

AUGUST 9, 1974

POOL REPORT OF THE
MEETING BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT
AND MIDDLE EASTERN AMBASSADORS

This is the meeting that was scheduled with the Arab and North African charges d'affaires and the Ambassadors who are on your list. The President was there, Kissinger again on his right. On the President's left was Alfred Atherton, the Assistant Secretary of State for that part of the world.

As we walked in, President Ford was saying, "I have negotiated with Congress for 25 years. That is an experience." Then later, he said, "That is a tremendous background," and later he said, "You are negotiating not only with the opposition, but with your own party sometimes."

Ambassador Ghorbal of Egypt said something about admiration and my guess was it was about Kissinger, but I am not sure, and President Ford agreed to the extent of saying that "in the U.S. the overwhelming majority of people feel the same way." But I cannot swear about Kissinger.

Then in an aside to Kissinger, the President said, "They are using an awful lot of film," and one of the Arab Ambassadors or charges who I did not recognize said something about what a day this was for America. I don't know whether he said it was a great day or not, and the President said, "It is a hard day, but we have to go through these difficult times."

They said something about the speech, and Ford said, "I agree. That is what I tried to say," this morning or in the speech after the swearing-in.

Marilyn Berger, Washington Post

