

May 25, 1976

PRESS POOL REPORT #24--Walnut Creek, California

In the event you were unable to see the President walk from his car to the stand at the square, we will give you a few brief details: The crowds were approximately 25,000, an estimate from the Mayor of Walnut Creek.

They were standing between 10 and 15 deep with all the jumping and squealing reminiscent of some earlier campaigns. Children, including teenagers were up on shoulders in order to get a look and reach over and clasp the President's hand.

A local reporter said the crowd had been in place for two hours waiting for the President even though they knew the time he was going to be there and the temperature was around 90°. As the President began to work the stands, a shower of balloons arose and floated into the sky. There were a few signs, most of them friendly and several welcome banners. One of the signs said, "Jerry Ford: He's Real." There were also a couple of Reagan signs and one Carter sign.

The population of Walnut Creek is estimated at 50,000, but the crowds represented other towns as well as Walnut Creek.

Paul Harle, State Republican Chairman and Chairman of the Ford Committee in California, said he thinks the President still has a chance to win in the state, particularly if there is a high turnout of voters in the friendly North and a low turnout in Southern California which is more conservative and considered Reagan country. He said, however, "If the election were held today, I'm afraid we wouldn't make it."

he stood

After the President returned to his limousine/in his shirtsleeves in the open car waving vigorously all the way through town on his way to Rossmore.

Dobbin--Baltimore Sun

Foley-- U.S. News

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