

Ford Assassination

Scare — Manson

Woman Is Seized

Alert Agent Grabs pistol

By George Murphy
Chronicle Correspondent

Sacramento

A fanatical follower of mass-murderer Charles Manson was disarmed and thrown to the ground by a Secret Service agent yesterday after she took aim at President Ford from pointblank range with a loaded .45 caliber automatic pistol.

Lynette (Squeaky) Fromme, a founding member of the blood-thirsty Manson cult who was dressed from head to toe in red, slipped through a crowd watching as Mr. Ford made his way from the Senator Hotel across Capitol Park for a speech before a joint session of the Legislature.

Witnesses said Miss Fromme, 26, calmly pulled the gun from her purse and brought the muzzle to within two feet of the President before Secret Service agent Larry Buendorf seized the pistol and twisted it from her grasp.

As two other agents grabbed President Ford, bent him double to reduce his visibility and hurried him off to safety, Buendorf forced Miss Fromme to the ground and held her as other security personnel rushed up to help.

"Don't get excited! It didn't go off! It didn't go off!" Miss Fromme shouted, according to bystanders. She was handcuffed and pushed against a tree, where she kept repeating, "He is not a public servant. He is not a public servant."

Buendorf, 37, suffered a small cut between his right thumb and index finger in taking the gun from the woman. There was speculation he might have been nicked by the firing mechanism.

When it was later examined, the pistol was discovered to have four bullets in the clip. But there was no bullet in the firing chamber.

The gun incident was at 10:04 a.m. Although shaken at the time, Mr. Ford was calm and relaxed two and a half hours later in discussing the apparent attempt on his life.

"I am not sure that I ought to describe what I saw beyond the fact that I saw a hand coming up behind several others in the front row. And obviously there was a gun in that hand," he told newsmen.

"I then saw almost instant-

Back Page Col. 3

From Page 1

aneously, very quick and very effective action by the Secret Service in taking care of the matter," the President said.

Mr. Ford was hustled by agents into the east entrance of the capitol and immediately ushered into a scheduled meeting with Governor Edmund Brown. The two men began chatting at once, making no reference to the incident, and then launched into a general policy discussion.

Toward the end of their meeting, an aide whispered the name of the woman with the gun and Mr. Ford relayed it to Governor Brown.

At a news conference, the President went out of his way to thank the people of California "for the very, very warm welcome that they've given me in the state of California and I would not under any circumstances feel that one individual in any way represented the attitude on part of the people of California."

Continuing, Mr. Ford said, "And let me add with great emphasis: This incident under no circumstances will prevent me or preclude me from contacting the American people as I travel from one state to another and from one community to another.

"In my judgment it's vitally important for a President to see

the American people, and I'm going to continue to have that personal contact and relationship with the American people. I think it's vital and I intend to carry it out."

Irene Morrison, 28, a secretary for the State Assembly, was standing in the crowd when the

More Ford news
on Pages 2, 3 and 4

assassination scare occurred. "I was shaking hands with the President and as soon as he touched my hand the Secret Service men came to him, and he turned completely white," she said.

Another Assembly secretary, Dori Cannon, said she saw Miss Fromme pull the gun from her purse. "She was wearing a long red dress and a red bandana and she just looked like everybody else. And then she had this great big gun in her hand."

Miss Fromme was arraigned before U.S. District Magistrate Esther Mix on charges of attempting to murder a president. Her bail was set at \$1 million and the case was continued to September 11 for a preliminary hearing.

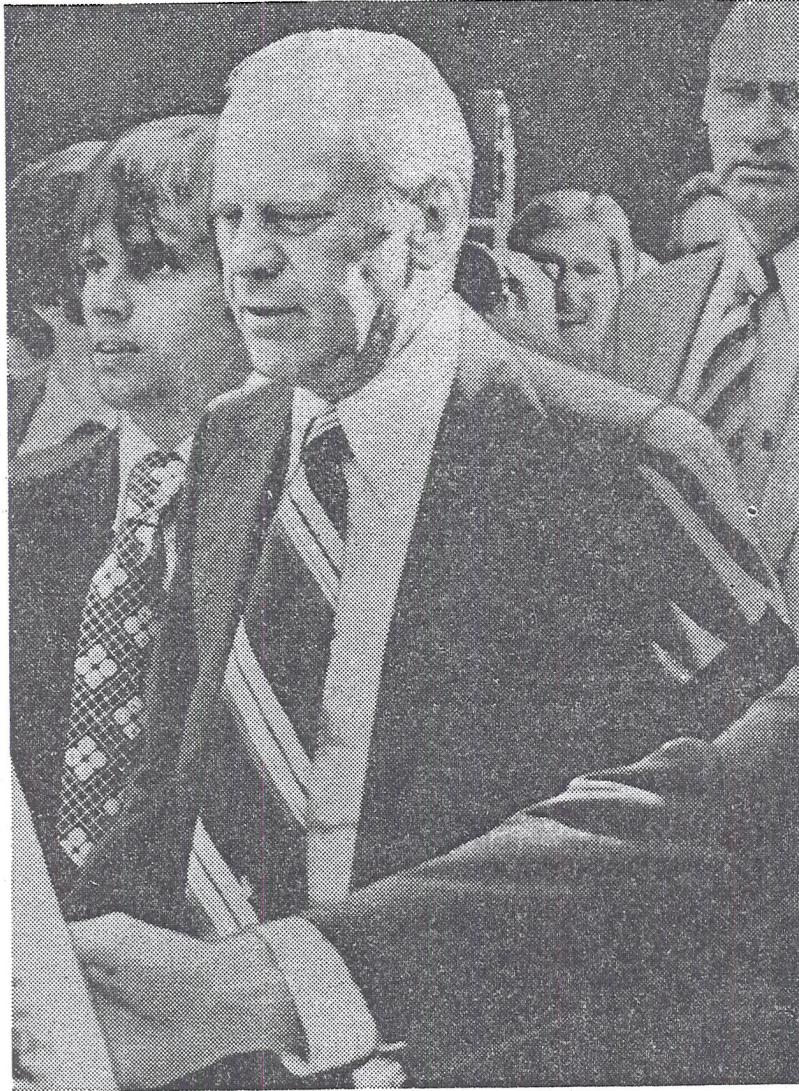
Mr. Ford was ending a two-day swing through Washington, Oregon and California when the apparent attempt on his life was made. He had been well-received in the Northwest—with the exception of some pro-Indian demonstrators in Seattle—and the crowds here were, for the most part, friendly.

'I Saw A Hand'



By Susan Ehmer

Moments after a Secret Service agent disarmed a woman aiming a pistol at the President at close range, other agents hurried Mr. Ford to the state Capitol in Sacramento



AP Wirephoto

PRESIDENT FORD AFTER THE SCARE
Agents escorted him into the Capitol

He had left the hotel for the brief walk to the capitol and, as is custom, was shaking hands with spectators who lined the leafy

lane in the sweltering heat when the incident occurred.

Within five hours, he was on his way back to Washington.