

PRESS POOL # 4

STATE DINNER AT THE WILANOW PALACE

A handful of people were standing outside the palace gate to watch as the visitors entered. The Polish officials hosted by President Ford, and the American guests, drove into a circular drive-way surrounding a well-kept park with a fountain (flood-lit). They entered the palace between two soldiers and two large cactus plants.

The castle was brightly flood-lit. Chandeliers glinted from most windows. The castle is in a baroque style resembling Versailles. As the guests entered they were serenaded by three men and two women wearing 16th century red costumes, members of the Warsaw Chamber Opera Company who were singing madrigals and traditional songs to the accompaniment of a guitar.

President Ford came out onto the porch about 8:25 p.m. where he personally greeted Chairman of the Council of State and Mrs. Henryk Jablonski. "Good evening, he said. So nice to see you. Thank you for coming."

While waiting for the arrival of First Secretary Edward Gierek, the President chatted briefly with members of the pool. He started out by saying in a jocular manner, "I can't see all you villains behind those lights".

Some of the photographers present suggested the President would not want to see them, since they said they all had bloodshot eyes. The President apparently misunderstood the remark and said that he had not been swimming and didn't think that he had bloodshot eyes.

Mr. Ford then inquired about a Polish photographer who apparently was injured earlier today when he fell from a jeep during the motorcade from the airport into the city. Members of the pool told him it was understood that the Polish fellow was not badly hurt.

"Well, he fell flat on his face", the President said. Then he changed the subject and said, "It was a good day yesterday. Didn't we have fun. It was very nice today. That crowd was tremendous."

The President then talked about the dancers who apparently entertained at the luncheon given today by Gierek. "They were very pretty girls, the President said. I understand they are coming to the United States soon -- in 1976".

The President then asked "Are they taking good care of you in Helsinki?" Members of the pool said they wouldn't know until they arrived in Helsinki. The President said "There will be more press people than diplomats and Heads of State. Helsinki will never have seen anything like it."

Gierek arrived in a white Polish built Fiat automobile, and was greeted by the President and escorted inside the Palace. Shortly afterwards the President escorted his guests into a rococo dining hall in a wing of the palace. The 34 guests sat around a long table set with candles and small bunches of varried flowers. Old paintings hung in gilt frames on the rose-colored walls and two large chandeliers lit up a ceiling covered with cherubs and highlighted with gold leaf.

(MORE)

After dinner (menu previously released), the President took his guests to the opposite wing of the palace for a 20 minute program of music, performed by a group of 125 young Americans called the Friendship Ambassadors. The group, winding up a three week concert tour of Poland, were composed of the New England Youth Ensemble, of Massachusetts; Takoma Academy Chorale, of Maryland; Morristown Madrigals, of New Jersey, and the Gulf Kirk Singers, of Florida.

During the dinner itself music was played by the Taylor Family String Quartet of Clinton, Massachusetts. And Miss Honor Conway and Mr. Dennis Hill, both from Florida played pieces for harp and flute.

The pool witnessed the President deliver a toast to his Polish guests which was then translated into Polish. Transcript has been made available by the Press Office. The Pool was ushered out before the toast was replied to.

BARRY JAMES - UPI
DICK RYAN - DETROIT NEWS

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