

NOVEMBER 19, 1974

Pool Report--Governor of Tokyo and Boy Scouts

The meeting of Ford and Governor Minobe was essentially a photo opportunity. The Governor, who is roughly equivalent to a mayor, and a handful of his aides shook hands with Ford and they all lined up in the second floor ceremonial salon in the Akasaka Palace. They sat on the gilt chairs beyond earshot and so all conversation went unrecorded. Ford had changed to his dark blue suit, was low key and smiling during the few seconds of pictures.

Then he walked down the hall to another ceremonial room where the group of Boy Scouts and their leaders were waiting for him. Actually, there were two girl scouts among the fifteen who came from troops in Tokyo, ranging from second class to eagle (no tenderfeet). The eight scout leaders, dressed in trim tan suits, represented scouts from all over Japan. Ford clearly relished this encounter. The scouts snapped to when Ford came in. They were dressed in traditional scout uniform--shorts, knee socks, the informal green beret hat, white sneakers. They formed a kind of drum and bugle corps with three glockenspiels added.

The President was directed to the middle of the room where he was presented a scout neckerchief by thirteen year old Haruhiko Murase, a second class scout and the shortest one there. He hit Ford at mid-rib cage. The President took the neckerchief and put it on, grinning appreciatively. One of the scout leaders read the citation for the Golden Pheasant award, only the fourth one which has been given (the others have gone to the Crown Prince, Sato and an industrialist named Tanza Ishezaka). The award was given for Ford's "personal association" with scouting and, of course, his leadership and contribution. The Golden Pheasant was on a ribbon and Ford put that on too, his necktie by this time being totally obscured. The Golden Pheasant hit him a few inches below the sternum. The drum, bugle, and glockenspiel band hit off a few strains and the audience applauded. Ford grinned. David Hume Kennerly, official photographer, took pictures.

"Let me express my deep appreciation," said Ford. "I have many fond memories with an early and long association with the Boy Scouts. . .I'm proud of the friends I made in Scouting. I'm proud of the examples they set. . .Scouting stands for the best in people and ideals and that is good for all mankind."

Ford asked if he could shake hands with the scouts. Given permission, he went down the line and gave them all the scout grip--left hand, while the scouts at the same time gave the three finger salute with their right hands. When Ford came to the girls he asked, "Pretty girls?" There was laughter. "Very nice," he kept saying. "Keep up the good work." Then he turned, asked: "May I have my picture taken in the middle?" They cleared a spot and the whole troop with bugles, drums, glockenspiels, Golden Pheasant and neckerchiefs, held the pose for the camera. The President smiled. The scout leaders then asked for a similar picture. Ford obliged, followed that up with a scout hand clasp for each and they returned the grip and added the three fingered salute.

Hugh Sidey, Time

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