introduced by the Commission (*US National Archives, House Select Committee 228-230*). The investigations shed light on the insufficient performance of the Secret Service responsibilities.

While the Secret Service agents were working for the Presidential trip to Chicago they received a piece of information about Thomas Arthur Valle who was living there and considered as a major opponent to the JFK's foreign policy. The police investigated and arrested him just for few hours. The secret service possessed information about Valle and it was addressed to the PRS but the Secret agents who were in charge of the Texas trip did not receive anything about it. The Committee investigations found that the Chicago police supplied the Secret Service by a piece of information about a potential danger against the President's life. However, it failed to use it appropriately. Furthermore, on November 12th, a recorded conversation was given to the Secret Service by the police officers of Miami about Joseph A. Milteer, talking about a plot to murder president JFK with a weapon from a high building. Besides, the Secret Service was advised that

the suspect was dealing and supporting some rightwing radicals who hated the President. The PRS data were transmitted to the Secret agents who were responsible for the Miami trip advanced preparations, but agent Lawson who was in charge of Dallas trip preparations Received nothing. The Secret Service ignored such a risk during the organization for the Dallas trip (*US National Archives, House Select Committee 231-233*). The deficiency of the Secret Service was in the analysis of data and the degree of threats, it did not know how to deal with the received information. But what was really weird, is that the Secret Service ignorance and disregard of the information that include threat and menace against the country's first Leader who was under their protection and responsibility.

The protective mission requires the Secret agent to be near and close to the President. The JFK limousine driver was directed to act only if he was ordered by the agent in charge of the whole trip. The House Select Committee insisted that, in such emergencies the driver should be ready to react and shield the president without waiting for any instructions. In addition President JFK refused the Secret agents to be in the platform building on the rear of the limousine, he also did not permit the motorcycle neither to be on the limousine rear bumper nor to be close to both sides of the limousine (*US National Archives, House Select Committee 235*). The agents were not ready and prepared to shield the President, JFK asked them to step back but this did not mean to be far from him, because this was the reason why the agents could not reach the President when he was attacked.

What was mostly noticeable during the Texas trip was the President's open car, because the bubble top of the limousine was removed for the sack of giving the public the opportunity to see their leader. But the protective measures consider the president's safety as a priority since his safety means a lot to his people and to the Secret Service agents. Commander in Chief JFK

would possibly be alive if only the roof of that car was not removed that day in Dallas, as stated in the book of *The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: Political Trauma and American Memory*, “The bubble top was not bullet proof but might have made the assassination difficult” (George 37). It was clear that the president wanted the Secret agents to give him more space with the public and to interfere only when the situation required so. However, their duty was to keep him safe so, it was better if they stick to the rules of their work by being close to the President even though he would not be satisfied with that (National Geographic 2013).

Agent Hill mentioned before that one of the agents who was in duty that day was just assigned, more precisely “McIntyre was just assigned to the detail two weeks ago, so he is still learning the ropes” (Hill and McCubbin 90). To involve an inexperienced agent to a Presidential trip that was full of risks was not the right decision, the conditions and the nature of the visit required only Secret agents who have dealt with trips and risks before. As long as the agents practiced their duty inside and outside the White House they would acquire the necessary skills, even the agents who had long time in duty were not really prepared, let alone with McIntyre who had just two weeks in the most sensitive job in the world.

Till nowadays, agent Hill cannot forgive himself, whenever he is interviewed he talks about the sense of guilt, because he believes that his job as a Secret Service agent makes him responsible for the safety, security, and protection of the president. He should not disappoint neither the President nor the American people, as it was mentioned in the book *Mrs. Kennedy and Me: An Intimate Memoir*, “There was nothing anyone could do. There was nothing anyone could do to relieve the pain, the anguish, the sense of failure and guilt I felt” (Hill and McCubbin 307). The Secret agent who served on November 22nd, could not forget that they failed to save their leader who represented the nation’s strength and power.

