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Gerald Ford takes the oath of office as 38th President while his wife Betty looks on. (Photographed by Wide World Photos)

Ford, nation out of valley

By ROBERT KIPPER

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The contrasts were obvious and unavoidable.

A proud, still sure of himself President surrenders his office to a more humble successor.

The office that Richard M. Nixon had coveted and sought for years passes to Gerald R. Ford, who never openly wanted it.

The 37th President, disgraced by the nation's greatest political scandal, is replaced by the 38th President, who emerged unstained from intensive investigation prior to his confirmation as Vice-president.

THE OUTGOING chief executive hesitates and delivers a long speech before leaving by helicopter from the rear of the White House. Within less than two hours, invited guests and members of the press enter the front gate of the White House to watch an assertive new leader deliver a brief inaugural address.

Nixon, never comfortable with Congress, gives way to a man most of Capitol Hill calls Gerry. Nixon, who gave too few press conferences, is replaced by Ford, sometimes criticized for giving too many.

Nixon, known worldwide, is the predecessor of one who eight months ago was unknown to most outside of Grand Rapids.

As Washington, D.C. watched Ford take the oath of office Friday, few doubted things would be different, at least on the surface. Nixon and Ford may be alike politically; neither has ever been a Lincoln to moderates and liberals. Yet Ford's inaugural speech—filled with promises of openness and candor with full confidence that honesty is always the best policy in the end.

"My fellow Americans," he added, like a reassuring brother, "our long national nightmare is over."

Speech in Washington to Ford's reaction was mostly good. Again, it was the contrast that was noticed.

"I think he's a fairer man," said an otherwise unenthusiastic cab driver. "Nixon was a dictator."

"Anyone would be an improvement," said Steve Daniels of the press.

"My impression is that he's a much more open guy," said Mary Goodloe-Murphy of Washington, D.C. "You used to see him going to work every morning with his briefcase and newspapers. He seems like a human being, uninterested in all the hoopla."

Of course, the most enthusiastic were politicians, Republican politicians.

GOV. WILLIAM Milliken, who managed to miss the backlawn farewell for Nixon, showed up for the swearing in of Michigan's first President.

"It's a great day for Michigan," Milliken said. "Watergate is now behind us. President Ford has strong bipartisan support. The results should be a surge of confidence in the government."

Yet despite positive feelings toward Ford, the nation's capital was subdued this inauguration day. Aside from a private celebration immediately following the ceremony, there were no parties for Ford. No airplanes unloaded cargoes of Michigan friends and supporters for night-time galas. Everything was low keyed, explained a Ford staffer.

THE IMAGE of that departing helicopter carrying away its reluctant passenger hovered over what also became a rainy day in Washington.

"This is not a happy time," said one congressional aide. "It's almost like somebody died," said another.

Before Nixon boarded his helicopter, he said, "Greatness comes when you are really tested, when you take some hard knocks, some disappointments, when sadness comes; because, only if you have been in the deepest valley can you ever know how magnificent it is to be on the highest mountain."

If Washington did not actually celebrate its new President, it seemed to extend him some hope. Watergate provided a glimpse of a valley. America, tested and sad, seemed ready for a climb.

Residents welcome Ford, want immunity for Nixon

By SHELLEY EICHENHORN

The transfer of power from the 37th president to the 38th president of the United States took place without much physical impact on the country.

Yet, there was an invisible, silent impact. Like other communities, the citizens of Farmington had their own responses to the resignation of former President Nixon and the swearing in of President Gerald Ford.

ANDRES HAINES, 34, owner of Andy and Bob's Korner Barber Shop in downtown Farmington said Nixon's resignation was the talk of the day in his shop.

"I think Nixon made the right move by resigning for the good of the people. He's lost all his sting," Haines said.

"I thought the resignation speech showed Nixon to be a very strong man," he said. "I don't think he should be prosecuted even though many of his aides are in jail."

"Nixon has been punished enough," he said.

Agreeing that the former president should not be punished was Mrs. Jane Weissman, 54, 3075 Point-O-Woods Dr., Farmington Hills.

However, Mrs. Weissman felt Nixon's speech didn't have enough humility in it.

"He tried to be sincere, but he didn't show true emotion."

"Even great men have emotions and they should show them," Mrs. Weissman said.

"I think he tried to be a great president, but the old 'Tricky Dick' side of his nature didn't leave him," she said.

MRS. RAY SOLOMON, 65 of 30405 Folsom, Farmington, felt that Nixon should have apologized to the country. "He didn't come out and say he was sorry," she said. "I think he did a wonderful thing by resigning."

Sixteen-year-old Diana McConas, 30724 Club House Lane, Farmington

Hills, was sorry for the ex-president.

"I think they should leave Nixon alone and not prosecute him."

"If he knows he's wrong, then that's enough," Miss McConas said. "Giving up his job was a difficult punishment."

