

FEBRUARY 13, 1976

POOL REPORT #4-5

AIR FORCE ONE, ORLANDO TO FT. LAUDERDALE

After speaking to about 250 persons inside a steamy hot hall, the President left about 5:30 p.m. to shake hands with others waiting outside. He congratulated members of the President Ford Budget-Saver Bagpipe Band while they skirled a tune, unrecognizable to your poolers. The President very slowly and deliberately worked the fence. With sweat rolling down his face, he told one woman: "It makes a difference what you do...All you have to do is get the votes out." When the woman replied that would be done, Ford smiled and said: "OK!" At times, he used both hands to grip or touch his admirers. Many wore blue President Ford buttons. A young woman kissed him below the left ear; the President then kissed Cindy Scott, 16, of Winter Park, Fla., who identified herself as Miss Teen Age Florida. She is a short, sun-tanned blonde. Later, talking to another supporter, the President said: "Let's get 'em all to the polls." Ford was surprised to find an old friend from Grand Rapids, Mich., Lynn Clark, 80, who was County Superintendent of Schools in the Grand Rapids area, and now lives in DeLand, Fla. "Lynn almost ran for my Congressional seat and, if he had, he probably would have won and I'd be practicing law," Ford said with a laugh. Clark replied: "But I wouldn't have become President." He added: "I know you're going to be elected."

Ford also met his nephew, Dr. Thomas Ford, 31, a dentist in Orlando. His tour of the fence took 30 minutes and covered 100 yards.

Paula Hawkins, Florida national committeewoman and a Florida Public Service Commissioner, said: "It was very close but I believe this visit has turned it around."

She said she has heard from telephone company officials that Ford may return to Florida in two weeks, about February 27-28. Ron Nessen said "It's a pretty good chance, but not certain" that the President will be back in Florida then.

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