



Gerald Ford has spent almost 27 years as a Congressman, Vice President and President pressing the flesh. He loves campaigning for elective office and meeting the

people. Neither threats nor attempts at assassination, such as this one by Lynette Fromme in Sacramento, are about to change Ford's style at this stage of his life.

For the mild-mannered man that he is, Gerald Ford strangely arouses the violence in women. Ford is the only U.S. President whose life has been threatened by two women, Sara Moore, 45, and Lynette Fromme, 26. Sara Moore tried to gun Ford down in San Francisco on Sept. 22—17 days after Lynette failed in Sacramento.

Can the President Be Protected?

by Lloyd Shearer

EACH time an assassination attempt is made on the President of the U.S., discussion begins anew on how better to protect the life of the chief executive.

The sad and simple truth is that complete protection from the individual assassin is impossible for any U.S. President unless he is willing to abstain from the rituals of American politics.

As the nation's leading politician, no U.S. President—not even Richard Nixon who became increasingly reclusive in his second term—wants to eschew such participation.

"Pressing the flesh," patting shoulders, kissing babies, mingling with crowds, greeting the people, eyeball-to-eyeball contact with the constituency—these are the traditional political techniques of an open society, and they carry within them the omnipresent threat of assassination.

As Urbanus Edmund Baughman, chief of the Secret Service from 1948 to 1961, used to say repeatedly: "The life of the President of the United States is in very real and constant danger. This danger has grown in recent years and will grow even more in the future."

Why?

Practically all persons who attempt or commit assassinations are mentally disturbed, deranged or flatly insane.

The population of the U.S.A. is 214 million. Medical authorities suggest that at any one time approximately 5 per cent of the people are mentally ill. That means 10.7 million Americans.

Long List

Of that vast number the Secret Service lists in its computer the names of approximately 47,000 potential Presidential assassins and harassers.

Nowhere on that list was the name of Lynette Alice Fromme, the 26-year-

old "kook" of the violent Charles Manson family, who last month tried to gun down President Gerald Ford in Sacramento.

Surely her name belonged on any list compiled by the Secret Service's Protective Research Section—especially after the Associated Press in July had quoted Fromme as saying: "If Nixon's reality wearing a new Ford face continues to run the country against the law, our homes will be bloodier than the Tate-La Bianca houses and My Lai put together."

Supposing the Secret Service or the FBI or the local police department had placed Lynette Fromme under surveillance or immobilized her in Sacramento during Ford's visit, does that mean they would have driven from her perverted, distorted mind all intent to kill the President? It does not. Untreated, mental illness like alcoholism, grows steadily worse.

Lynette Fromme is a cunning, wily, deceptive, sick young woman. During the Manson trial in Los Angeles, "Squeaky," as she is known, used to tell many of us reporters that in her eyes Charles Manson was "God" or "the Son of God" or "Jesus Christ" or "Jesus' Representative on Earth."

She is mad as are most fanatics. And there is no reason to believe that forestalled in Sacramento, she would not have followed Gerald Ford to some other city and there, under another name and another disguise, tried to kill him.

Big expansion

Since the assassination of John F. Kennedy in 1963, the Secret Service has been expanded from 450 agents to 1350. Its budget has boomed from \$5.8 million to nearly \$90 million. The President now rides in an armored limousine with an air-cover of helicopters. He wears a bullet-proof vest. The Secret Service is equipped with the latest electronic communications, the best in munitions, but despite its growth and equipment, despite the high caliber of its agents, it cannot become the caretaker or the tracker of this nation's demented. And it is the demented, the schizophrenics, the haters, the fanatics, the psychotics—the vast army of angry, disgruntled abnormals we have in this country—who forge the Damoclean sword which hovers continually over the White House incumbent.

Secret Service agents study the profile of the typical political assassin. They read the "Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy." They consult the high-priority file which is maintained on individuals considered major security risks.

They try to commit to memory the photographs of potential assassins which are kept in albums in the offices of the White House detail. They exchange information with the FBI and the CIA and other agencies.

But they are not psychiatrists, and the behavior patterns and thought processes of the mentally disturbed are incalculable, which under the present set of ground rules makes the job of protecting a U.S. President far less than a certainty.

The Pavlick case

Take the case of Richard P. Pavlick, who could have blown up John F. Kennedy, his wife Jacqueline, their two children, and any Secret Service agents with them.

In the late fall of 1960 after Kennedy had been elected President but had not yet been sworn in, a postal inspector in Belmont, N. H., notified the Protective Research Section of the Secret Service about 73-year-old Richard Pavlick. Pavlick had been overheard threatening the life of the President-elect.

Secret Service agents traveled to Belmont to talk to him.

But Pavlick, the village "nut", had gone. Where was he? On Sunday morning, Dec. 11, 1960, he was sitting in his car outside the Joseph P. Kennedy house in Palm Beach, Fla. Inside the mansion were the President-elect, his wife, his children, an assortment of other Kennedys, friends and relatives.

Pavlick had planned his assassination with the detail frequently typical of madmen. He had photographed the Kennedy home, the local Roman Catholic church, which Kennedy attended, and had carefully studied the church layout. He veered between blowing up the church while Kennedy was inside or blowing up the Presidential limousine while Kennedy was a passenger.

Not without mechanical ingenuity, Pavlick had placed seven large sticks of dynamite in his own car, so rigging them that by closing his knife switch, he could detonate the dynamite.

What he planned finally to do was to drive his vehicle into the Kennedy limousine. At the moment of contact he would pull the switch, detonate the dynamite, blow himself, Kennedy, and the Secret Service agents into fragments.

