



To celebrate 225 years of Lancaster newspapers, we present this weekly series of 52 front pages from throughout our history. Many feature events that would shape the course of world history. Some feature events of great local importance. Still others simply provide windows into the long-ago lives of Lancaster County residents. Make sure to check in every week, and enjoy this trip through time with LNP.

1981

25-Year-Old Was Under Psychiatric Care

The Accused: 'Troubled, Irresponsible Drifter'

WASHINGTON (AP) — An emotionless John Warnock Hinckley Jr., a wealthy oilman's son described in court as a troubled, irresponsible drifter under psychiatric care, was ordered held without bond today on a charge of attempting to assassinate President Reagan.

Hinckley, 25, of Evergreen, Colo., was held at a Marine facility at Quantico, Va., south of Washington, and was to undergo psychiatric testing later today to help determine his competency to stand trial, U.S. Attorney Charles F.C. Ruff said. A preliminary hearing before federal magistrate Arthur Burnett was set for 10 a.m. Thursday.

Custody of Hinckley was formally transferred from the FBI to U.S. Bureau of Prisons.

U.S. Marshals Service

spokesman Bill Dempsey said today that Hinckley is being watched 24 hours a day by at least two U.S. marshals. He is being held in the base brig in a 6-by-10 foot private cell equipped with a sink, toilet and bed.

The base brig is a one-story building isolated from the rest of the Marine installation. It has five cells to a block and Hinckley is in a block by himself segregated from the rest of the prisoners.

Justice Department spokesman Tom DeCair said Hinckley was examined by a Bureau of Prisons official when he arrived there at 1:30 a.m. today and the physician pronounced Hinckley in good health.

DeCair said the physician concurred with a prescription given Hinckley for an undisclosed quantity of Valium given by a

doctor who examined Hinckley earlier at the FBI's Washington field office. He has had no visitors.

Dempsey said, "He's alert. Everything's normal. And there have been no problems this morning." Dempsey said Hinckley was eating normally as well.

There was no immediate indication of a motive for Monday's shootings which wounded Reagan in the chest, left White House press secretary James S. Brady in grave condition with a bullet wound to the brain and injured a Secret Service officer and a Washington, D.C., policeman.

The gun believed to have been used in the shootings, FBI spokesman Roger Young said today, is a Rohm Model RG-14, a six-shot West German-made, 22-caliber handgun. Although the recovered

bullets were mangled, he added, they appeared to be .22 shorts.

Both the White House and the FBI said there were no evidence of a conspiracy to assassinate the president.

"There's nothing at this point to indicate motive or conspiracy," FBI spokesman Roger Young told reporters.

In Raleigh, N.C., Harold Covington, a leader of the National Socialist Party of America, said today from a hospital bed after an assailant's bullet was removed from his chest.

Wearing blue prison-type clothing, Hinckley appeared subdued throughout a 45-minute mid-night hearing Monday at the federal courthouse two blocks from

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John Hinckley Jr., right, is flanked by federal agents as he leaves Federal District Court early today after his arraignment.

Local Weather
Cloudy, mild tonight, lows 50 to 55. Mostly cloudy, continued mild, with showers and possibly thundershowers Wednesday, highs around 70.
(Details on Page 3.)

Today's Chuckle
The average man's idea of interior decoration is a square meal.

LANCASTER NEW ERA

103rd Year — No. 32,597 METROPOLITAN EDITION LANCASTER, PA., TUESDAY EVENING, MARCH 31, 1981 Price 20¢ — Daily Home Delivered \$1.20 A Week

Could Be Walking Around 'In a Couple of Days'

Reagan in 'Exceptionally Good Condition,' Resumes His Duties



Two Secret Service agents shove President Reagan into his limousine after he was shot outside the Washington Hilton hotel Monday.

Signs Bill in Hospital Less Than 24 Hours After Bullet Removed

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan, in "exceptionally good condition" and "excellent spirits," resumed the duties of the presidency today from a hospital bed after an assailant's bullet was removed from his chest.

Less than 24 hours after he was shot outside a Washington hotel, the 70-year-old president was joking with nurses at George Washington University Hospital, impressing his doctors with his physical stamina, seeing visitors and signing legislation.

During the morning, Reagan was visited by Vice President George Bush and the president's wife, Nancy, and two of their children, Ron and Patti.

At 7:15 a.m. EST, top White House aides visited Reagan's room and found him sitting up in bed, brushing his teeth after breakfast. Deputy White House press secretary Larry Speakes said Reagan used his breakfast tray to sign a dairy price support bill the aides had given him.

"He could probably put in a full day today, if he gets a nap this afternoon," said Dr. Dennis O'Leary, a hospital spokesman. "I would not be surprised to see him up walking around in a couple of days."

O'Leary said Reagan "is doing extremely well," could be discharged from the hospital in a week or two, "then a couple of months until he's back riding horses."

O'Leary said White House press secretary James Brady, who was shot in the forehead during the assassination attempt, was "much improved"

after extensive exploratory surgery conducted Monday to determine the extent of damage to his brain. Brady's progress, he said, "has been extraordinary."

The suspect in the shooting Monday, identified as John Warnock Hinckley Jr., 25, of Evergreen, Colo., was held without bond on a charge of attempting to assassinate the president — a federal crime carrying a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

O'Leary said Reagan was told the suspect is "a young man who came from a good family." Reagan's reaction, the doctor said, was "non-committal."

The hospital spokesman added that as of this morning, Reagan had not been told that Brady or two other persons — a Secret Service agent and a District of Columbia policeman — had been shot.

As for Reagan, O'Leary said, "He's doing as well as any patient who's had an operation in his chest would do."