One single day and three shots were able to change the USSS Agency and the whole concept of protection. JFK's assassination shed light on the deficiencies and the drawbacks that the Agency suffers from. In addition, the investigations did not only fetch for the criminal and his motive but also the protective mission as a whole. On one hand, the Secret Service agents' performance of their protective duty was poor including the superficial advance preparations, misinterpretation and ignorance of the information that they had, and the late reaction to an attack. On the other hand, the Agency lacked the equipments and the number of agents was not enough to carry out such a heavy responsibility. The Congress took all these drawbacks into account to overcome them in order to prevent any other tragedy in the future.

### Chapter Three

#### **Post Kennedy Assassination Change and the Evolution of the USSS Protective Mission**

The Kennedy assassination is the most terrible incident in the American history. But at the same time it was the turning point that led to the birth and evolution of a strong Agency responsible for protecting the nation's leader. No one denies that the USSS failed on November 22nd, 1963, in doing its core duty, however the Agency learnt a tough lesson which resulted in the revision of all the protective measures and the whole concept of protection and body guarding. After JFK's assassination the protection mission was given a major concern by the US authorities who tried to study the issues that the Agency was suffering from since the conclusions of both the Warren Commission and the House Select Committee found that the USSS was deficient and unprepared to protect the president of the US. The USSS of today is totally different from that of 1963, mainly in terms of the number of agents, and their materials. No Secret agent in the Agency wished to fail or to have the same experience that the JFK detail had in that dark day in Dallas.

The first step to enhance the President's protection and to ensure his safety was the legislation that the Congress passed in 1965 which considered the assassination attempt on the President a law breaking and a federal crime (*Secret Service*). Now the President safety does not lay only on the Secret Service agents but also the power of law plays a major role in safeguarding the US national leader. In order to provide the President with adequate protection the agents training is a key to success, their programs of training vary according to their roles and positions in the Agency. Before engaging in the training, the Secret Service agents should pass a number of background checks before starting their extensive training (*Criminal Justice Degree Hub*).

## **1. US Secret Service Agents Training**

Today the Agency has an experience of more than one century and a huge number of special agents which is about 3,200 (*US Secret Service*). The newly coming agents must go through an obligatory training which starts in Glynco, Georgia at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) for eleven weeks then they have a specialized training for seventeen weeks at James J. Rowley Training Center (JJRTC) or the Secret Service Training center Washington DC (Federal Law Enforcement. Org). The Secret Service agents' training is an essential and necessary stage before being engaged in their future job. Starting their profession as Secret Service agents does not mean that their training is finished. But, throughout their profession, they will be exposed to another advanced training, plus courses of personal development including Practical Leadership, Ethics, and Interpersonal Awareness. Further, physical fitness and mental acuity are requirements that must be maintained and demonstrated by the USSS Agency employees (*Criminal Justice Degree Hub*). The training can guarantee the agents readiness and ensure that they are capable to deal with different situations which may face them in their future career.

### **1.1. Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC)**

The primary training of both the uniformed officers and the Secret Service agents takes place in the FLETC. The Criminal Investigator Training Program (CITP) is one of the courses of the Secret Service agents training, it is planned to all new agents and deals with criminal investigations. The CITP training is taught to the agents through lectures, workable practices, exams, and laboratory duties. Besides, the agents take part in bogus case investigation through team work, in which they may make interviews with the witnesses, perform monitoring operations, and get an indictment plus other activities. Moreover, the CITP training includes

topics about; legal training, interviewing, firearms, surveillance, physical evidence, physical techniques and conditioning, and criminal case management (*Federal Law Enforcement.org*). At first, the Secret Service agents training dealt mainly with the basics of conducting the criminal investigations.

