

NOVEMBER 2, 1975

**POOL REPORT NUMBER 2 - NAVAL AIR STATION TO EPPING FOREST**

After opening remarks to the crowd, Ford worked both crowds -- on opposite sides of Air Force One -- with Betty walking about 20 feet behind. It was the usual friendly kind of crowd, mostly kids in front, and composed entirely of base personnel or their friends, according to Pappy Noel.

Some crowd scenes: A small Cub Scout, about 8, asked Ford as he went by, "Are you the real Mr. Ford?" Ford did not appear to hear. So far as the pool could tell, he was the genuine article. A good looking blond Navy wife, Mrs. Liz Walsh, reached out and kissed Ford resoundingly... Mr. Ford stopped and leaned over, apparently to kiss 84-year-old Mrs. Eunice Dillard, who was in a wheelchair... he stopped to autograph a cast on the broken leg of a boy, about 12, named Jim Curole. The boy said he broke the leg playing football. Ford said, "It's the only one I'm going to sign." He actually initialed the cast... he patted one tearful toddler held in a parent's arm, the toddler continued to cry.

Ford then boarded the 33-foot captains gig of the USS Yosemite, a destroyer tender, for the 2-1/2 mile trip across the St. Johns River. He stood the whole way, talking animatedly, in the center of the gig under a canvas canopy. About a dozen craft were in the Ford party, including Coast Guard and other security boats. A line of Coast Guard small boats formed what was called a 'picket line' to keep sightseers in private craft at a distance. In all, including private craft, about 36 boats made the trip across the river. Half-way across, the press boats were taken ahead to witness Ford's arrival. We could not see therefore if he fell down, got nibbled by sharks or whatever, but the crew of the gig said later he merely stood and talked the whole way.

The gig landed at a concrete pier over the water at the edge of the Epping Forest estate. The estate consists of a main house with 30 rooms and 12 bathrooms and a number of out-buildings, including a garage and a greenhouse, which are all built in a Mediterranean style -- yellowish stucco walls, red tile roofs -- and surrounded by plentiful magnolia and other trees.

Sadat met Ford at the dock, which was covered with a new red carpet. The boat knocked a railing askew as it came in; the railing was replaced moments later. Ford and Sadat shook hands. Sadat and Kissinger exchanged kisses on both cheeks. So did Kissinger and Fahmi.

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The boathouse is the same stucco Mediterranean style and lies over the water. The first level is for a boat to enter. The house is connected to the shore by a long pier.

The luncheon was at one end of the second level, in a semi-enclosed area with open archways letting in the light river breeze. It was very pleasant. There were 12 places set at the table, covered with a yellow cloth. There was a centerpiece of yellow orchids. The two Presidents were seated side by side with their backs to the water, on chairs covered in gold fabric. There was a great deal of animated conversation and laughter -- a very cordial atmosphere -- during the photo session.

The only conversation we could hear was Ford talking about St. Joe (presumably St. Joseph) in southwestern Michigan. At another point, Ford evidently made reference to Sadat's interest in the old West: "I've got a son who, at the age of 19, thinks he would like to be a bronco-busting cowboy," said Ford. "I thought he'd get over it when he scared his mother to death." (presumably by getting thrown from a bronc last summer.)

Kissinger made some reference to the "5,000 year history of Egypt," at which everyone laughed. We evidently missed the prelude to a punchline.

The luncheon was served from large silver trays and vessels brought out from the main house by white-coated servants. Each piece of silver had engraved on it the name "Mason" and a serial number.

The menu:

- Florida fruit cup (served in red glass compotes)
- Florida salad (avacado and tomato e)
- Atlantic red snapper with shrimp sauce
- Artichoke hearts
- Green beans, carrots, rice
- Char lbtte russe with creme en glace
- Coffee

For estate aficianados, the Epping Forest was built in 1927 -- supposedly, according to locals, by one of the DuPonts -- and purchsed by Mason in 1970.

For some reason, not explained, the talks ended 25 minutes early. Ford and Sadat walked through the sculpted gardens, amid Spanish moss hanging from live oak trees. They stopped at the fountain, which featured stone frogs spouting water and stone alligators basking around the base of the fountain, for a photo session. They spoke, inaudibly, to one another (inaudible, that is, to us). They stopped again at the curved driveway at the roadside part of the estate to shake hands.

Ford motorcade to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Luther Coggin was uneventful. A number of people, friendly, waved along a the 8-mile route.

(MORE)

At the Coggin home, General Scowcroft was asked if he could clear up what Kissinger had meant about the sale of the nuclear reactors. He said that the financing "has not been determined" and that all Henry was trying to say was that the reactor deal would not be an "add-on" to the \$750 million AID package for Egypt. Asked what that meant, Scowcroft said it meant the terms had not been settled and that there were several possibilities. For instance -- but not necessarily -- he said that it could turn out to be a straight commercial transaction between Egypt and reactor manufacturers, although Congress would, he agreed, have to express some form of approval.

The Coggin home is in the center of the Deerwood development of posh homes. It is about a \$250,000 house. It is one-level, modern white brick and white stone with a cedar shake shingle roof. Mrs. Coggin said that Ford told them as he entered "he appreciated it" -- the loan of the house. They turned it over to the White House yesterday. "We were politely asked if we would leave." She said it was all very cordial. Coggin said his wife had remarked, "We won't go through this again," and he remarked, "No, not unless the President calls and says he's coming back." Coggin described Deerwood as "one of the more exclusive areas in Jacksonville -- probably the tightest security in the whole area." White House began dealing with them 10 days ago, and has installed 18 phones. It is a 12-room house with four bedrooms. Coggins are registered Independents; he said he voted Republican in the last Presidential election.

Down the street is the home of Warren Coughlin, where the TV taping occurs. Coughlin is the local Muzak franchiser.

The second meeting with Sadat is at a house next door to Coggins -- owned by William Drennon, president of Deerwood. It is a buff-colored brick house.

BONNIE ANGELO  
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