

NOVEMBER 15, 1975

POOL REPORT #4

First Delegates Meeting

The pool was ushered in the meeting room about 20 minutes before the conference began. The room is in a downstairs section of the Chateau and has obviously been hastily redone for the purpose of this meeting. Eighteen blue velvet covered chairs were placed around a 30-foot long table which was covered with a brown felt cloth. Each participant had a headset and mike combination before him. There were two bowls of flowers on the table and a gold placque in the middle. The walls were of pink and gray marble.

After a reception upstairs of the Heads of State and their Ministers, the delegations made their way downstairs to the meeting room. President Ford and President Giscard were the first to enter.

President Ford was wearing his blue pin strip suit with a blue shirt and striped tie. The President, who had been napping just prior to the meeting, looked a little sleepy. He spoke across the conference table to Giscard: "You have a beautiful place here, Mr. President. The facilities are really gorgeous, and comfortable as well." President Giscard made some remark in return that the pool could not hear and both Presidents laughed at the remark.

Then the other Heads of State and their delegations made their way into the room. President Ford was flanked by Secretary Kissinger and Secretary Simon. West Germany Helmut Schmidt came over to President Ford for a warm handshake and pleasantries. The two laughed out loud at some remark Mr. Schmidt made in the conversation.

While the conference participants were awaiting the arrival of photographers, Secretary Kissinger and British Foreign Minister James Callaghan were in animated conversation. There was one vacant seat at the conference table, that of Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans-Dietrich Genscher. There was some light conversation around the table about credentials for the meeting.

The photographers were then ushered in in three separate groups touching off a scene which only can be described as pure bedlam. Each wave of still and television photographers were hustled around the room with French security men doing their share of the shoving. Treasury Secretary Simon commented: "This is one of the most incredible things I have ever seen." When the final group of photographers came in the room, President Ford just shook his head and smiled in bewilderment at all the turmoil.

Shortly after 6:30 p.m. the pool left the conference room and the discussions began. A light rain was falling outside the Chateau.

#

John Mashek, U.S. News & World Report