Furthermore, the Uniformed Police Training Program (UPTP) is another program addressed to the Division of uniformed officers within the FLETC. The aim of the UPTP is to provide law enforcement knowledge to the trainees, besides the skills needed to do the job through the inclusion of many topics concerning terrorism, communication and interviewing, firearms, constitutional and federal criminal law, and VIP protection (*Federal Law Enforcement.org*). Moreover, the CITP and the UPTP are not the only programs provided by the FLETC for the trainees, the center offers also other training Programs that are required for better preparation for the future agents. The Land Management Police Training (LMPT), Federal Air Marshal Training Program (FAMTP), and United States Border Patrol Integrated (USBPI) are few from a wide range of programs that the trainees should perform. For the improvement of the agents training the FLETC currently offers additional programs such as, Active Shooter Threat Instructor Training Program (ASTITP), Advanced Pistol Instructor Training Program (APITP), Basic Tactics Instructor Training Program (BTITP), and Commercial Vehicle Counterterrorism Training Program (CVCTP) (*Federal Law Enforcement Training Center*). The Training Center provides its trainees with basic programs, each one is designed to develop particular skills.

## **1.2. James J. Rowley Training Center (JJRTC)**

After finishing their basic training at the FLETC the agents continue their training at James J. Rowley Training Center which has a curriculum designed for the Uniformed Division Officers, Special agents, Physical Security Specialists, and Special Officers. The JJRTC situated outside



Washington D.C (*Federal Law Enforcement org*).The traineeship in the academy consists of courses in criminal law, use of force/control tactics, psychology, diplomatic immunity, firearms, site protection, and so on. Also, the technology use is included in the JJETC programs like emergency response, dignitary protection, investigation of crime scene and financial crimes (Kelly et al.103). One of the programs provided at both the FLETC and JJRTC is the firearms training, but the focus of the program is not the same. Since the training program at JJRTC deals mainly with issues that are exclusively related to the protective duty, the trainees learns the application of the marksmanship fundamentals to high and advanced level concerning speed without losing the tactical accuracy (Holden 37). The JJRTC provides an innovative and advanced traineeship for the trainees to meet the objectives of the academy and the agents' future tough mission.

## **2. The President's Protection Inside the White House**

The USSS is responsible for securing the President residency the White House which is considered the safest place for the national leader. The White House security lies on the hands of the Uniformed Division officers, who have extra duties of protecting and securing the residence of the vice President, the Treasury Building, foreign diplomatic embassies and missions in the area of Washington D.C. besides, travelling to support the Presidential, heads of foreign state missions (*USAJOBS*). The Secret Service agents protect the White House with less pressure and more confidence, Former agent Joseph Funk argued:“That's really our home field we own it, we control it” (Discovery Channel 2017). The Uniformed Division has several responsibilities but its main concentration and focus is the Presidential residency.

The White House has special units which ensure the safety of the Commander in Chief inside the Presidential residency. Counter Snipers Support Unit (CS) is one of those units, which was

established in 1971 in order to provide specific and specialized security support that has a major role in the prevention of attacks and threats against persons who receive Secret Service protection using long range arms. The CS work is so important for the Division of the Presidential Protection since it is the Division's operational unit, which provides oversight using special firearms and equipment (Christiansen and Kasarc 298). Moreover, the Canine Explosives Detection Unit (k-9) is another contributor in the Presidential residency protection. It was formulated in 1976 to carry out a specialized and skilled detection of explosives mission, in order to ensure the protectees safety (*Indiana Department of Homeland Security 2*). Each unit has a particular mission and responsibility in the security operation of the White House.

Further, the White House has the Magnetometers who are responsible for checking every individual entering the areas, which are under the Secret Service security to make sure if that person carries with him arms or not using metal detectors. This team was employed outside the Presidential residency in 1981 after the attempt of assassination on the President Ronald Regan for the improvement of the protection level (Christiansen and Kasarc 298). In addition, the Emergency Response Team (ERT) is also a White House unit that was created in 1992, its main duty is to deal with unlawful intrusion through tactical response, besides other protection responsibilities and challenges concerning the White House plus its areas. The ERT's expose to an advanced and specialized training besides they must have a high operational and physical proficiency (*Indiana Department of Homeland Security 2*). The Secret Service tries always to deal with protection violations through the improvement of the services of its units.

