

# Secret Service 'Intuition' Kept Ford Out of Crowd

## White House Says Guards Cautioned the President on Coast Group—Nessen Asserts Trips Will Continue

By JAMES M. NAUGHTON

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 24—The White House said today that the Secret Service, acting on "intuition," had cautioned President Ford against mingling with the particular crowd from which a woman fired a revolver at him Monday in San Francisco.

Ron Nessen, the White House press secretary, reaffirmed the President's determination to continue his extensive cross-country travels but broadly hinted that Mr. Ford had already begun to reduce his close contacts with large crowds.

### Nessen Explanation

At a news briefing, Mr. Nessen noted that the President had not mingled with crowds of presumed well-wishers during his three-day stay in California last weekend.

The disclosure appeared to be part of a continuing White House effort to defend both the Secret Service and the President's penchant for frequent trips outside the capital.

Meanwhile, sources familiar with the activities of the woman accused of firing at Mr.

Ford said that she was a long-time Government informer who continued in that role in the days before the shot was fired. [Page 29.]

Mr. Nessen said that "occasionally the Secret Service will suggest that it might be just as well to pass up this or that crowd" and that, in such circumstances, Mr. Ford always accepted the judgment of his security detail.

Asked if the Secret Service had suggested on Monday that Mr. Ford pass up the chance to plunge into the crowd of 3,000 outside the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco, Mr. Nessen at first said that that would be a "fair" deduction and then flatly affirmed it.

### Decision to Move

A well-placed White House official said later that the Secret Service recommendation had not been based on any awareness that the crowd at the hotel included Sara Jane Moore, the 45-year-old woman accused of firing a .38-caliber

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# Secret Service 'Intuition' Kept Ford From Mingling With the Crowd

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revolver at the President. The official said the judgment had been based on "a kind of intuition or instinct" that the crowd was not entirely friendly.

Before Mr. Ford arrived at the hotel, a group of demonstrators paraded outside with signs advocating a variety of radical and left-wing causes. One placard said, "Release Pat-ty Hearst. Arrest Gerald Ford."

One official said today that the Secret Service had obtained "some intelligence" information that the demonstrators had left their placards in nearby Union Square and had dispersed into the crowd.

Moreover, a cameraman for a local television station was said to have told Presidential aides that there were "bad" individuals in the crowd and "you ought to get [Mr. Ford] out of town as fast as you can."

Acting on the information, Secret Service agents were said to have persuaded Mr. Ford as he left the hotel to pause only long enough to wave to the crowd some 40 feet away and then enter his limousine.

It was while he walked to the vehicle that the shot was fired, struck the pavement and missed Mr. Ford but apparently ricocheted and injured slightly a cab driver among the bystanders.

Mr. Nessen said later that there had been "no change in prospective travel plans" despite the two alleged attempts on Mr. Ford's life 17 days apart in California.

The first instance occurred Sept. 5 in Sacramento when Lynette Alice Fromme, a follower of Charles M. Manson, the convicted mass slayer, allegedly pointed a loaded pistol at Mr. Ford outside the State Capitol.

The White House spokesman

also said today that, while Mr. Ford was "certainly not going to try to block" a proposed Congressional inquiry into Secret Service protective methods, the President was "more than satisfied with the protection he gets from the Secret Service."

Mr. Nessen said in reply to questions that the Secret Service was constantly seeking ways to improve its protective function. He suggested that modifications of procedure could be put into effect on future trips by Mr. Ford.

The President "is fully aware of the dangers involved" in his journeys, Mr. Nessen said, "I think anyone who suggests the President is insensitive to the dangers is wrong."

At one point during the briefing, Mr. Nessen said Mr. Ford had recalled that the door of Nessen's limousine was not open when he emerged from the St. Francis Hotel.

"If it had been open, he would have gotten right in," Mr. Nessen said.

Later, however, Mr. Nessen told reporters that Mr. Ford had not meant to be critical of the Secret Service in commenting on the door but had intended to recall details.

Yesterday Mr. Ford viewed videotape copies of the television news film of the shooting incident. Mr. Nessen said that in part to bring Ford's case, travel was intended to bear on members of Congress who had not responded to White House legislative initiatives in such areas as energy, the economy and foreign policy.

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