

August 18, 1975

POOL REPORT #3
The President Visits the 4-H Exhibit Hall

The theme of the exhibit is "It is here we must begin."

The President spent a half hour in the building. The hall looks like a giant airplane hangar with dozens of exhibitions. It was children's day today at the Fair and several thousand kids were in the building. The President was greeted by Marsha Henderson and Bill Raney, two of the top 4-H State Officers. Governor Robert D. Ray also toured with him.

The President stopped first at an exhibit of jams and preserves. One sample of strawberry jam had won the blue ribbon. "I'll bet it's good but it also puts it on you," said the Governor. The President said, "Yes, I know it."

The President turned around to an educational show where Pam Ask of Mitchell County was showing how to make multi-colored sand planters in fancy glass jars. The President watched her while and then she gave this particular planter to the President as a gift.

Next he stopped at a leather exhibition with the theme "A Steer is not all Steak." One of the exhibits was a baseball glove. Governor Ray kidded and said, "That's Bob Feller's glove." The President said, "He came from Iowa, didn't he? Where was that town?"

"VanMeter," said the Governor. And the President added "A good Iowa school boy."

The President was then given a hot dog and paper cup full of lemonade. At first President refused hot dog but then accepted it. Governor Ray got the same hot dog lemonade treatment. Then they watched an exhibition where Cindy Edgren made a low-cal milkshake of skim milk, ice cubes and pineapple. (Recipe available if any one wants it -- 119 calories).

They moved on and to another exhibition and as moving shook many hands.

Next stop: The 4-H "Open Class". Some of the exhibits the President admired here included, "Is your sleepwear flame retardant?" And a fossil stone collection at which Ford remarked, "Beautifully laid out isn't it?" Governor Ray replied, "These kids really learn a lot of things. Things I wish I could do. One thing you would really be impressed with is the way these kids can conduct a meeting."

Then the President was brought over a skeleton of a cat mounted on a block of wood. He took one look at the skeleton and President Ford said "that kid should be a doctor."

Want to an exhibition of clothes designed in Great Britain styles. Bill Raney, 4-H Officer, turned to Ford and asked, "Mr. President does your daughter sew?" President Ford replied, "Not as much as she used to. She was pretty good, you know, when she was 14.-- before boys."

(More)

"How is Mrs. Ford doing?" The President was asked this as he moved down the line. "Not badly," he said. "But she's not doing as much as she used to...she doesn't have as much energy as I have."

Moving along, President Ford accepted a Warren County T-Shirt from Kevin Putney, a 16-year old boy from Indianola. Prompted by C. J. Gauger, Iowa State 4-H Leader, Kevin showed the President the 1965 Ranchero which he bought for \$10.00 and worked on for four weeks to put it in operating condition. He said it was now worth between \$1200 and \$1700. President Ford laughed and said, "We ought to send you back to manage some of these Detroit companies."

Still sipping lemonade the President moved on to some wood making and furniture exhibitions. He pointed out a white wooden porch swing and said, "A girl I courted had one of those."

After viewing all manner of wood pieces, cabinets, tubs, shelves, he said, "These kids are competing with my Grand Rapids furniture companies." Then he added quickly, "Of course competition never hurt anyone."

He declined to sign an autograph saying "If I sign one...oh... send it to me at the White House."

Then they admired some blue ribbon winning stalks of corn. "Is that good looking corn, Bob?" The Governor felt the corn and didn't seem to know. Then Mr. Gauger said, "This year's corn is a little dry, you can tell by the brown leaves there at the bottom."

Going out of the building they came to a high sign board where visitors sign their names in their own counties. It was a big map of Iowa. At top of it on the right was simply a place for USA. The President signed his name there left-handed.

Outside the building the President admired two prize winning hogs -- one black and one white. One was the champion Future Farmers of America hog the other was the champion 4-H. Ford asked, "How much are they worth?" Their handlers said \$250.00 a head. Governor Ray quickly added, "Not enough"

Carol Keppy, 15, Wilton, Iowa, leaned over and pinned on the President a large "Hogs are beautiful" pin on the President's lapel. Another boy gave him two golfing hats, one red and one blue.

The President had the same question for the two lambs -- one FFA and the 4-H. "How much are they worth?"

Finally admired a prize winning steer which had been a blue ribbon champion and sold at \$3.10 a pound. The buyer Harvey Feilen of Feilen meatpackers in Des Moines shook hands with the President and promised to send him two standing rib roasts from that steer as soon as it was properly aged.

The drive to the stadium took 5 minutes. The President and Governor stood in an open car and waved. Most people waved back. Enthusiasm was not spectacular.

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Michaels

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