The Secret Service agents use equipments and technology that can help them secure the President residence. Locator boxes are available at the White House through which the agents can notice the US first family members location all the time. A database about all the visitors is

maintained in order to know information about the visitors of the White House, the duration of their visit and to whom they came. Any package or visitor to the Presidential residency must be checked. Suspicious visitors, vehicles, and packages are checked by dogs of bomb- sniffing (Schulman 280). No person can have access to the White House till the Secret Service agents check him or her and make sure that this individual does not threaten the life of the President.

In addition, the protection of grounds includes the electronic sensors, reinforced fences, television cameras, and guardhouses. Recently, the bicycle patrol service was added to enhance and improve the White House security. Moreover, the residence is equipped with a system of Doppler radar which can detect any anti-aircraft weapons or parachute assault. Also, under the President's desk the panic button is installed to be used by him in emergency cases or if he needs any help and the agent will respond immediately (Schulman 280). The White House has a strong shield consists of the Secret Service agents equipped with advanced and developed technology and tools to defeat any threat against the first family.

The division of K-9 uses dogs which are specially trained in order to detect explosives, drugs, and firearms. At first the USSS used the German shepherd dogs but now it replaced them with the Belgian Malinois from Holland. These dogs are characterized by their adaptability and flexibility to new environments and climates, besides they serve in the Agency from seven to eleven years. Part of the k-9 unit's duty is to patrol the interior of the White House and its grounds. Moreover, regular searches are done by the dogs to the Presidential residency before the arriving of tours and guests and after they left, besides they check all the incoming vehicles and delivery. Some dog teams work for 24-7 which is an evidence for their capability and skills. To support the commander in chief security the K-9 can travel to any area in the US which may include searching and verifying Air Force One long hours prior to the coming of the President

with the help of their dogs (Allsopp ). Guard dogs are very helpful to make the President and the white House safe since they are trained to detect what the Secret Service agents cannot see or notice.

### **3. Protecting the President outside the White House**

The US President does not perform all his duties inside the White House, most of his job requires him to be out of his residence. He travels in the Presidential limousine called the Beast which is highly developed and equipped limo. The Beast is a result of a series of inventions to enhance the president safety, which was violated in 1963 by the assassination of President JFK who was traveling in an open vehicle. Throughout time the USSS worked hard to design a strong Presidential vehicle taking in its consideration all the security measures and the potential risks .Today it is impossible to see the Commander in Chief riding in an open car.

#### **3.1. The President's Car (The Beast)**

The Cadillac Company is responsible for providing the Presidents of the US with secure vehicles since 1919. In 2009 president Barak Obama rides his presidential limousine which is the safest car that has been ever made nicknamed the BEAST. Some security features of the Beast are known for the public, but at the same time the Secret Service makes sure that not all the car specifics are discussed and announced to the people it must be kept as a secret that only the USSS agents know about it. Obama's limousine windows are 5-6 inches as it was reported, bomb proof, plus it can resist and withstand armor- penetrating bullets. Unlike the previous Presidential limos models, the Beast has a larger space for the windows which provide better external visibility. The window of the driver is different since it is 2.75 inches which allows him to talk with t Secret agents who stands outside the limo. Moreover, the limousine has armor-plated doors with the thickness of 8 inches, in addition steel overlaps are added between the

stitching to prevent bullets from entering the area between the body of the limo and the doors (Jones). The Presidential limousine is a unique vehicle that has very developed security features.

Additionally, the passenger section in which President Obama rides alone or accompanied with an official guest is an area characterized by both luxury and safety measures. The section has four seats plus glass partition which can be unlocked by the president Obama only. This section includes also panic button used for calling up help. Inside the Beast there is also a laptop and a secure Wi-Fi means which enables the President to do his work, in addition to the satellite phone that keeps him connected with the vice President and the pentagon through a direct line. An armour-plated fuel tank that can resist bullets is another security feature in Obama's presidential car, any attack or dicer hit on the fuel tank cannot lead to its explosion since a special and unique foam fills it (Jones). The drivers of the Presidential limousine are very skillful and trusted Secret Service agents. They receive an extensive training at JJRTC which provides them with a variety of courses such as the offensive and defensive driving course (Rogoway). The Beast provides the President with secure and comfortable traveling.

