

Pool No. 5 -- DesMoines to Minnapolis August 18, 1975

At the GOP reception Ford shook hands around the room which was packed with about 500 beaming Republican partisans, including Miss Iowa, who wore her crown and got special admiring attention from the President when he launched his speech.

He moved from the reception to the nearby Wedgewood Room, where we had a brief photo opportunity. There were 28 people seated at a long table. Ford was flanked by Governor Ray, on the right, and Robb B. Kelly, president of the Employers' Mutual Companies of DesMoines, on the left.

We are now informed that our earlier information was incorrect, in the matter of eligibility to attend the dinner. There were only 17 paying guests, and we now understand that they got there by selling large numbers of tickets to the earlier reception. A number of White House aides swelled the guest list.

Nessen reported there was a question period, but that the President broke no new ground, and that there were ~~no political~~ political questions.

On Portugal, the ~~press~~ President reiterated, what he has said before, that if Portugal goes communist it would raise a question about the desirability of continuing in NATO.

On the Middle East: Ford said he was "hopeful" but that there are many problems still to be resolved. He did not say how long he expected the new Kissinger shuttle negotiations to continue.

On Turkish aid: He told them that Congress is acting irresponsibly by contijuing the aid cut-off

He also took questions on energy and the economy, but we were not told about the answers. He said he was pleased with his reception in Iowa.

Paul Healy
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