

POOL REPORT #9

Ford Committee Reception at Hotel
March 5, 1976

President Ford entered the ballroom a few minutes before 9. About 200 there. Applause greeted him. The pianist played Hail to the Victors as the President circulated for about 25 minutes for handshakes, some autographs and small talk. The pool, restrained like sheep -- if you'll pardon the expression -- couldn't hear the chatter from behind our penned-up area.

Representative Bob Michel told a pooler Ford should carry the state March 15 by anywhere from 55 to 65 per cent. In introducing Ford, Michel said Ford would deliver the "coup de grace" in the primary after Florida and Illinois. After that, he said there wouldn't be any need to do any more campaigning.

Ford, in a brief talk to the workers, commented on the good economic news of recent days and compared it to what he said the doomsayers were saying a year ago.

"The economic news is good and it is going to get better," Ford said. Ford predicted victory in Illinois, Florida and at the Kansas City convention... he called this "a great springboard" to a tremendous victory in November.

As he left the hotel lobby, Ford asked the pool with a straight face: "Did you behave yourselves in Peoria?" "Like good little sheep," was the response.

There was some question whether Room 801 at the Peoria Hilton will either (1) be retired with honrs or (2) be boarded up by the health inspectors. There were also reports that SPCA officials were looking for someone nicknamed Sod Buster.

Uneventful 10 minute motorcade to airport.

Mashek
Kondracke
Gittines

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