

September 25, 1976

PRESS POOL REPORT - Travel Dinner Pool

President Ford changed his sked for dinner to attend the first and part of the second quarter of the Tulane-Boston College football game at the Superdome; 7:22 p.m., CDT. President departed hotel after handshakes with some 100 or so people in motor entrance. Short drive to Superdome; greeted by U. S. Rep. F. Edward Hebert, D-La., went arm in arm to suite No. 50, St. Martin's suite on 4th floor. President accompanied by his traveling party plus Louisiana congressmen and candidates. Suite described as typical to Capital Center at Washington with bartender, cheese & crackers; President sat between Hebert and Rep. Treen; with eye-glasses on, animated at times during key plays; Ford was introduced over PA as a "surprise guest", and given a 45 second applause and cheering from the audience. Only sign was banner on ground floor: "Tulane Dekes Welcome Brother Ford."

8:14 p.m. Presidential aides had expected him to stay no longer than first quarter, but he lingered until the 2nd quarter had progressed several minutes, and at 8:14 p.m., bid farewell; group outside quite squealed and asked for him to come over; Ford repeated, "take it easy" 3-4 times to calm them down; elevator ride to street level; Ford aides had discovered the "Apache Belles" from Tyler Junior College, Tyler, Texas, who had greeted Ford on his pre-Texas primary visit to their city had been scheduled as entertainment for half time. Ford had been told a half dozen of the cowgirl costumed belles were waiting for him and he proceeded to hug them and exchanged kisses. Then he positioned himself in the middle line spot and paraded them down through the hallway toward the exit smiling all the way. The "Ford line" found the whole troop of cowgirls in short skirts and ten gallon hats behind a barricade. He went along the line, kissing on cheeks, getting bussed in return and veteran reporters were treated to the sight of squealing, jumping and excited late teens, early 20s girls whooping it up with Ford.

8:24 p.m. left for Masson's restaurant on shore of Lake Ponchartrain; posed with owners for photos, proceeded to Medoc Room for private dinner party - 14 persons travel party -- Ford between Representatives Hebert and Treen.

White House aides said that President was paying special attention to Congressman Hebert both at the football game and later by going to Hebert's choice of restaurants. Newsmen were ushered in for opening photos; President said it was a "good day." Kidded about Tyler, Tex., girls, Ford said "any lipstick on me -- I'd better get it off before I get back." Ford exited restaurant 10:50 p.m.; small friendly crowd got handshakes and hellos; motorcade arrived at hotel 11:02 p.m.; crowd 5-10 deep in lobby; more handshakes; President started toward elevators; calls of "Hey, Brother Ford! "Hey, Deke." He then turned and went to them for more greetings. Departed lobby 11:09 p.m.

Embrey - Columbus Dispatch
Osborne - New Republic

#