

Ford Says Nixon Deserves Credit

New York

Vice President Gerald R. Ford said yesterday that President Nixon deserves much of the credit for Henry Kissinger's successful Middle East peace mission last month and suggested that the President's Watergate critics have lost sight of his many foreign policy achievements.

"Secretary Kissinger's most recent mission was facilitated by the new climate that exists worldwide," Ford said at a breakfast meeting of the American Apparel Manufacturers Association. "This is the climate that ensued from the President's historic initiatives."

He cited Mr. Nixon's visits to Moscow and Peking during his first term in office, his "masterful extrication of the American armed forces" from Vietnam, the release of American prisoners of war, and the end of the military draft as primarily responsible for the new atmosphere in international relations.

Adopting a line of reasoning often used in defense of the President, Ford asked the American public not to judge Mr. Nixon solely on the grounds of his role in the Watergate affair but also for his "bold and courageous foreign policy."

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