Many Have Been Targets Of Assassins

By Karlyn Barker

The attempted assassination yesterday of Alabama Gov. George Wallace, coming just four years after Robert F. Kennedy was killed during the 1968 presidential primary campaign, was another reminder of the hazards faced by American politicians and public figures.

In addition to Kennedy and civil rights leader the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who was slain a month earlier, assassin's bullets have struck down four American presidents—John F. Kennedy in 1963, William McKinley in 1901, James A. Garfield in 1881 and Abraham Lincoln in 1865.

Three presidents—Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman—escaped assassination attempts. Teddy Roosevelt, the Bull Moose Party's candidate in 1912, was shot but not fatally wounded.

Mr. Truman escaped injury in 1950 when a group of assassins attempted to storm Blair House, the presidential guest house where the President was living during extensive renovation of the White House.

FDR was fired on by a would-be assassin in Miami in 1933. Chicago Mayor Anton J. Cermak, who was with the President-elect, was killed by shots intended for FDR, who was not hurt.

Another assassination victim during the Roosevelt era was Sen. Huey P. Long, the Louisiana populist whose political career resembles that of Wallace.

Long was killed in the rotunda of the State Capitol at Baton Rouge in 1935 at a time when he was being mentioned as a presidential possibility. The one-time Louisiana farm boy was considered a virtual dictator in the state, having consolidated his strength earlier as governor.

The 1960s saw the greatest incidence of political assassinations in the nation's history and prompted sociologists and presidential commissions to explore the underlying cause of violence in the country.

In addition to the Kennedy's and Dr. King, the list of assassination victims included civil rights activist Medgar Evers in 1963, black nationalist Malcolm X in 1965, and George Lincoln Rockwell, American Nazi Party leader, in 1967.