A family escort

A little before 10 a.m., John F. Kennedy emerged from his father's house. He was accompanied by his Secret Service guards, his wife, daughter Caroline and a flock of nieces and nephews. They escorted him to his car although he was the only one going to Mass. A Secret Service agent opened the door to the limousine. The President-elect entered. Another agent started the engine.

Pavlick, sitting in his car across the

street, ready to make his move, watched Jackie and the children waiting for Kennedy to drive off. The sight of those he considered innocents neutralized his plan. He did nothing.

Later he explained: "I did not wish to harm her or the children. I decided to get him at the church or sometime later."

On Thursday, Dec. 15th, the Secret Service took Pavlick into custody. On him they found a letter, written in the past tense as if he had already completed the assassination.

Why he did it

"I believe," it said, "that the Kennedys bought the Presidency and the White House, and until he really became President it was my intention to remove him in the only way it was available to me; the Supreme Court wouldn't enter any motion of mine, if asked, to stop the oath of office. If death and destruction and injury to persons has resulted from my vicious action then I am truly sorry... It's unfortunate for the Kennedys that John was elected President because it was Jimmy Hoffa who was to have been my target of destruction because of his 'go to hell the United States' attitude and because of the gutless cowards called the Congress of the United States who are afraid to clip his wings..."

What sort of Presidential security procedures can be developed to thwart determined suicidal maniacs? Practically none which would still permit Presidents to walk openly among the nation's citizenry.

"If the President is willing to be sealed off from contact with the people," says Rufus Youngblood, who was Lyndon Johnson's favorite Secret Service agent, "that makes it easy. But



Social and psychological misfit, cunning and deceptive, "Squeaky" Fromme obtained the gun (shown in hand of Secret Service agent after her capture) from retired civil service worker Harold Buro. The only protection from potential assassins is Presidential isolation.

that's not the American way or the American tradition, and I personally doubt whether the people or the President would stand for it. It is simply not in the character of our country."

Murder and mayhem, the easy access to guns and weapons of every type, wars, the rising tide of mental illness and crime, the growth of a nameless

malaise which deprives youth of hope, the decline of religion, the TV commercialization of violence—these are all ingredients of our national life. They lead to aberrations of human conduct which in turn may lead to political assassinations.

Herewith our record to date on that subject:

ASSASSINATIONS AND NEAR-ASSASSINATIONS OF U.S. PRESIDENTS

Jan. 30, 1835—Richard Lawrence, a painter later judged insane, fires two pistols at President **ANDREW JACKSON**. Both misfire.

Apr. 14-15, 1865—At Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., while watching "Our American Cousins," a comedy, President **ABRAHAM LINCOLN** is shot by actor John Wilkes Booth. The bullet enters the rear of Lincoln's head, lodges near the right eye. On April 15, Lincoln dies in the William Peterson residence across from Ford's Theatre, the first of four U.S. Presidents to be assassinated.

July 2, 1861—**JAMES GARFIELD**, President of the U.S., waiting for a train in the Washington, D.C., railroad station, is shot by Charles J. Guiteau, a disgruntled federal job-seeker. The

assassin's bullet lodges against the President's spine. Garfield contracts blood poisoning, fights for his life through the summer, dies on Sept. 19, 1881.

Sept. 6, 1901—President **WILLIAM MCKINLEY** is shot by anarchist Leon Czolgosz at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, N.Y. Eight days later, McKinley, 58, dies from the bullet wound. He is succeeded by **THEODORE ROOSEVELT**, who becomes the 28th President of the U.S.

Oct. 14, 1912—While waving and bowing to an admiring crowd, **THEODORE ROOSEVELT**, ex-President, running against Taft and Wilson on a third party Bull Moose ticket, is fired upon from a distance of six feet by John Schrank of New York. The bullet goes through Roosevelt's overcoat, spectacles' case, and thick folded manuscript, fracturing his fourth rib. It lodges a little short of his right lung. "I don't know if you fully understand," Roosevelt tells his audience,

"But it takes more than that to kill a Bull Moose." After delivering his speech he is taken to a hospital where his wound is dressed.

Feb. 15, 1933—In Miami, Fla., Joe Zangara, 33, fires six shots at President-elect **FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT**, seated in an open car. Roosevelt is not injured, but Mayor Anton Cermak of Chicago is. Taut with pain, the wounded Cermak murmurs to Roosevelt: "I'm mighty glad it was me instead of you. I wish you'd be careful. The country needs you." A few days later Cermak dies. Four others, wounded in the shootout, recover. Zangara is electrocuted March 20, 1933.

Nov. 1, 1950—Oscar Collazo and Griselio Torresola, two Puerto Rican members of a fanatic band of nationalists, try to shoot their way into the historic Blair-Lee House where President **HARRY TRUMAN** is living while the White House is being repaired. One of Truman's guards is

killed, another two are wounded. Next morning as he takes his usual walk, Truman remarks, "A President has to expect these things."

Nov. 22, 1963—Riding in a motorcade through Dallas, Tex., President **JOHN F. KENNEDY** is struck by two bullets fired by assassin Lee Harvey Oswald. Kennedy dies after arriving at Parkland Memorial Hospital. Two days later while in police custody, Lee Harvey Oswald is gunned down by nightclub owner Jack Ruby.

Sept. 5, 1975—En route to address the California state legislature President **GERALD FORD** narrowly escapes assassination in Sacramento, Cal., when Lynette Alice Fromme, 26, attempts to shoot him from a distance of two feet. No shot is fired, because the .45-caliber, gas-loaded, automatic pistol has not been properly cocked although it contains four bullets in its magazine. Lynette Fromme becomes the first woman in U.S. history to attempt a Presidential assassination.