

April 3, 1976

**President Ford's visit to Senland Farm
Campbellsport, Wisconsin**

The 7:00 am motorcade required 20 minutes from the Holiday Inn at West Bend through the rolling hills and farmland. Along the way the President was able to see the damage done by a vicious ice storm three weeks ago. Trees along the route had been stripped of branches and snapped off. The area has been declared a disaster area as a result of this storm.

Senland Farm is owned by Peter Senn, 46, a Republican and a former Farm Bureau official, and strong supporter of Congressman Bill Steiger. Steiger said the Senn farm was picked because he is an "old, old friend". Senn's family consists of his wife, Laverne; and four children: Jim (22), Deborah (20), Mary Beth (18), and Dan (15). The land in this area sells for around \$1,000 per acre.

The Senn farm consists of 270 acres owned, and 130 acres which he operates under lease.

Senn greeted Ford outside the modest yellow, two-story frame farm home. The farmer introduced his wife and two of his children to the President, and then the group proceeded on a tour through a number of barns in the Senn family dairy operation. There were no notable quotes, but the President did inspect cows as they were fed, and milked by machine.

The President's dark blue suit became soiled by a near miss in the milking barn. Nessen's remark was: "But did you see the Secret Service wrestle that cow to the ground?" Thoughtful aides supplied President Ford with a change of clean clothes.

The President learned in inspecting the farm that a tornado had hit the farm a few years ago and damaged a number of the buildings. Senn family was obliged to borrow \$120,000 to make repairs, a debt they will be paying off for the next 20 years. The farm value is estimated at \$250,000, but Mr. Senn said if they could find a buyer they could probably get closer to \$400,000.

Inside the farmhouse the President shared scrambled eggs with grated cheese, bran muffins, cranapple juice, and fresh milk with the family. Outside in a barn the press pool of about 40 local reporters and the White House staff drank fresh milk.

Inside the home the President saw a number of trophies over the fireplace which one of his sons had won in 4-H competition. After breakfast the President also signed a small ceramic cow in the dining room.

As the Presidential motorcade prepared to leave, the President thanked his host after being introduced to some of Senn's relatives. Ford remarked: "We started early but we learned a lot."

He drove into Fond du Lac and as soon as he crossed the town limits, the top was removed from his limousine. He stood and waved at the crowds as he pulled up to Goodrich High School.

Norton
Mashek
Compton

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