

The Woman in Red — An Earlier 'Threat'

By Keith Power

Only two months ago, Lynette (Squeaky) Fromme, wrapped in a red robe symbolizing the blood of sacrifice and speaking for the imprisoned Charles Manson, made a veiled threat against President Ford.

Miss Fromme, nominal leader of the bizarre followers of the convicted mass murderer, sought out the news media to deliver "Charlie's" message of warning and was anxious it be spread to the public.

The tiny, red-haired Miss Fromme went to the offices of the Associated Press in Sacramento on July 3 while other media sources were contacted by letter or telephone.

The message was explicit in all cases. Manson, who had been corresponding regularly from San Quentin with his "Squeaky," was angry with former President Nixon and, by extension, President Ford.

"If Nixon's reality wearing a new Ford face continues to run the country against the law," Miss Fromme warned, "our homes will be bloodier than the Tate-La Bian-

ca houses and My Lai put together."

The actress Sharon Tate and a Los Angeles couple, Leno and Rosemary La Bianca, were among seven victims of ritual murder by Manson's cult followers in 1969. Manson and four others were convicted a year later.

Miss Fromme, one of Manson's first worshippers, was not accused of the murders at the trial, although she subsequently was jailed for conspiring to feed a hamburger laced with LSD to a

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prospective witness.

In her role as Manson's emissary to the media in July, she wore a long, rust dress and red turban over her freckled, elfin face. On her forehead was the scarred "X" she carved to show her fealty to Manson.

"We're nuns now and we wear red robes," she said. "We're waiting for Our Lord and there's only one thing to do before He comes off His cross and that's clean up the earth."

"Our red robes are an example of new morality. . . they're red with the sacrifice, the blood of the sacrifice."

Despite Miss Fromme's open statements about President Ford and her record of proximity to violence, the leader of the Manson cult and another follower apparently were left unwatched in their little apartment a few blocks from the Capitol.

In fact, Sandra Good, another original member of the Manson family, told a reporter over the telephone shortly after the arrest that Miss Fromme has "just gone to the post office . . . she's just up the street."

Miss Fromme and Miss Good originally moved to Sacramento to be near Folsom Prison where Manson was in custody. He was moved to San Quentin a year ago, but the girls remained behind cultivating an organic garden.

The landlady of the big Victorian on P street where the young women lived on welfare described them as "nice quiet girls."

In an interview with The Chronicle a year ago she said Sacramento police were aware of the identity of the two girls in the third floor and had told her about them.

Despite the popular conception that the Manson cult is dormant, The Chronicle learned Miss Fromme and Miss Good were still recruiting followers in Sacramento.

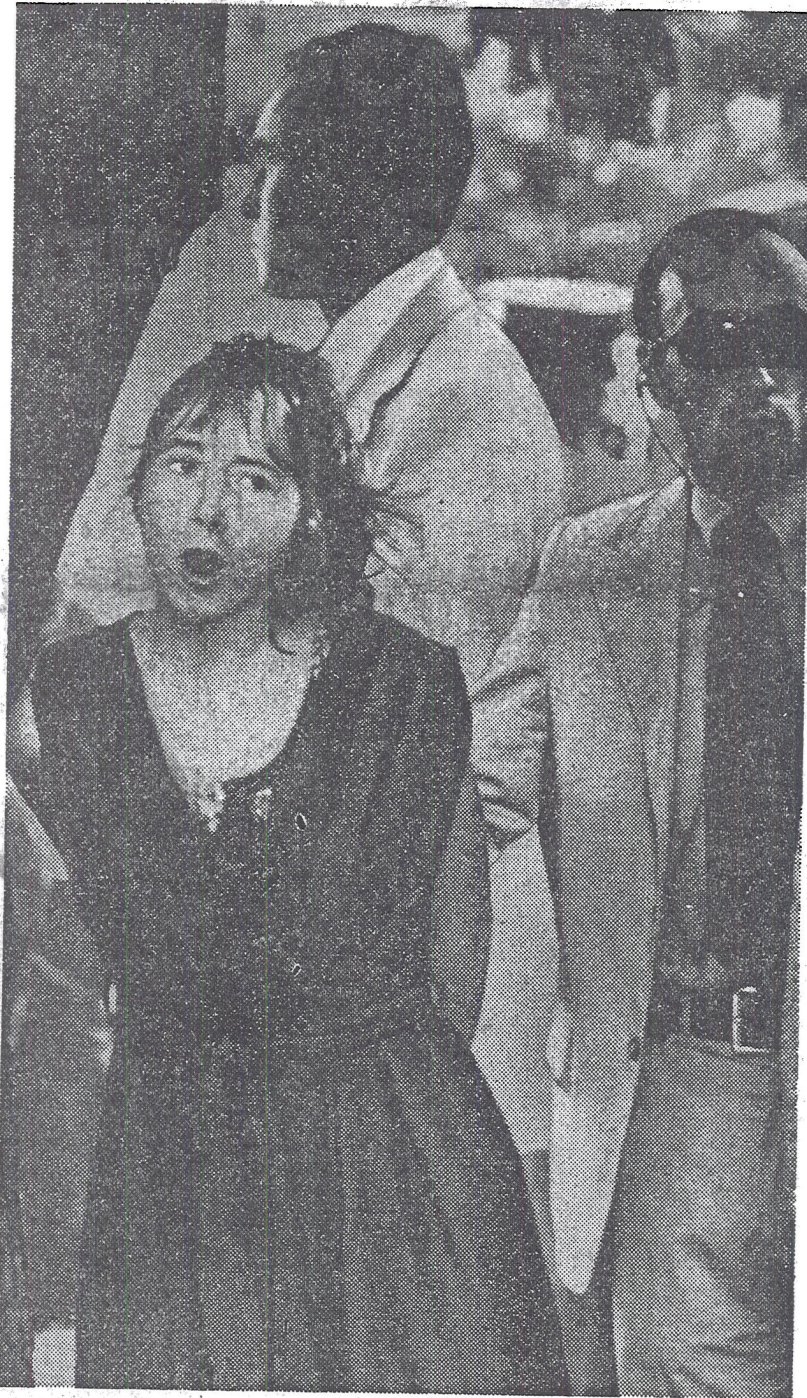
They left with young women for sojourns and initiation rites in remote country. Meanwhile, Miss Good was majoring in English at Sacramento State University in order someday to write the "true story" of Manson.

