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Smiles, Unsmiles And Weaponry

By Dorothy McCardle
and Jeannette Smyth

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President Nixon stepped out along the red carpet on the White House North Portico Tuesday night, sniffed the air, looked at the sky and glanced at the traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue, just as the limousine of Pakistan's Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto pulled up the driveway for the first state dinner of the fall season.

The 45-year-old prime minister of the war-torn and flood-ravaged country in the South Asian subcontinent and his wife, Begum Bhutto, emerged smiling into the chilly fall breeze.

Mr. Nixon's welcome was cordial but unlingering as he hurried his guests past photographers into the foyer and up the elevator to the Yellow Oval Room where Mrs. Nixon, Vice President and Mrs. Spiro Agnew and Secretary of State-designate Henry Kissinger awaited them.

The Agnews had arrived about 15 minutes earlier. They, too, had not lingered in the presence of photographers waiting on the North Portico steps.

"Mr. Vice President, will you have a word with us?" asked one reporter of Agnew, who had been the subject throughout the day of reports that he was considering resigning.

Agnew ignored the request and walked quickly through the front door, looking straight ahead.

The White House appeared to make some effort to protect Agnew from the press. The first indication was a sudden shift in protocol that kept the Vice President out of the limelight when the Nixons and their guests descended the grand staircase to pose for official pictures.

In the past, the Vice President and Secretary of State have preceded the Nixons, stopping in the foyer to witness the descent. But last night the Agnews went directly to the East Room where about 110 dinner guests waited to be received by their host.

A White House spokesman explained the switch, saying the previous arrange-

ment had "cluttered" the foyer with too many guests.

"We've gone back to the system we had six to eight months ago when only the principals came downstairs in time to pose for photographers, and the foyer was clear of guests."

During the dinner, conversation was lively at the head table where the Agnews were seated with President and Mrs. Nixon and the Bhuttos.

The prime minister, asked later if he had discussed the possibility of the Vice President's resignation with Agnew, replied, "We did not discuss his future, but he seemed in very good spirits as he chatted with both President and Mrs. Nixon."

After dinner, the Blue and Green Rooms were both closed off to the press for the first time in the memory of reporters who cover White House social events. The explanation given was that the Vice President and the prime minister were having a "private talk."

After his conference with Agnew, Bhutto met informally with the press in the Blue Room. He downgraded the idea that the Watergate scandal is having any influence on world opinion of President Nixon.

