

At women's luncheon

DC reporter rates Ford

By LOUISE OKRUTKEY

In Gerald Ford's quiet White House, even the Secret Service has mellowed in its attitude toward the press. "It wasn't around as a human shield," Helen Thomas, chief of UPI's White House Bureau told the Detroit Sector of the National Council of Jewish Women recently.

Although Ford's administration doesn't exhibit the imperial trappings of its predecessor, "we are aware that the more it changes, the more it remains the same," she said.

Ms. Thomas told the group at the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield, "The feeling among the press is that Ford will get the Republican nomination. He expects Carter to get the Democratic nomination."

Ford's decision to pardon Richard Nixon has followed him throughout his campaign. "He says it's the best decision he's ever made. He thought he had put it behind him."

"Pardoning Richard Nixon cut off for all time the true story of Watergate," she said.

A PRESIDENT IENT outside of the law, she said. It came as a shock when Nixon said in a deposition that he as a sovereign could act as he sees fit.

While describing the atmosphere of the last days of Nixon's White House as a "gulag," Ms. Thomas added, "We still do not live in Valhalla."

Ford, whose ambition was to become speaker of the house, found himself in a job which he never coveted until after he got it.

"He's exhibited poise and confidence that has never been matched in a new-comer to the White House," she said.

"Ford has always believed that good government is the best government," she said.

He is still laboring under Johnson's assessment of him, that he can't walk and chew gum at the same time.

"He's the only president in history who has been asked if he has the brains to cope with the job."

"He answers that he was third in his class at Yale Law School."

"If LBJ had been asked that question, he'd become apologetic."

Ford admits that he likes his job. "None of his predecessors would admit that," she said.

FORD IS A one dimensional president, she believes.

"He has no dreams for the future."

All 38 presidents have had trouble with the press. Franklin Roosevelt autographed a photo which hangs in the press room. "From their devoted victim."

Kennedy said of his treatment by the press, "I'm reading more but enjoying it less."

Once when a group of newsmen walked into the room Nixon commented, "It's only a coincidence that we're talking about pollution when the press walks in."

"I have never been awed by a president," Ms. Thomas said. "They like us, have their joys, sorrows, frailties."

"I have a ring-side seat to history in the making," she said.

Her ring-side seat enables her to meet the people who make that history.

"Kissinger is knowledgeable, witty, urbane, secretive, reserved. Power is an aphrodisiac."

When asked why he spent so little time in Washington, Kissinger answered, "I only go to friendly capitals."

Kissinger had his staff and the press wrapped up.

Of his secretive diplomatic actions, Ms. Thomas said, "We may be held accountable for it for many years to come."

SHE BELIEVES that Kissinger won't hold onto his position for long, even if

Ford is reelected.

"Although the president has said that Kissinger can stay in the cabinet as long as he is president, come November, Kissinger will be departing."

The job of the press is to keep people informed and democracy alive.

"We believe that a constant spotlight on people in public offices hampers the possibility of corruption," she said.

She supports Woodward and Bernstein's exposure of a president's private life.

"The Last Days."

"As painful as it probably is to them (the Nixons) and as it is to many of us, it should be told."

She believes that in the declining days of the Nixon administration, the president was given a choice of staying in office and facing impeachment proceedings or leaving and retaining all the privileges of an ex-president and the president's pension.

While she won't predict who Ford will choose as a running mate, she believes that his choice will be politically advantageous to him.

"IT BEFUDGLES ME that so low a premium is attached to the job. The vice-president should run for the job. A great democracy demands that everyone run for the top offices."

She reminded her audience that three vice-presidents in recent history have become presidents.

When Johnson became president, he said, "I'm president of all the people" in an attempt to explain why he supported policies which were not representative of his own political party.

At the height of anti-war sentiment, Johnson was limited to visiting military bases. On one such visit, a soldier pointed to a plane and said, "There's your plane, sir."

Johnson looked over the plane in the airfield and told him, "They're all my planes."

Free soccer clinic offered for coaches

A free soccer clinic will be offered at Cranbrook school on Saturday, May 15 for all soccer coaches throughout Michigan, college, high school, junior high and youth.

The clinic will feature George Beem, a former player and coach, who is now president of World Cup Sports Inc., a New Jersey firm.

Coaches wishing to register should do so with Mark Trister, head soccer coach at Cranbrook, at 645-3474 during business hours.

Morning sessions at the Koppel Gymnasium, 550 Lone Pine Road, will emphasize the three major areas of soccer coaching: fitness, techniques and tactics. Practices will stress restart plays, overall principle of play and positional theory.

Afternoon sessions on the football field will include a field demonstration by Cranbrook varsity soccer players. Functional aspects of position play and coaching principles of play and tactics will be covered. Time will be provided for questions and answers.

Sessions will last from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Beim, author and editor of books on soccer, has coached the game with the Baltimore Comets, Dartmouth College, Hampshire (New Hampshire), United Soccer Club, Saint Francis College in Biddford, Maine and Wall Whitman High School in Bethesda, Maryland.

The 33 year old Beim has also played soccer for the Boston Astras, British Lions Soccer Club and Britannia Soccer Club in Washington, D.C. and the University of North Carolina where he was an All-Atlantic Coast and All-South selection.

Trister, chairman of the clinic, said he hopes to host a week long clinic for boys 7-19 in the summer and that a first Cranbrook Invitational Soccer Tournament was in the planning stage.

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