

The original documents are located in Box 43, folder “President - Assassination Attempts Moore, Sarah Jane” of the Philip Buchen Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 22, 1975

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
UPON HIS ARRIVAL
AT THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION ROOM

11:55 P.M. EDT

QUESTION: Mr. Ford, could you speak to us for just a moment please and tell us how you feel?

THE PRESIDENT: Can I have just a minute to look at all of you?

QUESTION: Mr. President -- what --

THE PRESIDENT: May I take just a minute. Obviously, Betty and I are delighted to be back here very safely, and we are most grateful that Mr. Vice President and Mrs. Rockefeller have met us. We have talked to our four children and I guess they are kind of happy that we are back here all right. But, let me say most emphatically, I thank the Secret Service for doing a super job again. They really were tremendous in the things that they did that were necessary and essential. But equally, let me express my appreciation for the fine job that the San Francisco police force did. They were tremendous, and those that were associated with them, because they had the help of others. But the most important thing is that I don't think any person as President or any person in any other major political office ought to cower in the face of a limited number of people, out of 214 million Americans, who want to take the law into their own hands. The American people expect, and I approve of it, in fact, I think it is right, want a dialogue between them and their President and their other public officials. And if we can't have that opportunity of talking with one another, seeing one another, shaking hands with one another, something has gone wrong in our society.

(MORE)



I don't think these individuals who want to destroy our society and tear up our fabric of relationships represent America. The American people are good people; Democrats, Independents, Republicans, and others. Under no circumstances will I, and I hope no others, capitulate to those that want to undercut what's all good in America. The American people are strong, they're good and they will reflect the leadership that comes from the people in public office. And the leadership must likewise be strong and good. And I am confident, whether that leadership is Democratic or Republican, it will be good and it will be strong. That's the way America can give the leadership to the world that is essential in these crucial times.

It's wonderful to be home. It's good to see our family. It's good to see the Vice President and Mrs. Rockefeller, and it's, I think, important that we as a people don't capitulate to the wrong element, a limited number, an infinitesimal number of people who want to destroy everything that's best about America. I won't. I'm sure the Vice President won't. I am sure Democratic leaders won't. We're going to stand tall and strong in this confrontation with a limited number of people who don't represent all of us.

END (AT 11:59 p.m. EDT)



SEPTEMBER 22, 1975

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END (AT 11:59 p.m. EDT)

September 22, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

At the conclusion of a t.v. interview with KPIX-TV, in a suite on the 6th floor of the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco, President Ford boarded an elevator and rode to the ground floor of the Hotel on the Post Street side. The President greeted a small group of well-wishers in the lobby of the hotel.

The President stepped out on Post Street, where his car was parked at the curb. As he walked from the hotel door to the car, he waved briefly to a large crowd, on the other side of Post Street.

At that point there was a sound of a single gun shot.

Secret Service agents Ron Pontius and Jack Merchant and Assistant to the President Donald Rumsfeld pushed the President down toward the sidewalk shielding him behind his car from the crowd. The President, agents Pontius and Merchant, and Donald Rumsfeld entered the car and the motorcade departed immediately for the San Francisco International Airport.

For the first several blocks after departing from the hotel, the President was stretched out on the floor of his car between the seats with agents Pontius and Merchant and Mr. Rumsfeld shielding his body. After the car was out of the area, the President sat in the middle of the rear seat with agents Pontius and Merchant on either side and Mr. Rumsfeld in the jump seat.

Mrs. Ford arrived at the San Francisco International Airport by U.S. Air Force C-9 aircraft from Monterey a moment or two after the President and boarded Air Force 1.

She was told of the episode in the Presidential cabin. Mrs. Ford received the information calmly. The President can be described as serious following the episode and on the flight home to Washington.

The individual who fired the gun has been identified as Sarah Moore, age 47. The weapon has been identified as a 5 shot .38 revolver.

During the flight home to Washington, the President told his staff aboard Air Force 1 that he felt that the U.S. Secret Service and the State and Local law enforcement officials had performed their duties in an outstanding manner and he asked that his thanks be expressed to all involved.

