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Agnew, Nixon: Trading Notes

By Art Buchwald

While Henry Kissinger has been getting all the attention in the past few weeks, our own vice president, Spiro Agnew, has just returned from a successful goodwill trip around the world. Its significance could affect foreign affairs for years to come.

Flying in four Boeing 707s and one cargo plane, with two bullet-proof Cadillacs, the Agnew party of 141 people, paying an average of \$3,000 a night for quarters, visited such unlikely places as Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, Kenya, the Congo, Spain and Portugal.

Anxiously awaiting his report on his return was President Nixon.

"Well, Spiro, we're really glad to have you back in the country."

"Thank you, Mr. President. Say, I heard a funny thing in Spain—this will make you really laugh. Some joker said you were going to Red China to visit Mao Tse-tung. How do you like that for a kooky rumor?"

It's not kooky, Spiro. It's true. And I don't want you to say anything to louse it up."

"Are you out of your mind, Mr. President? There isn't a decent golf course in the entire country."

"I'm not going to play golf in Red China."

"You're not going to play golf? Then why would you go there?"

"I have some things I want to talk over with Mao."

"Why didn't you let me know about it, Mr. President?"

"I tried to get you several times, but they told me you were always on the golf course and you left word you didn't want to be disturbed."

"That isn't true, Mr. President. The reporters who were with me kept putting out the stories that I was always playing golf to embarrass me. The truth of the matter is I played as much tennis as I did golf."

"Never mind. Tell me what you have to report."

"The South Koreans don't like the North Koreans. President Chung Hee Park told me that himself."

"That's interesting. What else?"

"The Saudi Arabians don't trust the Israelis."

"How do you know this?"

"Prince Faisal revealed this to me in strictest confidence."

"You mean King Faisal."

"Prince—King, what's the difference? I saw Jomo Kenyatta for 15 minutes in Kenya. I gave him some candlesticks and he gave me a monkey-skin robe. Haile Selassie says hello. Ethiopia has made fantastic progress in its putting greens."

"Anything I should know about the Congo?"

"Mobutu really has his blacks under control. Our black leaders could learn a thing or two from Kenyatta and Mobutu, believe you me."

"I know about that, Spiro. Your remarks on our black leaders were reported back here in detail. And while I'm sure they were received well in Kenya and the Congo, they didn't go over very big with our black leaders here."

"Well, you can't please everybody when you're on a goodwill trip."

"I'm not criticizing you, Spiro. How's Franco?"

"He's okay. I shot a 76, a 74, and a 79 in Spain. They have some of the finest fairways in the world at Sotogrande."

"You've really worked hard, Spiro, and the information you brought back is invaluable. Is there anything else I should know?"

"I've been saving the best for last, Mr. President. Have you ever seen two rhinos copulate? What they do is . . ."