Furthermore, the Presidential limousine consists of several equipments to defend against any potential attacks. It is speculated that cameras of night vision, cannons of tear-gas, and shotguns of pump-action are among the defending weapons that the Beast has. If President Obama is wounded while in his car as a result of an attack, apparently there are bottles which contain the blood type of the President in case that an emergency transfusion is needed. Moreover, trunk houses which supplies oxygen in emergency cases and equipments of firefighting are other defending pieces that the Presidential limousine consists of. Additionally, the tires of the limo has a special design, puncture -resistant, and reinforced with Kevlar which can defend against any attack on President Obama's Beast with spike strips, bullets, or any device that is used to

disable the Goodyear Tires of the car. To protect the car from rocks and bullets the limo's body is possibly made of a combination of soft and hard material which function to dissipate and stop the projectile's energy, so any kind of hurled projectile toward the limo cannot penetrate the external protection. For this kind of vehicles a mixture of typical materials is used including dual-hardness of titanium, steel, ceramic, and aluminum (Jones). With highly developed defending features no one can defeat the Beast or hurt the US President.

The nation leader travels in a package or motorcade which vary according to the location, seize, and the potential risks of the intended destination. The Presidential motorcade may consist of 10 to 40 cars, including generally Scout Patrol vehicles, the motorcade Lead Car, limousines Lead Car, follow car, cars of the staff, Intelligence Car, the car of major crimes, buses for the press, civilian ambulance, squad cars of the local police, vehicles of the SWAT unit, plus tail cars which ban anybody to join the motorcade or pass it. Wherever the President travels the USSS receives collaboration from different military units and local law enforcement, in order to perform assisting tasks such as controlling large crowds and blocking off streets. Besides, the local unit of SWAT is often asked to ensure nearby presence to the Presidential motorcade in order to provide supplementary assistance if it is required (Wipfler III et al. 126-127). The Presidential motorcade is the most practical and secured way to transport the President outside the White House with the support and assistance of the local law enforcement agencies.

Each Vehicle in the Presidential motorcade has a particular and different role but they share one goal which is the president safety. The motorcade starts generally with the Route and Pilot Cars, the Route Car moves minutes before the Presidential package to clear the way besides supplying the rest of vehicles with intelligence. The Pilot Car has the same function as the Route Car but it runs in front of the Presidential package for few seconds or just a minute. For cutting

off any high way overpasses and key intersections a motorcycle may accompany the Pilot Car. Most of the time the motorcade consists of a huge number of police in Patrol Cars as well as on motorcycles. Their main role is to clear the path in order to keep the motorcade speed consistent. Furthermore, the Presidential motorcade has a Lead Car which can be a local police car or any vehicle that the USSS select like the BMW to guide the motorcade (Rogoway). The Presidential motorcade cannot move before the Leading vehicles clear the route to avoid any sudden attacks.

Stagecoach is a name given to any car that the Commander in Chief is in, it is the most important car in the motorcade and its main focus. All vehicles in the Presidential motorcade concentrate on helping the Stagecoach to arrive to its destination. The Spare which is an identical car to the Stagecoach accompanies it all the time and it functions as a decoy, blocking, and back up vehicle. The motorcade can consist of one spare or many more. The Presidential Security Detail or Halfback follows directly the spare (s) and the Stagecoach carrying the President Protective Detail. Habitually, the Halfback is a Chevrolet suburban which functions the first line of defense against any attack. Further, the motorcade consists also of the Hawkeye Renegade which is black Suburbs with rails and police light used by the CAT. The cars also equipped with running boards for the Secret Service agents external transport in addition, the agents have their own ajar rear gates and on their back an armed commando plus and assault rifle (Rogoway). Many cars in the motorcade has a defensive role equipped with heavy weapons and the Secret Service agents.