The President indicated to his staff that a circumstance where the political leaders are forced into isolation from their constituents because of the threats of a few would be intolerable. The communication of ideas is fundamental in our system, and to allow it to be unduly restricted, warped, or inhibited would be to weaken, if not destroy it.

He believes it is vitally important for the leadership of our country to be free to communicate with the people they serve.

#



THE ORIGINAL OF THE ATTACHED DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REMOVED TO THE
VALUABLE FILE.

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Gelford Library

[Oct. 1975?]

STATEMENT OF
PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD

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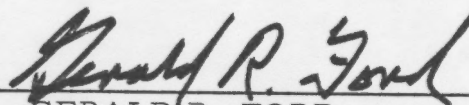
ORIGINAL RETIRED TO
SPECIAL DOCUMENTS FILE

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10. This is a complete and accurate statement of my recollections of the incident described above.


GERALD R. FORD

The White House
Washington, D. C.
October 13, 1975

ORIGINAL TO
SPECIAL DOCUMENTS FILE

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 9, 1975

*Pres
Assass
(page)*

MEMORANDUM FOR: DON RUMSFELD
THROUGH: PHIL BUCHEN *P.*
FROM: KEN LAZARUS *KL*
SUBJECT: Statement by the President on
Attempted Assassination in
San Francisco

Attached is a statement which was developed on the bases of the President's recorded remarks which you forwarded to Mr. Buchen under date of September 25, and relevant excerpts from Secret Service reports.

The President should review the document as soon as practicable and, assuming it is complete and accurate, sign the statement and return it to the writer for distribution to the Criminal Division, FBI and Secret Service in accordance with their joint request.

Thank you.

Attachment



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The White House
Washington, D. C.
October , 1975



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KAL:dlm



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Washington, D. C.
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The White House
Washington, D. C.
October , 1975

Post Entrance is
on South side of
Sheet. — walking
North — LEFT VIA
Limousine in Eastern
Direction.



WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
Report	Excerpt from a government report (1 page)	ND	B

File Location:

Philip Buchen Files, Box 43, Folder: "President - Assassination Attempts: Moore, Sara Jane" SMD - 1/21/2016

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(B) Closed by statute or by the agency which originated the document.
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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 25, 1975

MEMORANDUM

FOR: PHIL BUCHEN
FROM: DON RUMSFELD

Attached is a copy of the President's dictation to Nell today and his responses to three questions I posed to him concerning the San Francisco incident. As per your memo from Ken Lazarus, I am going to assume you are going to edit this and prepare it for him to reread and sign.

Let me know when you have it and I will take it in.

Thanks so much.

Attachment



September 25, 1975

Following a television interview, I went down an elevator in the St. Francis Hotel to the ground floor. I walked from the elevator through a lobby of about 15 to 20 feet to the door leading to the street. I walked from the door to the edge of the sidewalk and stood approximately 2 to 3 feet from the limousine itself. I stood there waiting for the door to be opened as was customary by an agent of the Secret Service. As the door was being opened, I looked across the street, slanting slightly to the right, and waved. Just as I waved, I heard a noise that appeared to be a gun shot. Almost instantaneously several people from the rear pushed me down onto the sidewalk. At the same time, the door of the limousine was opened and I crawled into the limousine on the floor at the insistence of the Secret Service. Two agents, Ron Pontius and Jack Merchant, plus Donald Rumsfeld, crawled in the limousine on top of me. We remained below the window level of the limousine and very quickly the limousine sped off.



September 25, 1975

They had cautioned me generally about the situation in and around the downtown area. It was discussed, I believe, as I rode over earlier to the previous meeting.

I may have asked why we were going in through the garage which is not normal. They said they were apprehensive about the crowd. I don't recall a specific statement as we came from the TV studio down to the street.