Mayor Ralph Yoder also felt that Nixon should not be prosecuted.

"To prosecute him now would be kicking him when he's down," he said.

The mayor said he was very pleased with President Ford. "He's a sincere man and I'm grateful that things will now be back to normal."

Although most residents were enthusiastic about the new president, a different view was held by Mrs. Carol Cohen, 30, 28650 Lincolnview, Farmington Hills.

"I have no reaction to Ford," she said.

He didn't say anything really, I see him only as a caretaker president," Mrs. Cohen said.

A FARMINGTON ATTORNEY, Donald C. Harms, 2970 Orchard Lake, expressed mixed feelings about the Nixon resignation.

"I feel a certain ambivalence, a deep personal tragedy for Richard Nixon. Yet, I abhorred what I read in the transcript of the tapes," he said.

"I was afraid of a bitter resignation speech, but I think what he said did him credit," Harms said.

"The tragedy is that he was one of our greater presidents in foreign affairs. There were brilliant strokes of diplomacy," he said.

But, his blind spot was the inability to see that the ends don't justify the means, according to Harms.

"Nixon began to think that what's right for Richard Nixon was right for the office of the presidency," Harms said.

Students, parents, teachers mourn Bond School's death

By SHELLEY EICHENHORN

Bond Elementary School is being laid to rest after 48 years of service to the community.

The family of mourners includes Bond students, parents and administrators.

Bond did not die because of internal disorders or old age.

It expired because of an economic deficiency within the system. Bond was filled with spirit and life until the end.

"It was a very fun school, and many activities took place in and around it," said 11½-year-old Michelle Harp, a Bond student.

"Even this summer, we had a fun recreation program at the playground," she said.

"AT BOND, teachers and the principal were fun-loving. When you came to the school, they accepted you. They were your friends, not just teachers."

Bond parents echoed Michelle's sentiments. Joe Reed has sent 10 children to Bond.

"We thought the education was terrific. The school was staffed with the finest group of teachers we have had the privilege to know," he said.

"I've been to Bond many times. Although it's an older building, it seemed to be in fine condition and the kids never complained."

"They simply loved their old school," said Mrs. Beatrice Keeber, a Bond parent. "It had a lot to do with the kids' enthusiasm for learning."

Bond teachers also liked their school.

MRS. MACINALLY has been at Bond longer than anyone else, more than 15 years.

"I'm rather attached to the building and my friends. It's been a friendly school. The children and the parents were very nice to work with."

"We'll be scattered to various schools, and we will have to take vacancies that will occur in other buildings," she said.

"Historically, old things keep having to go," said Mrs. Naomi Schwinck, a Bond teacher for 14 years.

"We've had two additions and some heating problems, but they've been overcome," she said.

"Bond had the finest and biggest

playground in the district, and the building was landscaped with trees. I guess this is progress."

THE MUTUAL admiration among Bond students, parents and teachers also was felt by Bond principal Phillip Townsend.

"I knew that it was inevitable. It's too bad. I've been in education 12 years, and this was the strongest group of parents in support and concern for kids' education that I've ever seen," he said.

"Last year we had 8½ volunteer parents out of just 225 families to help on various projects. When you have that kind of involvement, it's passed on to the kids."

"I'm sure they'll continue to show concern wherever they go."

"It's hard to believe I've been there only one year because the experience was larger than the time period indicates," Townsend said.

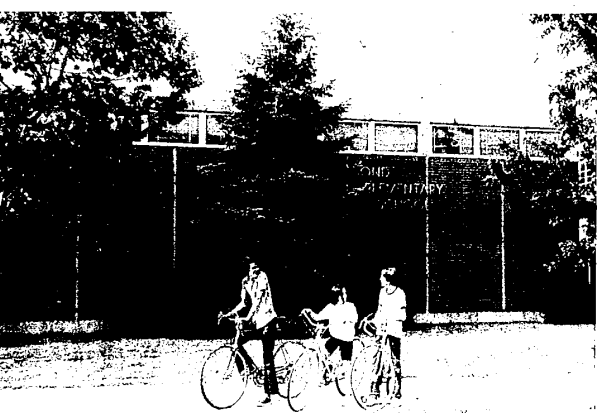
The Farmington Board of Education also feels concern for Bond Elementary School.

"CLOSING OF a school is a most difficult thing," assistant superintendent Larry Freedman said.

Due to the financial situation of the district, he believes the question has become, "Do I eliminate a whole educational program, or do I close a school?"

"And if you can place kids in a good facility, then the closing of a school must be considered," he said.

"I'm certain people will be happy in the new situations they will be in."



Brent Canner (left), Sandra Stumpf and Richard Stumpf stop next to Bond Elementary School, a casualty of economy in education. The school is being closed after 48 years in Farmington Hills.

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