

GI's Helo Drama at White House

Compiled From AP and UPI

WASHINGTON — A harrowing flying escapade in a stolen Army helicopter culminated in a storm of shotgun fire and a rocky landing on the south lawn of the White House early Sunday.

Secret Service officers wounded and arrested the sole occupant of the chopper as it bounced to a standstill just 100 yards from the executive mansion — and well inside the White House grounds. He was identified as an Army private who had washed out of flight school last September.

President Nixon was at Key Biscayne, Fla., and Mrs. Nixon was visiting the couple's hospitalized daughter, Julie, in Indianapolis, Ind.

Pfc. Robert K. Preston, 20, a helicopter mechanic at nearby Ft. Meade, Md., was being held at Walter Reed Army Medical Center for psychiatric evaluation and treatment of superficial buckshot wounds, officials said.

When Secret Servicemen bundled Preston off to the hospital he entered "laughing like hell," according to Army sources.

In the last minute of a bizarre, two-hour chase which began with a midnight theft of the aircraft at Ft. Meade and the buzzing of houses and cars in the suburbs, the pilot first hovered at the Washington Monument in full view of dozens of officers and a pursuing police helicopter, then bore down at an estimated 60-knot speed toward the presidential residence less than one-half mile away.

When he crossed onto the grounds, police turned a number of spotlights onto the helicopter, a UH-1B "Huey," and opened fire with shotguns. The craft slowed abruptly, veered leftward at some 50 feet above the ground, then came down hard, bounding on one runner and then the other.

The pursuit helicopter, pi-

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Doctored-Tapes Report 'Utterly False' — St. Clair



KEY BISCAIYNE, Fla. (UPI) — President Nixon's chief lawyer said Sunday that reports that two subpoenaed presidential tape recordings may have been doctored are "utterly false." James D. St. Clair said he would request an investigation into leaks from the Watergate grand jury to halt such insinuations.

St. Clair said one member of the panel of experts examining the Watergate tape recordings had expressed an opinion "many weeks ago" that two of the tapes could be re-recordings.

However, St. Clair said a technical investigation ordered

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Agent Protection Ends for Agnew

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Treasury Department said Sunday it was lifting Secret Service protection for former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew.

A spokesman for the department said the decision to end federal protection for the resigned vice president was made by Treasury Secretary George P. Shultz, with knowledge of the White House.

The spokesman, Charles Arnold, said Agnew's Secret Service guard will "end before midnight."

The decision comes two days after U.S. comptroller Elmer B. Staats said that payments for the agents for Agnew were not authorized by law. Staats said in a letter sent to Shultz that the General Accounting Office would not pay for Agnew's Secret Service protection after Sunday.

Commenting on Staats' letter,

Arnold said the Treasury Department still believes there is presidential authority to order Secret Service protection in cases not specifically covered by statutes — such as the Agnew case.

Arnold said that Secret Service

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Safe Drivers Bad Bet in Nev.

RENO, Nevada (UPI) — The police department's drive to find the city's best drivers has been a flop.

In five months officers could only find two drivers who qualified—one was outside the city limits.

"From now on, instead of looking for a safe driver every month, we'll look for one periodically," police Capt. Ken Pulver said.



At top, Secret Service agents and a policeman check over the helicopter Preston landed on the White House grounds. Shotgun pellet scars are evident on the helicopter. (UPI Photos)

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