

September 22, 1975

POOL REPORT #15

The President is fine, he is okay, he is in the airplane going back to Washington.

Now, this is Bob Mead relating it. They were in the MacArthur Suite for the interview with KPIX on the 5th floor. He went down in the elevator. In the elevator were agents, the President and Rumsfeld. They were discussing the interview and how well it went.

They went out to a small lobby on the Post Street side of the hotel. There were some people standing on the entrance way to the Post Street lobby. They waived and they went outside. He said to people as he went outside, "Hi, how are you," and waived.

Then he said there appeared to be a shot fired from the crowd. At least they thought it was but all they saw was a puff of smoke. Bob Mead saw the puff of smoke. (Robert Mead is the Television Adviser to the President.)

The agent told the President to get down. The agents -- he said they didn't shout, they talked quietly. The President crouched down by the side of his car. Agents hovered over him and they hustled him into the car, the limousine, that was waiting outside -- his regular limousine.

They tore away from the front of the hotel at a fast speed -- at which I gather Mead meant was much faster than usual. Once they got away from the immediate vicinity of the hotel, they slowed down to a more normal rate of speed. They went to the airport. There was a group of policemen there. The President shook hands with them, was smiling, said the weather looks nice but the wind is blowing. This is Mead relating what he heard the President say.

Jack Merchant, the SS agent standing next to him at the airport. And Mrs. Ford drove up. She had driven up from Monterey. She smiled and waived. They got on the airplane and it flew away.

To go back to the beginning, the President is fine. He was not hit, he is on his way back to Washington. He is fine, he was not hit.

Phil Shabecoff
New York Times

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