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Ford Briefs

White House Reporters

Washington

President Ford told White House reporters yesterday that his will be an open and candid administration — "I can't change my nature after 61 years."

In the White House press briefing room — often a scene of confrontation as newsmen pressed Watergate questions upon former President Nixon's spokesmen — Mr. Ford introduced his new press secretary, Jerald F. terHorst.

"We will have one of yours as my press secretary, Jerry terHorst," he told the crowd of reporters.

Mr. Ford said he trusts that as President, he will have the kind of rapport and friendship that marked his relationship with newsmen during his years in Congress and his service as vice president.

Then Mr. Ford, who likes a daily swim, noted that the press room was erected over what was the White House swimming pool. Smiling, he said he hadn't decided what to do about that.

That remark was greeted with laughter.

Mr. Nixon had the White House press facilities erected over the swimming pool in 1970. The reconstruction cost nearly \$500,000.

"I do look forward to working with you," Ford said. "We will have, I trust, the kind of rapport and friendship we've had in the past. And I don't ask you to treat me any better . . ."

"So, all I can say is thanks for your kindnesses in the past, your reporting, good and bad, mistakes and maybe a few plusses," the new President said.

As White House press secretary, terHorst, a newspaperman for 31 years, succeeds Ronald L. Ziegler.

terHorst was Ford's press secretary during his first campaign for Congress, in 1946. He worked for the Grand Rapids (Mich.) Press, joined the Detroit News in 1952, came to Washington five years later, and has been the News bureau chief since 1961.

Mr. Ford said Paul Miltich and Bill Roberts, who have been his vice presidential press aides, will work with terHorst.

Associated Press