

May 22, 1976

Press Pool report (#4) Medford to Portland, Oregon

Motorcade pulled away from park at 12:43 p. m. Heavy crowd along street leading from library, but thereafter only a few bystanders.

On the flight to Portland, Nessen told poolers that President tried to call Governor Philip Noel of Rhode Island who reportedly was injured in a helicopter accident earlier today. Noel was in intensive care unit and under sedation and unable to take calls, Ford was told.

Flight to Portland was uneventful. Reporters and photographers from Oregon newspapers had some time with the President during the flight. Pool was barred.

Landed in Portland at 1:45 p. m. Impromptu press conference at airport. Referred to himself in the third person and said, President Ford had restored trust in the White House, brought peace and prosperity, etc. The usual.

Asked about next Tuesday's primaries, he said: "We are reasonably optimistic about whats going to happen next Tuesday in all six states." Said he was pleased by reports of swing to Ford in the New York delegation and added: "That was done on their own."

Said he had just received word that he got all 18 delegates in the Vermont Convention today, "Which is better than we anticipated."

Asked about Howard Baker's appearances with Reagan in Tennessee, the President shrugged it off calling it "just typical Tennessee courtesy".

Then to reception for PFC volunteers at the Sheraton Portland Hotel, arriving at 2:15. Ford mingled with crowd for eight minutes, shaking hands and then speaking for eight minutes.

Standard pitch--peace, prosperity, and trust. There will be a transcript presumably, but here are a couple of highlights:

1. I am absolutely confident we are going to win in Oregon by a good margin.
2. Alluding to his foreign policy speech tonight, Ford said, "Our mission is not to buoy, not to back off. Our mission is to go down the line of fairness and equity and peace, and that is what this Administration stands for.

Later in the afternoon, Ford was to give a state-wide interview (see bible) that was to have been piped into the pressroom at the Portland Hilton. However, John Carlson said turned out that none of the radio stations involved was going to carry the press conference live, so they asked that it not be piped to the pressroom. In line with this, Nessen and Carlson prohibited pool coverage of the press conference as well, so we have nothing to give you on it. There will be a transcript. later.

Deakin, deFrank