

POOL REPORT

Air Force One - Philadelphia
Museum to Civic Center

May 18 - Sunday

The President arrived uneventfully at Philadelphia International Airport; there was no formal greeting party and the arrival was closed to the public. Staffers aboard AF One included Hartmann, Cheney, Hushen, Lukash, O'Donnell, Caveney, Kennerly. Susan Ford was also along taking pictures.

The motorcade was uneventful. Upon arrival at the University Museum, the President was met by University President Martin Meyerson and Donald T. Regan, Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The President was ushered into the building and up one flight of stairs, through the renowned "Mummy Room" into the Rotunda for an informal reception for the 330 luncheon guests. The President mingled with guests for 15 minutes. He then walked the few steps to the adjoining "Upper Egyptian Gallery" where luncheon tables were placed amidst Egyptian archaeological statuary. The menu included mixed nuts, creamed chicken cubes, rice, creamed spinach, broiled tomato with bread crumbs, strawberries with whipped cream, espresso coffee, cookies, mints, and white wine.

Among those at the President's table were President Meyerson, former Secretary of Defense Thomas S. Gates Jr., retired Sun Oil Co. exec Robert Dunlop, and former Ambassador to Great Britain Walter Annenberg.

In his toast to the President, Meyerson revealed Ford had told him that in the period from 1935-40, the President had visited the university "quietly" -- slipping onto the campus and into Franklin Field to scout the Penn Quaker football team; at the time of course, Ford was a coach of the Yale football team.

Meyerson noted that during the first years of Ford's coaching tenure, Yale beat Penn three straight times. But the last year, he noted with satisfaction, Yale was trounced, 50-7.

"Facing a trend like that, I can understand why he and his staff preferred not to come to Franklin Field this time around," Meyerson said. (There is a campus controversy over using the 10,000 seat Philadelphia Civic Center for Commencement instead of the 60,000 seat Franklin Field. Many students have complained that the smaller Commencement site, which reportedly was dictated by security considerations, kept down the number of available tickets for friends and relatives of the graduates.)

In calling for a toast to the President, Meyerson returned to the football theme. "We have met this former competitor and we are his," he noted. There was no Presidential response to the toast.

Then the President left the museum and instead of using his limousine, rode a white school bus with university officials for the 200 yard trip to the Civic Center. (Susan Ford was aboard the bus taking pictures.)

Enroute the bus passed by approximately 300 demonstrators carrying a considerable number of signs and placards and chanting "Jobs, not speeches." There were signs critical of Ford's economic policies, Henry Kissinger and the Administration's policy towards Turkey and the Mideast. The President and other officials went into a back room to robe for the Commencement.

Aboard AFOne, Jack Hushen reported that Ford would be the 9th President given an honorary degree from Penn. The first was George Washington and the most recent was Eisenhower.

Tom DeFrank
Larry O'Rourke