We had talked about it earlier in the day and obviously while I was in the St. Francis, we heard continuously the chants and protests. Their warning, plus my recognition of the protests, prompted me to move toward the car.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*Pres -
Assass.*

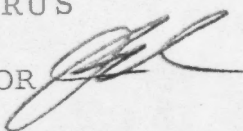
October 13, 1975

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR:

PHIL BUCHEN
KEN LAZARUS

FROM :

JIM CONNOR 

SUBJECT:

Statement by the President on
Attempted Assassination in
San Francisco

The President reviewed your memorandum of October 9 on the above subject and signed the attached statement today.

It is returned to you for dating and appropriate distribution.

cc: Don Rumsfeld



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The White House
Washington, D. C.
October , 1975



THE WHITE HOUSE

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October 13, 1975

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The White House
Washington, D. C.
October , 1975



By Messenger

JL 3-1

October 15, 1975

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR

**H. S. KNIGHT, DIRECTOR
U. S. SECRET SERVICE**

Enclosed please find a copy of the Statement of President Ford relative to the alleged assassination attempt on the President's life in San Francisco, California, September 22, 1975.

**Kenneth A. Lazarus
Associate Counsel
to the President**

Enclosure

KAL:dlm



October 15, 1975

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR

**John C. Keesey
Deputy Assistant Attorney General
Criminal Division**

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October 15, 1975

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR

**CLARENCE M. KELLEY
DIRECTOR
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON


October 15, 1975

Ken,

Mr. Buchen thought you
would like to have this.

I note you received a
copy so I guess you will
want to file the original.

shirley



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 13, 1975

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR:

PHIL BUCHEN
KEN LAZARUS

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SEP 23 1975
FBI - SAN FRANCISCO

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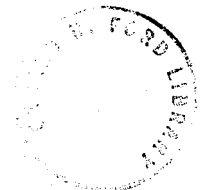
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GERALD R. FORD

The White House
Washington, D. C.
October 13, 1975



November 11, 1975

President
Court case

Mr. Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Buchen:

The trial of Sarah Jane Moore for attempted assassination of the President in San Francisco, California, on September 22, 1975, has been set for December 15, 1975. A hearing is scheduled for November 26, 1975 to consider all motions. In light of developments in the Fromme case, it must be anticipated that Ms. Moore will seek to subpoena the President.

In resisting such a subpoena, it is important that the Department be able to make a definite representation to the court concerning whether the President possesses any relevant and material evidence on the actions of his alleged assailant. From our review of the President's written statement of October 13, 1975, a copy of which was supplied to us by Kenneth A. Lazarus of your office, it appears that he possesses no such evidence. However, our conclusion in this regard is drawn by implication rather than from an affirmative statement by the President. It is probable that the court, in considering the subpoena issue, will insist on more definite information.

It would, accordingly, be most helpful if the President would make a brief supplemental statement clarifying whether



he observed the actions of his alleged assailant. Although such a statement will not be needed until a subpoena is sought by the defense, it is suggested that it be prepared in advance of that time. As in the Fromme case, the trial judge in San Francisco is concerned about the ramifications of the Speedy Trial Act and is handling the case on an expedited basis. Between the short deadlines imposed by the court and the exigencies of the President's schedule, it is possible that following a defense request for the subpoena the Department would be unable to obtain the necessary statement in time to support its motion to quash. Further, if such a statement is obtained in advance, the U. S. Attorney's office may be able to use it to discourage the defense counsel from pursuing a request to subpoena the President.

It is, therefore, suggested that the President provide a brief supplemental statement responding to the following questions: (1) Between exiting the St. Francis Hotel, San Francisco, California, and entering your limousine at approximately 3:30 P.M. on September 22, 1975, did you observe any person with a gun pointed in your direction? If so, please describe the person's appearance. (2) During that same period of time, did you see anyone fire a gun? If so, please describe the person's appearance. (3) At the time you heard the noise which sounded like a gun shot, did you observe a puff of smoke in the area of the spectators located on the North side of Post Street?

