

POOL REPORT

Reception given by Chancellor Schmidt aboard
the Gorch Fock

July 16, 1976
Baltimore, Maryland

The President and Mrs. Ford went aboard the Gorch Fock in a downpour. On board the vessel, deck awnings had been set up on the Quarterdeck to cover the buffet table.

The deck was crowded with guests -- one report was more than 200 guests, including several Cabinet members, with Mayor of Baltimore William Schaeffer, Governor Marvin Mandel, and Senators Beall and Mathias.

When the pool came aboard, the President was below deck inspecting some of the quarters with Chancellor and Mrs. Schmidt, Mrs. Ford, Secretary Kissinger and others. He had gone down through a companion way which had a sign on the door reading "Ladies and Gentlemen."

Mrs. Ford was carrying a nosegay of spring flowers as they came up from below. (Mel Laird was with the party below deck and came up with them.)

From the Quarterdeck near the ship's helm the President spent a lot of time shaking hands and chatting with various guests. At one point, leaving, he said 'the press always says nice things about my wife and my son, Jack. It says they are better speakers than I am. I'm getting self-conscious.' This was part of the general chit-chat as the President moved from the Quarterdeck forward on the Starboard (right-hand) side of the ship.

Mayor Schaeffer presented the President with a small gift -- a set of buttons which was an adaptation of the buttons worn by President George Washington during his inauguration. The originals of the buttons are in the Smithsonian.

Admiral James Holloway, Chief of Naval Operations, was aboard. He shook hands with Chancellor Schmidt and said, "We have nothing like this. The President served on a carrier so we have more carriers."

Mr. Ford shook hands with Captain Hans Von Stackelberg and said, "Will you thank the crew for their outstanding effort." He was referring to the salute as the Fords came aboard. The Captain acknowledged with a click of his heels and a bow from the waist.

At one point Governor Mandel told the President, "I stopped it from raining just for you." Moments later it started raining again.

There was a general discussion of the Baltimore Harbour by the President, Chancellor Schmidt, and Governor Mandel. It was agreed that Baltimore was the second or third largest harbour in the country in tonnage. The President told Schmidt, "I would say that most of your Volkswagens come through this port."

Governor Mandel told Chancellor Schmidt, "Our national anthem was written out there" pointing in the direction of Fort McHenry. Schmidt wanted to know with whom did you have a war in 1812? The President answered, "Our friends the British -- they burned the White House." Mrs. Mandel added, "But they left very quickly."

At that point President Ford and Chancellor Schmidt delivered the exchange of remarks which were piped to the press boat.

As the President left the ship, he told Chancellor Schmidt, "It has been a delightful experience."

Russ Ward - NBC

#