

February 12, 1975

POOL REPORT

At 12:23 p.m. President Ford and Bob Hartmann drove in a motorcade to the Lincoln Memorial. En route their limousine passed a jogger wearing blue shorts and a green jersey. The jogger waved.

At the Lincoln Memorial, in a filmy drizzle, the President with three Washington military district commanders at his side marched up the fifty-eight steps to the enclosure. About two hundred persons, mostly school children, lined the rope barriers, one or two deep up the steps. The President arrived while the Washington chapter of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion were holding a ceremony marking the 165th birthday anniversary of Lincoln. The Order presented literary awards to historians Stephen Louis Balloga of Southern Colorado State University (for his work "The New Mexicans: Dilemma During the Civil War") and Allan F. Westcott of Severn Preparatory School, Maryland (for his work "Running the Blockade: 1861-65").

Fred Hunt, commander of the local chapter of the Loyal Legion introduced the President who wore a raincoat over a dark blue pinstrip suit. Ford delivered a speech about the same length as the Gettysburg Address. He said, "None of the problems today are as severe as those facing Lincoln. . . but we are confronted with the need to achieve economic emanipation." He said Congress and himself must unite "at once on an effect program for National recovery and economic independence."

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Ford then drove to a hurriedly scheduled "drop-in" at the Shoreham Americana luncheon given by college student entertainment agents honoring Bob Hope as "The Comedian of the Century."

The diners Turkey Hollandaise main course went mostly uneaten because Ford got a standing ovation and the thousand diners let their food go cold as they stood and laughed at such Ford jokes as "I've got good news and bad news. The good news is that Bob Hope has been named Comedian of the Year. The bad news--how am I ever going to explain this to Earl Butz?"

Ford said the standing ovation he received at the Shoreham "sounds just like what I get back up at Congress." The President said Hope had an engagement; "He is going to entertain our fighting forces--in the Congress."

With Ford at the Hope function was speechwriter Bob Orben.