The story of Miss Fromme, as recounted in the best-selling book, "Helter Skelter," began with her being ordered out of her comfortable family home in Southern California.



By Clem Albers

LYNETTE FROMME IN 1972 PHOTO
'We're nuns now and we wear red robes'



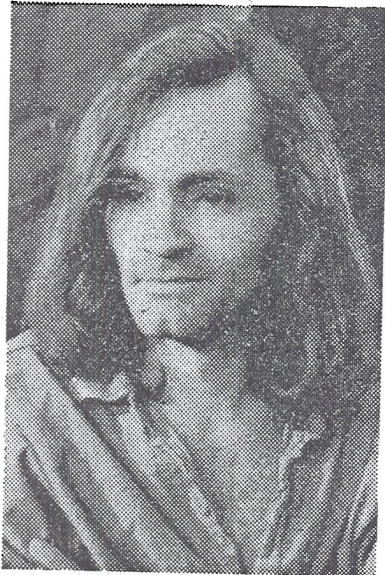
UPI Telephoto

Lynette Fromme, a devoted follower of Charles Manson, was marched away by guards after aiming a pistol at President Ford



AP Wirephoto

In Sacramento Lynette Fromme, in her long dress, was taken from jail to be arraigned before a U.S. magistrate



CHARLES MANSON
At 1970 court hearing

As she sat crying on a curb in Venice, "a man walked up and said, 'Your father kicked you out of the house, did he?' And that was Charlie."

She is fiercely proud of being among the first of the Manson girls to join the hippie family during the flower child period in the Haight-Ashbury. She was 17 and Manson named her Squeaky because of her voice.

Miss Fromme's expression of pert innocence impressed family members and even investigators into the grotesque sex and drug orgies and ritual killings of the family's Hollywood period.

Her beatific regard for Manson was never tainted by the ugly testimony of the trial. "Charlie's in love with love," she told the court. "And I'm in love with love, so I'm in love with Charlie. All of us are."

That wholesome smile was undiminished when The Chronicle interviewed Miss Fromme in the county jail at Stockton where she awaited trial for murder in November, 1972.

She was accused by authorities of being part of a wandering clan of Manson women and ex-convicts who killed a couple to cover up a series of robberies in Los Angeles.

Manson was then on San Quentin's Death Row (his sentence has since been commuted), but Miss Fromme was confident he would survive, somehow escape before the apocalyptic race war he predicted.

"We foresee a lot of violence in the street," she said. "We want to survive."

Ultimately, in the Stockton case two of the accused Manson girls were sent to jail as accessories to murder. The murder charge against Miss Fromme was dropped; as was another charge of robbery pending in Los Angeles.

San Rafael attorney George Douglas Vaughn, Miss Fromme's court-appointed defender in the Stockton and Los Angeles cases, expressed shock when he learned of her arrest in Sacramento.

"If that is what happened it is completely different from the Squeaky I knew," he said. "She was a very pacifistic type of girl. I saw no violence in her at any time."

He said he felt her past brushes with the law after the Manson case were political harassment by law enforcement officers.

But Curt Gentry, co-author with Vincent Bugliosi of "Helter Skelter," the book on the Manson family, held an entirely different assessment of Miss Fromme.

Gentry, who researched the book for three years, said he was not surprised at Miss Fromme's involvement in the assassination attempt.

He said he knew she was in Sacramento recruiting members for the Manson family and working with ex-convict groups like the white racist Aryan Brotherhood, which has a philosophy close to Manson's.

"Was she violent? We always thought so. They always let her go because of her innocent good looks."

"Squeaky has that very beatific smile. The true believer. She had all the answers ... Charlie was God."