

... - A.F.-1, Andrews to Grand Junction, Colo.-Dec. 23, 1975

President Ford, coatless, wearing a business suit, boarded the plane carrying a dark brown puppy in his arms. Mrs. Ford, wearing a fur coat, led Liberty on a leash. We were told later that the puppy was a three-month-old Chesapeake Bay Retriever named Riva that belongs to Jack, who will arrive in Vail later today from the West Coast. He traded one of Liberty's puppies for ~~Lib~~ it about three or four weeks ago, according to Sheila Weidenfeld.

Takeoff was at 8:19 a.m. Passengers included Dick Cheney with his wife and two children, Donald Rumsfeld with wife and three children, Sheila and Ed Weidenfeld, Brent Scowcroft and Ron Nessen.

According to Nessen, the President worked on the plane on two folders of bills and personnel appointments and on other paper work. Nessen said he signed some bills and appointments ~~but~~. He expects "a fair number" of bill signings ~~in~~ in Vail.

Giving what he described as a "human interest story," Nessen said the President put in a phone call at 7:15 p.m. yesterday to Beth Ann Cameron, 8 years old, in Yale-New Haven Hospital, New Haven, Conn. Beth Ann was orphaned when her parents and three sisters were killed in a truck accident in Vermont ~~last~~ about two weeks ago. Since then she has been hospitalized with broken arms, legs and other injuries she suffered when she fell 87 feet from the bridge the family's truck slammed into. According to an AP story in Saturday's Washington Star, she is afraid Santa won't find ~~her~~ her this Christmas because she was taken to the hospital in Connecticut, ~~then~~ after first having been taken to a hospital in New Hampshire. The President, according to Nessen, told her he would make sure that Santa knew where she was so that he could bring her presents. Nessen had no report of the child's reaction. He said the call lasted four or five minutes.

The President plans to ~~head~~ change clothes and head for the ski slopes immediately after arrival in Vail, Nessen said.

--Stan Carter