

Ford's Daily Routine Doesn't Vary In First Day of New Presidency

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By Saul Pett
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A new day.

The commuter at 514 Crown View Drive in Alexandria awoke shortly before 6 a.m. and, in baby blue summer pajamas, boiled the water for his tea, cut the melon and toasted the English muffin.

Still in his pajamas, he popped his head out the front door looking for the morning paper. Not there yet.

Thirty minutes later, he popped out again. Still no paper. The Washington Post, which had never charmed the 37th President of the United States, was now getting off on the wrong foot with the 38th.

Finally, at 6:40, Shelley Deming, 14, who was wearing faded denims and no shoes, arrived in a car driven by her father.

She apologized, to reporters, for the late delivery explaining that "the circulation man was late."

And so The Washington Post was passed inside 514 Crown View Drive by a Secret Service man, and Gerald Rudolph Ford had his morning paper.

At 7:20, Saturday or no Saturday, Gerald Ford left

the house to go to work. Outside he chatted with neighbors.

"How do you feel?"

"Couldn't be better."

"How do you like being President?"

"Great so far. It's very nice."

"When are you going to move into the White House?"

"I didn't ask yesterday. I felt it would not be very appropriate."

Yesterday the old tenants were still there. The Fords don't expect to get into their new place until next week.

Back on Crown View Drive, someone asked President Ford for his autograph and provided paper and pencil. He obliged, started to pocket the pencil, smiled sheepishly and returned it to its rightful owner.

A few minutes later, Gerald Ford left his brick colonial, the one with the bullet-proof windows taken from the old Spiro T. Agnew home last December.

The traffic was light. The commuter in the big black car got to his office in 15 minutes. Monday it'll probably take longer.

By 10 o'clock, he was sitting down with his Cabinet, which until midday Friday

was Richard Nixon's Cabinet. Gerald Ford sat at the middle of the long table that Mr. Nixon had bought as a donation to the government and for which he earlier had taken a tax deduction of \$1,400. Depreciation.

For his first meeting with the Cabinet, Gerald Ford wore a semi loud suit, plaid with very wide lapels.

Opposite him at the table was an empty chair, the one he has to fill soon, the one he occupied as Vice President at the last Cabinet meeting Tuesday. That chair is five feet across from his new chair, five feet that make all the difference.

Mr. Ford made easy small talk while photographers took pictures and reporters studied his face.

He chatted easily. His chitchat rolled out smoothly, unlike the self-conscious lunges of the man before him. He looked comfortable in the chair, in the place, in the job. He looked more relaxed in his second day than Richard Nixon did during and after his 2,027 days.

He looked up and smiled at the reporters. They no longer felt like uninvited guests who had to be watched near the silver.

It was a new day at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.