The president "had an excellent night" but got little sleep because of the intensive activity around him. Still, he kept up a running series of one-liners throughout the night.

"If I'd gotten this much attention

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Death Penalty, More Protection Needed?

Lancastrians Sad But Not Surprised By Reagan Shooting

By JANET KELLEY and TIM MEKEL
New Era Staff Writers

Tragic but inevitable. That was the reaction here today to Monday's shooting of President Reagan in Washington.

Public figures, such as the president, always will be targets of assailants, about 25 persons interviewed at random here this morning agreed.

They felt that mentally ill persons and moral decay in society will provide a steady stream of potential killers and, short of living in a "police state," there is no sound way to control them.

There was little agreement, however, on ways to prevent such attacks.

Strict gun control laws received strong opposition, and only moderate support.

The most common suggestion was that the president should wear bullet-proof clothing for all public appearances. (He was not wearing such a garment Monday.)

A death penalty, with public executions, definitely would be a deterrent to assassins, said one person.

Others advised that Reagan should wear a helmet, walk within a glass shield, or be protected by a more alert security force.

"It's very hard to stop a public figure from an assassination attempt. There will always be a

gap somewhere. You can't keep a president in a glass cage," said Bob Hershey, 29, of Marticville.

Hershey, like 15 other persons interviewed today in Joe Myers Restaurant, Lincoln Highway East, was surprised and angered by the shooting.

"I can't understand why the man (Reagan) wasn't wearing protective clothing," Hershey said. "Yesterday, a bullet-proof vest would have done the job."

"He ought to wear a bullet-proof vest," echoed John Lenti, 56, of Manchester, Conn. But Lenti realized the limits of protecting a president "who likes the exposure of being seen."

A bullet-proof vest wouldn't stop a shot at the head, he noted, adding that gun control would be ineffective. Instead, he advocated the death penalty for attempting to slay a president.

Even a death sentence is not a guaranteed safeguard, his wife, Diane Lenti, 40, observed. "When someone is committing murder, when they are pulling the trigger, I doubt if they are thinking rationally," she said.

"A president will always have enemies. And there will always be a bunch of crazy guys," remarked Naomi Hoffman, 43, of Lancaster.

Mrs. Hoffman and Fernie Jordan, 34, of Lancaster, both were

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Press Aide James S. Brady

'Extraordinary Progress' Brady Likely To Live, Doctors Say

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House press secretary James S. Brady, gravely wounded in an assassination attempt against President Reagan, is making "extraordinary progress" and probably will live despite extensive bullet damage to the right side of his brain, doctors said today.

Dr. Dennis O'Leary, chief of clinical affairs at George Washington University Hospital, told reporters Brady could move his limbs on the right side of the body — which is controlled by the left half of his brain — on command from his doctors.

But O'Leary ducked a question about possible paralysis of the left side of Brady's body, saying, "We are not able to assess that until we get a little further downstream."

Both Brady's pupils respond to light, which O'Leary said was encouraging.

The doctor was optimistic about Brady's eventual mental capacity because "all his mental processes are on the left side," which sustained little damage.

One half of the brain is dominant in almost everybody, controlling most mental processes. For Brady, O'Leary said, the left half dominates.

"We really don't know how he's going to end up," O'Leary said. "We believe he is going to live. We are cautiously optimistic."

The bullet entered Brady's head beside the left eye and came to rest in the right rear portion of the skull, from which it was removed intact, O'Leary said. He described tissue damage on the right side as "fairly extensive" but only "minimal" on the left side.

The hospital listed Brady's condition as "fairly good."

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Man Cited for Shooting Out Lights

Brian Dean Roland, 20, Kirkwood R1, has been cited by Lancaster state police for criminal mischief in connection with the shooting of several outdoor lights in Martic Township on March 15-16.

Police allege that Roland shot out lights of several businesses in the area.

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Visiting Her Husband

First lady Nancy Reagan arrives at George Washington University Hospital in Washington this morning to visit President Reagan.

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REAGAN SHOT

On March 21, 1981, President Ronald Reagan visited Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., and experienced what he would later call a premonition:

"I looked up at the presidential box above the stage where Abe Lincoln had been sitting the night he was shot and felt a curious sensation. ... I thought that, even with all the Secret Service protection we now had, it was probably still possible for someone who had enough determination to get close enough to the president to shoot him."

Ten days later, gunman John Hinckley Jr. shot six bullets from a revolver in the direction of Reagan outside the Washington Hilton hotel. Though none of the six

shots hit the president directly, one bullet ricocheted off the presidential limousine, struck Reagan and lodged in his lung less than an inch from his heart. Bystanders, including White House Press Secretary James Brady and Secret Service agents Tim McCarthy and Jerry Parr, also were hit.

Prior to the attempt, Hinckley had developed an obsession with actress Jodie Foster after seeing her in the 1976 film "Taxi Driver." After sending her volumes of letters with no response, Hinckley decided the best way to get Foster's attention would be to assassinate the president.

According to the front page of the Lancaster New Era, local citizens uniformly reported being sad, but ultimately not surprised by the shooting.

"I recalled 18 years ago when President Kennedy was shot," explained Ken Schuler. "Those 18 years have taken such a toll on me that yesterday I went on with my normal business. Please understand, it's not that I'm callous, but what's happened, it's becoming a normal occurrence and it's having a detrimental effect on society."

Hinckley was declared not guilty by reason of insanity in 1982, causing a public outcry strong enough to spur Congress to rewrite insanity defense laws.

Despite losing nearly half of the blood in his body on the day of the shooting, Reagan would return to the White House for work only a few weeks later, though he would never walk down a public sidewalk during his presidency again.