In order to communicate with intelligence sources including local police and surveillance units, the motorcade relies on the Intelligence Division Vehicle (ID Car). This car is responsible for supplying information about probable obstacles or threats along the route of the Presidential motorcade. The main job of the ID Car agents is to identify troubles before occurring. The White

House Communications Agency Vehicle nicknamed Roadrunner keeps the Commander in Chief and the presidential residency officials attached to the whole world in securely way. A constant feature in the motorcade is the ambulance which takes care of injuries resulting from an attack. Moreover, the press Vans are the vehicles which transport the Press Corps of the White House in the Presidential motorcade. Support vehicles carry important staff including members of the President's cabinet, President's doctor, and security personal. (Rogoway). Being in the motorcade does not mean that the President is isolated from the rest of the world because there are vehicles that guarantee communication through very developed technology.

### **3.2. US President Air Force One**

When the president travels abroad he has another transportation option which is Air Force One. The term refers to particular equipped planes that transport US President in comfortable and safe way. The electronics on the plane are hardened in order to protect from electromagnetic pulse besides, the aircraft is outfitted with secured and highly developed communications equipment that enables Air Force One to be like a movable command center in case the US came under attack. The aircraft consists of three levels with a space of 4,000 square feet including, the President extensive suite equipped with a conference room, large office, and lavatory. In addition to the medical suite which can has the function of a surgery room with a permanent doctor on the board (*White House*). Air Force One provides both security and comforts for the President of the US.

Military Office of the White House is responsible for planning the Presidential trips. It does not work alone but rather it operates with agencies including the USSS in order to ensure the President safety. The Presidential aircrafts undergo regular maintenance and the employees take Air Force One for regular test flight. The tires and engines are frequently replaced in addition



emergency procedures are often practiced by the crew. Air Force One has a 24 hours security a day, security is also provided to its fuel to prevent and avoid tampering. In order to prevent the planes sabotage in Andrews Air Force Base, people are not allowed to be in near proximity to it through monitoring the Base with high and developed technology sensors plus surrounding it by fences (Britton 22). The protection mission does not take into consideration the President safety only but every detail that is related to him including his means of transportation.

The Air force one does not takeoff before making sure that the runway has been checked for damage or debris by hand. Then, the Marine One helicopter brings the Commander in Chief from the Presidential residency to Andrews, he steps on Air Force One and the trip starts. On the plane the President can relax, read, and watch television, dress casually if he wants, and work without interruption. Air Force One controlled environment provides both freedom and safety for the President to be himself and to do his job (Britton 21-22). The President may travel anywhere and at any time outside the country in his highly equipped Air Force One.

When natural disasters happen the president should be ready to go to the disaster zone. In this emergency case the Presidential visit is neither prepared nor scheduled and it is known as Storm Stop in which the USSS has no enough time to design it. But an advance team should be in the area before the president arrival to scan all places that he will visit. The storm stop visit cannot last long it should be quick in order to prevent any security breakdowns. In this situation the USSS needs exceptional collaboration from the US Army and National Guard. In order to reach the damaged area the Commander in Chief has one way which is the Marine One helicopter that replaces the other presidential means of transportation that has not the ability to cope with these emergency circumstances (Discovery Channel 2017). The USSS should cope with emergency

situations and to do what should be done to facilitate the President work and duty toward his people.

#### **4. US Secret Service Weapons**

The USSS weapons changed or replaced through time in response to the development of the weaponry field and the requirements of the protective mission. Shoulder standard weapons are the ones which the secret service agents trained on including the submachine guns FN P90, Koch MP5, and Heckler 9mm plus the shotgun 12-gauge Remington 870. Submachine guns use have been stopped by other agencies in the US then it was substituted by assault rifles which is still in use to present time, whereas the USSS is not planning to do the same thing. UD officers and Special agents use other equipments which are non-lethal including pepper spray and ASP baton. The CS has technicians of the UD who work with them and they use custom built weapons that include the action-rifle Magnum-chambered bolt 300 Winchester which consists of 700 action Remington with Bender and Schmidt optics (*Shooting Range Industries*). The USSS uses a variety of weapons mainly the submachine guns.

