

## POOL REPORT

May 2, 1975

## WINCHESTER, VA.

The President returned to Washington at 6:10 P.M. after a 30 minute flight. Before leaving the Winchester area, the President circled around twice to review the Firemen's Parade.

The final Presidential pool picked up President Ford and Susan at 4:30 P.M. when they arrived in a classroom at Handley High for an informal reception with some of the Maids-of-Honor, some of the local organizers and the New Christy Minstrels. Mr. Ford shook hands while Susan kissed her Maids -of-Honor.

The pool left after four minutes to rush into fire car #1 for the Firemen's Parade. The Parade lasted one-half hour. It wound through 30 blocks of the city of 21,000, and included 300 units mainly fire equipment from Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland. (It is against the law for any fires today.)

Mr. Ford shook hands with some of the fire officials and the pretty Firman's Marshal, a singing star, LaCosta. Both he and Susan were given yellow firemen's helmets. The President wore his hat while shaking a few more hands. Mr. Ford stood up in his limousine, his arm around Susan throughout the one-half hour route. The count was estimated between 50 and 60 thousand people by E. Michael Luby, President of the Apple Blossom Festival. Susan wore her jeweled crown and her long white gown.

In general the crowds were friendly and warm but not wildly enthusiastic.

As the pool car was a 1/2 block to a block back, it was difficult to judge the tone of the reception.

There were some but not many home made signs. Some samples:

A little boy held up one saying "I love you President Ford."

A banner across a street "Winchester Jaycees welcome President Ford."

"Welcome Mr. Ford, Betty Ford and Queen Susan."

In the parade with Mr. Ford were Senator Robert Byrd, Jr. and Governor Mills Godwin and assorted Congressmen and local officials. The weather was warm, the skies were blue. It was a perfect day for the festival and a little politicking.

"What do you mean he's not going to run for office," said one White House aide.

Peter Kumpa, Baltimore Sun