

POOL REPORT

Concord, New Hampshire - Old North Church
Service in Boston

April 18
1975

The trip from Concord to Boston was uneventful. The President left the Highway Hotel at 7 p.m. after shaking hands with the hotel staff and waving to a crowd of about 150 people, gathered near the motorcade. Governor Thompson was not on hand to see the President off. He left immediately after the White House Conference speech to attend a conference in Puerto Rico.

It was a 5-minute ride to the Concord Airport from the Hotel. Small but friendly crowds along the road leading to the airport.

On arrival at the Coast Guard station in Boston, we immediately ran into very large crowds along the road in "Little Italy", the North end. They appeared in the main to be friendly, and the only signs we saw were concerning the school buses. One sign read "ROAR" which stands for Return Our Alienated Rights. It was an anti-busing group. Several Italian flags were waved.

When we arrived at the church, most of the congregation had already taken their seats. One of the late arrivals was Former Speaker McCormick. The church is pure white inside, with red and orange carpeting, high-walled, old-fashioned pews (the highest box pews in America - 5 feet high built to keep out wintry drafts). There is a brass plate on the door of each pew.

The church is lighted by candlestick chandeliers which contain artificial candles which burn with a flame. The chandeliers hung very low, suspended from the very high church ceilings. They were modeled on a London church built by Sir Christopher Wren - St. Andrews Church.

The head usher said that 550 persons were expected tonight, and there probably were more there, with extra seats. The church tower was rebuilt about 150 years ago after the original tower was blown down in a great gale.

The Bishop, The Right Reverend John Burgess, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, is the first Black to head an Episcopal Diocese in the United States.

While the service was in progress, you could hear shouts of demonstrators and counter demonstrators on the narrow streets outside. Nobody made it very clear exactly what they were demonstrating about, but it was reported that the demonstrators included Cypriots, Indians, School busing, and Viet Nam.

The police "took away" about a dozen to 15 of the demonstrators before the President emerged from the Church. When the President came out, there was relative quiet. The crowd was cheering and friendly.

We will not describe the service because you saw it on television.

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