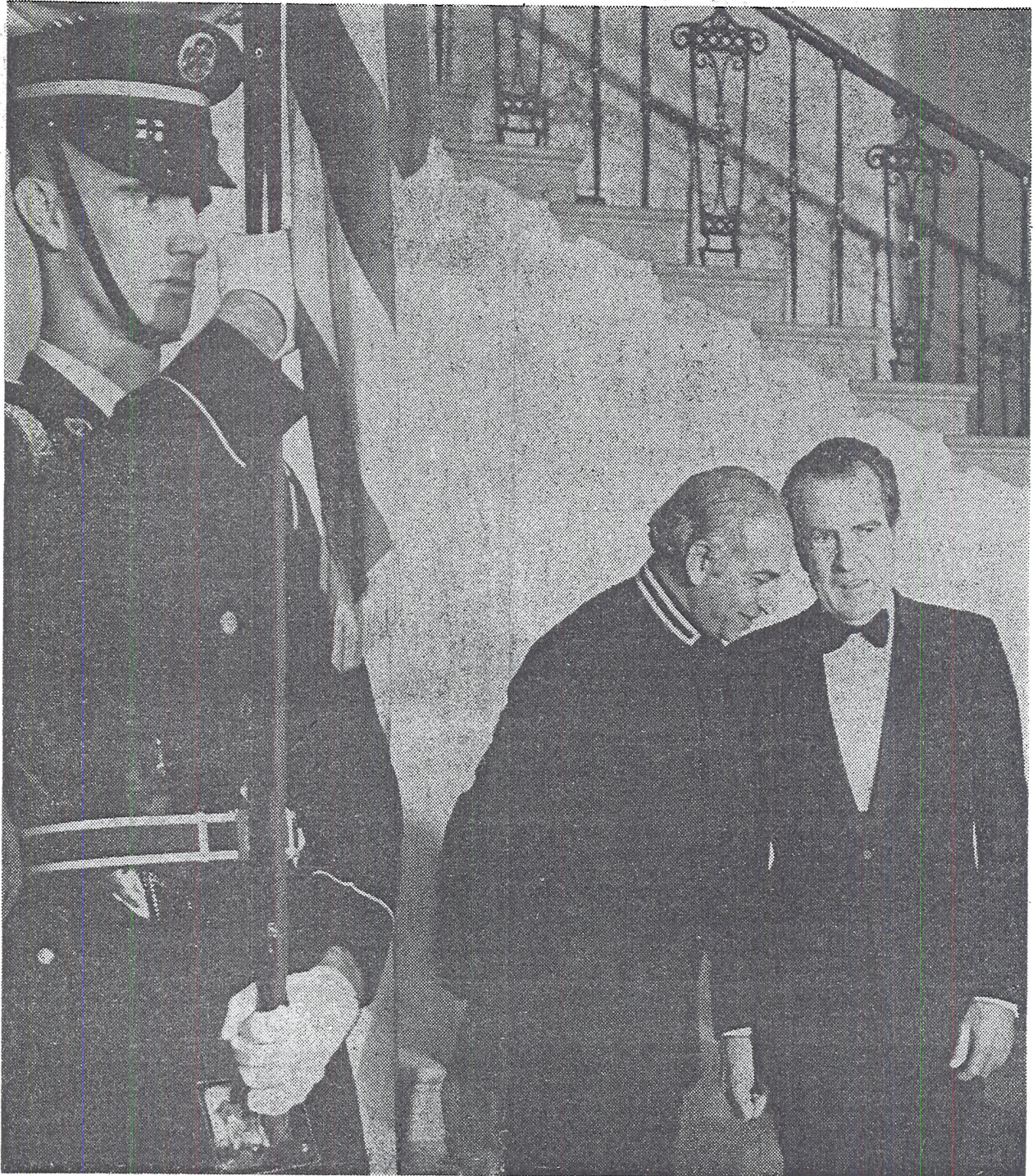
"The world outside is concerned more with world peace," he said. "We don't find Watergate of any great significance. It has been distracting, but it is your business."

Later when a reporter ran almost head-on into the Agnews as they walked to the East Room for the after-dinner entertainment, Mrs. Agnew was asked whether her husband would resign.

"You'll have to ask my husband," she said, smiling.

When the same question was put to the Vice President he snapped without smiling, "I do not comment on stories from undisclosed sources."

It was an apparent reference to The Washington Post story Tuesday that an undisclosed source predicted that the Vice President will resign.



By Frank Johnston—The Washington Post

President Nixon with Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto at Tuesday night's state dinner in the White House.

Before the entertainment started, many of the guests went up to talk to the Agnews, who were seated in the front row. Among them were former ambassador to Vietnam Ellsworth Bunker, now ambassador-at-large-designate, and his wife, Carol Laise, former U.S. Ambassador to Nepal and Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs-designate.

In a few minutes, President and Mrs. Nixon joined the Agnews in the front row, Mrs. Nixon taking her place beside the Vice President. The President then introduced the evening's en-

tertainers, Mr. and Mrs. Richard M. Hadden, duo pianists from Michigan. In his remarks, Mr. Nixon described the Haddens as the only artistic group to perform before both Premier Chou En-lai of China and the President of the United States.

Earlier in his after-dinner toast to President Nixon, Bhutto hinted at his hopes for a change in U.S. policy toward Pakistan.

Raising his champagne glass, Bhutto revealed that his discussions Tuesday with President Nixon were on economic, cultural and

military matters—including the U.S. policy of shipping only "nonlethal weapons" and spare parts for weapons already in-country.

"I don't know how," said Bhutto, "but the cultural and military matters got intertwined. Perhaps because Dr. Kissinger was there."

Bhutto joked that the heavy artillery was already spoken for—"Jill St. John is booked for the Soviet Union. Raquel Welch is earmarked for China. Tallulah Bankhead is earmarked for Pakistan." He was unaware that Miss Bankhead died in

1968.

"What do we get?" asked the President.

Laughing, Bhutto concluded, "Our interest is not in obsolete spare parts but in red-hot weapons."

Bhutto went on to praise President Nixon's "splendid initiatives to bring peace to a troubled part of the world" and his "everlasting contribution to world peace and tranquility" and led the dinner guests in drinking to the President's health.

"Much too generous," the President murmured. "Much too generous. I appreciate that. I'll record that."