Moreover, the semi-automatic sniper rifle 7.62mm KAC SR-25/Mk11 Mod 0 which has Trijicon 5.5× ACOG optic is another weapon that the technicians of the CS use. The breaching shotgun Remington 12 gauge 870 MCS is used by the Counter Assault Team (CAT). From early 1990's to 2006 the M4 carbine was the weapon that was used by CAT, then the team shifted to the use of SR-16 carbine because it carries fire power more than the previously used weapon. Both the ERT and CAT are supplied with the SR-16 CQB 5.56mm assault rifle from the company of Knight Armament. Up to now the USSS keeps acquiring all its weapons through an independent process (*Shooting Range Industries*). The different units and teams of the USSS are supplied and equipped with weapons which differ according to the duty and function of each unit.

The USSS protection mission changed some of its aspects and substitute others for the good of one person the nation leader. Now, the agents training has many stages and extensive courses that must be accomplished with high competency to make sure that the people standing behind the US President are the best. Moreover, the agents work inside the White House is easier since the security measures over there are undefeatable including the latest technology, specialized teams and units, and highly trained dogs which maintain the White House area safety and offer the President a secure residency. But the USSS cannot lock the Commander in Chief in his Presidential residency all the time his job requires him to travel within the US and abroad as well as seeing his public. Consequently, the Agency designed many plans and strategies to facilitate and secure the President travelling through preparing an army of agents who would accompany the national leader in a motorcade. Further, the President has many means of transportation but only his destination can decide wither he can ride his Beast, Air Force One, or Marine One helicopter. Not all Presidential trips are planned he may respond to an emergency situation and go there, the Secret Service agents must be flexible and deal with this kind of visits or storm stops in smart way without any deficiencies. The agents perform their duty equipped with specially designed weapons that can help them to handle any catastrophic situation .The change inside the Agency was a necessity to carry a heavy responsibility which is guarding the US executive office and at the same time enhancing the protective mission.

## Conclusion

During the Civil War counterfeiting was a nightmare that threatened the US currency. The Government response to the problem was the establishment of a new Agency to fight the spreading phenomenon. The USSS was the new division assigned to save the financial system's integrity. It succeeded in controlling counterfeiting as well as saving the US economy. When the US financial system recovered, the executive office suffering from assassinations began. The USSS was seen as the most capable Agency to provide protection to the US President. The Secret Service agents perform their duties believing on core values and principles that they took the oath to apply and respect.

The US history witnessed the assassination of four national leaders including President JFK. From 1901 the USSS took the responsibility of safeguarding the Commander in Chief in order to stop any potential assassin. The Agency's successful investigative career was the reason behind receiving its second assignment from the Congress. The USSS protective mission evolved throughout time to maintain an undefeatable shield around the President. The JFK assassination, however, proved that the USSS's shield was not strong enough to save the President's life. The assassination had a great impact on the improvement of the Commander in Chief security since, the USSS was obliged to change and develop different aspects of the protective duty.

Today, the Agency has an army of secret agents divided into specialized units that are highly trained and equipped with developed weapons. It also provides the President with armed and armored transportation means to travel safely. In addition, the Secret Service agents maintain the President's protection in and out the White House following appropriate strategies. Moreover, the JFK assassination highlights the importance of other Law Enforcements Agencies' collaboration with the USSS that they must supply it with intelligence reports to protect the

President. Even though the incident has more than fifty years, the failure of the USSS makes it unforgettable. Now, the Agency refers to the JFK assassination as a lesson that its agents should learn from. The USSS holds two heavy responsibilities in which it saves the integrity of the national currency and protects the country's leader, these are two significant symbols of the US, that is why playing two different roles can be hard for the USSS and it is better to concentrate on its unique protective duty and assign another Agency to carry out the criminal investigations.

Despite the fact that the JFK assassination is still a defining moment for the Agency demonstrating its failure and loss, it forced the USSS to notice the weaknesses of its protective duty and to develop all the required aspects of security. For the Secret Service agents today it is impossible for an assassin to reach the President or harm him since the last technological tools and equipments are used. The agents also represent a human shield for the Commander in Chief, forming the last line of defense against any aggression or attack. The Secret Service agents must do their job and keep the President safe whatever his ideology, policies, or race.

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