

POOL REPORT
EVENT 2-A - National Cemetery
Wreath Laying

November 22, 1974

The President arrived at the National Cemetery about 10 minutes behind schedule. An honor guard was standing alongside a circular driveway entering the grounds. A Korean guide said, "this is our Arlington."

The cemetery was established in 1954 and is the location of the burial of 47,000 identified Korean soldiers, and 120,000 unknown military personnel.

The entry way is a large, multi-colored pagoda-styled arch. The President and several members of his official party entered. He paused to sign the guest book simply "Gerald R. Ford." Flanked by 2 Korean officials, the President walked about 30 yards up a concrete sidewalk to the base of the memorial. There he placed a circular floral wreath of yellow and white flowers at the base of the Tomb of the Unknowns. He was assisted by 2 United States military personnel while an honor guard of 4 Korean troops stood alongside. Also present: Kissinger, Hartmann, Rumsfeld, Scowcroft, Habib.

Beneath the floral wreath were the words, "Gerald R. Ford, President of the United States of America." The President still wearing a top coat, stood with his head bowed. He stepped back and placed incense in a pot which was burning immediately in front of the wreath. At this point there was some solemn trumpet music and the President stood with his head bowed for about a minute. That concluded the ceremony. The American group turned and walked away as Secretary Kissinger passed the guest book, he made his mark (a pair of unreadable scratches), below that of the President.

The Tomb of the Unknown is marked by a 30 meter tall granite tower, flanked by heroic sculptures depicting strugglers by the Korean people and their military services.

POOL REPORT

President Dines in Open Mess at
Camp Casey

The troops at Camp Casey had erected a mess hall operation in the field for the President's lunch. Food was served from tents and eaten on wooden tables picnic style. The menu was hamburgers, cottage cheese and potato chips served on a paper plate.

There was applause from the troops standing around the table where the President elected to dine. It was immediately in front of the photo position. He took his place standing at the center of a long wooden table. Before eating he walked around the table and met those there. The first was a black sergeant who snapped a salute as the President reached to shake his hand.

At the President's table there were 13 men and one woman, Sergeant Catherine Stalnaker of Richmond, Virginia. The President attempted to make conversation saying, "Well, this looks awful good, dig in." Turning to Sergeant Stalnaker,

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he said, "are you a nurse?" "Yes sir," she replied. To another he said, "That's quite a game of football". To another he said, "How many teams?" The answer was "104, sir." To another of his luncheon companions he said, "How long have you been here?" "5 1/2 months, sir." The President said, "That's great."

To the only Navy man at the table, the President said, "How big a Navy contingent do you have here?" The answer was unintelligible.

Turning back to Sgt. Stalnaker, the President said, "Do nurses have a one year tour of duty?" "Yes, sir", she replied. Other GI's dining nearby were summoned to come closer for a picture with the President. Someone shouted out for Kennerly to get it. General "Gunfighter" Emerson told his men, "You've got to give him a chance to eat". At this point the conversation loosened up and the President exchanged some laughter with the soldiers.

The General spoke up again asking, "How are we doing on time, somebody?" "Where is Kennerly?" "Will somebody get a copy of this picture for the President?" The General was assured that from the battery of photographers present, a copy could be arranged.

A G.I. shouted out, "Tell those Russians who's number one." The President shook hands and said, "Thank you, you're doing a good job, and we're proud of you." He turned and walked away to his next event, leaving behind his cottage cheese and a steaming cup of coffee.

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