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A plea for concord at Concord

Associated Press

CONCORD, Mass. — At Concord and Lexington, where the first battles of the American Revolution were fought 200 years ago, President Ford sounded a call yesterday for unity at home and reconciliation and reconstruction in the world.

He received the cheers and applause of crowds estimated at more than 125,000 in Concord.

At the Old North Bridge,

where the "shot heard around the world" was fired April 19, 1775, Ford called for renewal of America's "belief and commitment to human rights and liberties."

"It is a time to place the hand of healing on the heart of America — not division and blame," he said. "When all is said and done, the finest tribute that may ever be paid this nation and people is that we provided a home for freedom," Ford declared.

At similar ceremonies at the Lexington Green eight miles away, Ford told a cheering crowd that he had had a "wonderful experience" in launching the nation's bicentennial.

He said he had an "inspirational opportunity today — first at Concord and now at Lexington" which gave him "a new spirit and a new strength about our country."

"We have inherited a

great tradition," Ford said at the historic Lexington site. But, he added, it was now the job of all the people to see that when Americans gather 100 years from now, "they can say what was done here on this date was the kickoff for a new century of unity and progress at home as well as abroad."

He added, "If we join in unity in the next 100 years, then we will have done our part in tribute to those who have preceded us."

Revolution celebrants boo Ford

United Press International

CONCORD, Mass. — What began as a music festival sponsored by the People's Bicentennial Commission ended yesterday in a hooting, hollering demonstration by thousands of young people against President Ford and U.S. foreign and economic policy.

White House Press Secretary Ron Nessen said it was the biggest protest against President Ford since he took office.

At its peak, about 3 a.m., police estimated 40,000 young persons had hiked miles through traffic to attend the Alternative Bicentennial Celebration within musket distance of the historic North Bridge.

By mid-morning, the crowd dwindled to about 20,000. They booed and chanted when Ford arrived for what was to be a solemn commemoration of the beginning of the American Revolution.

Eight hours of speeches and folk music by Arlo Guthrie, Pete Seeger and Phil Ochs featured the economic protest against the country's 200 largest multi-national corporations, which PBC founder Jeremy Rifkin charged "no longer maintain loyalty to America."

Rebirth of the Revolution

By Steven Natthews
New York Times

LEXINGTON, Mass. — In front of "the rude bridge that arched the flood" in nearby Concord and here on the famed Village Green where America suffered its first military casualties of the Revolutionary War, the United States entered its third century yesterday with all the pomp and ceremony incumbent upon a 200th anniversary celebration.

Nearly 170,000 persons crowded these two normally quiet Boston suburbs to witness ceremonies commemorating the historic battles between the colonial Minutemen and King George III's redcoated British regulars.

Neither intermittent rain, massive traffic jams nor a large counter-Bicentennial demonstration marred the festive day, although President Ford, foremost of many dignitaries in attendance, was jeered loudly as he addressed a crowd estimated at more than 75,000 persons gathered around Concord's Old North Bridge.

There was a brief scuffle between National Park Service police and demonstrators from the protest rally held Friday night in Concord by the Peoples Bicentennial Commission as Ford placed a wreath on the Minuteman monument.

No serious damage was done to national monuments or in either town, and no serious injuries were treated. The Park Service did report,

however, that its staff handled about 14 drug overdoses from among nearly 30,000 young people who turned the Peoples Bicentennial into a kind of Bicentennial Woodstock.

Some 35,000 persons jammed the center of Concord to watch a three-hour parade of more than 6,000 marchers. A similar sized event also was staged here.

The highlight of the Lexington celebration was attended by 35,000 persons who crowded six-to-10 deep around Lexington Green at dawn under cool, gray skies to witness a re-creation of the skirmish between the Minutemen and the Redcoats.

The audience was swelled by another 15,000 townspeople and tourists several hours later when the President arrived from Concord to make a brief speech and lay a wreath at the Minuteman monument here. The recreation was patterned as closely as possible after the original battle.

The costumed participants took their positions at spots marked by commemorative stones and plaques that described what occurred 200 years ago.

As Sir Peter Ramsbotham, British ambassador to Washington, looked on, a troop of 150 uniformed redcoats confronted a less-disciplined line of 77 later-day Minutemen dressed in an assortment of buff and blue clothing.

Words and commands

shouted by the soldiers were not amplified, so most of the crowd did not hear the reenactment of the immortal lines once spoken by the British commander, Capt. John Pitcairn — "Lay down your arms, you damned rebels, and disperse!" or his American counterpart, Capt. John Parker — "Stand your guard! Don't fire unless fired on. But if they mean to have a war, let it begin here."

But no one could miss the sound of the volley of musket shots — really the "shot heard round the world," despite Emerson's famous poem placing the event in Concord — that flashed from the barrels of the muzzle-loaders carried by both sides.

The mock engagement was over in 15 minutes, and the British boarded yellow school buses to ride the eight miles to Concord along the same route they had marched 200 years before.

There the regiment participated in the ceremonies at which Ford spoke, and at which Lord Ramsbotham, who traveled in a Rolls Royce, laid a wreath at a British grave nearby.