Your cooperation in this matter, as in the Fromme case, is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

RICHARD L. THORNBURGH
Assistant Attorney General



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 25, 1975

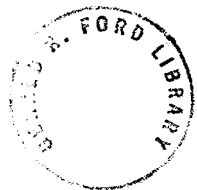
MEMO FOR: PHIL BUCHEN

FROM: KEN LAZARUS

I spoke with Dick Thornburgh yesterday regarding the attached letter. He advises that the attorneys for Sarah Jane Moore have not yet moved to subpoena the President and suggests that we disregard this request for the time being.

He will contact us again in the event it becomes necessary to obtain an additional statement from the President.

Attachment



Department of Justice

Washington 20530

November 11, 1975

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Dear Mr. Buchen:

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In resisting such a subpoena, it is important that the Department be able to make a definite representation to the court concerning whether the President possesses any relevant and material evidence on the actions of his alleged assailant. From our review of the President's written statement of October 13, 1975, a copy of which was supplied to us by Kenneth A. Lazarus of your office, it appears that he possesses no such evidence. However, our conclusion in this regard is drawn by implication rather than from an affirmative statement by the President. It is probable that the court, in considering the subpoena issue, will insist on more definite information.

It would, accordingly, be most helpful if the President would make a brief supplemental statement clarifying whether

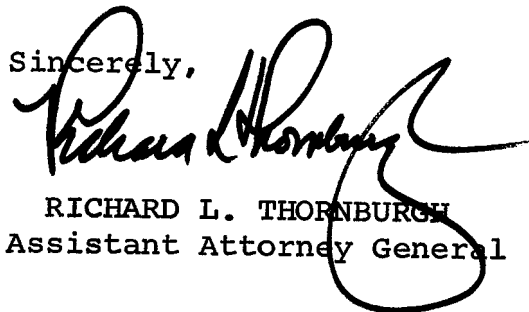


he observed the actions of his alleged assailant. Although such a statement will not be needed until a subpoena is sought by the defense, it is suggested that it be prepared in advance of that time. As in the Fromme case, the trial judge in San Francisco is concerned about the ramifications of the Speedy Trial Act and is handling the case on an expedited basis. Between the short deadlines imposed by the court and the exigencies of the President's schedule, it is possible that following a defense request for the subpoena the Department would be unable to obtain the necessary statement in time to support its motion to quash. Further, if such a statement is obtained in advance, the U. S. Attorney's office may be able to use it to discourage the defense counsel from pursuing a request to subpoena the President.

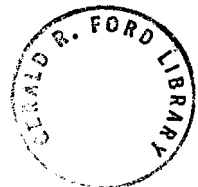
It is, therefore, suggested that the President provide a brief supplemental statement responding to the following questions: (1) Between exiting the St. Francis Hotel, San Francisco, California, and entering your limousine at approximately 3:30 P.M. on September 22, 1975, did you observe any person with a gun pointed in your direction? If so, please describe the person's appearance. (2) During that same period of time, did you see anyone fire a gun? If so, please describe the person's appearance. (3) At the time you heard the noise which sounded like a gun shot, did you observe a puff of smoke in the area of the spectators located on the North side of Post Street?

Your cooperation in this matter, as in the Fromme case, is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,



RICHARD L. THORNBURGH
Assistant Attorney General



913-1

November 25, 1975

MEMO FOR: PHIL BUCHEN

FROM: KEN LAZARUS

I spoke with Dick Thornburgh yesterday regarding the attached letter. He advises that the attorneys for Sarah Jane Moore have not yet moved to subpoena the President and suggests that we disregard this request for the time being.

He will contact us again in the event it becomes necessary to obtain an additional statement from the President.

Attachment



Department of Justice

Washington 20530

November 11, 1975

Mr. Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

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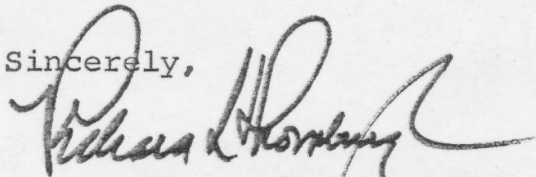


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RICHARD L. THORNBURGH
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