
Betty Beale: Washington

A backlash on impeachment?

WASHINGTON — Clare Luce was in town, dined out at Trader Vic's with the Richard Nixons, went back to the White House with them to see "Butterflies Are Free," and with her usual deft touch put her finger on the reason why the President will probably not be impeached.

"Nobody likes an executioner," she said. "That's why executioners have always worn a mask.

"None of the men on the Senate Watergate Committee are going to make a good reputation out of this," she continued, explaining what has been happening to perhaps the most admired member of that committee. "Danny Inouye was the most popular man in the state. Nobody said anything against him. Now, even in very Democratic Hawaii, the newspapers are full of criticism of him on the basis of his Watergate stand.

"If Congress tries to impeach Nixon before the next congressional election, or if they drag it out until October, then say they can't get on with the trial because they have to go home for the election, the people may consider it a partisan trick. And if they get rid of Nixon and don't support Jerry Ford, the people will resent it. The Catholics have a saying: God often punishes people by answering their prayers."

As for the press, Clare said, "They can't have it two ways. They have been saying the people have a right to know the truth. Now they ask him to resign without getting the truth."

(During that White House showing of "Butterflies Are Free," when Goldie Hawn appeared on the screen wearing a bra and panties, modest attire for today's movies, Julie Eisenhower turned to her straitlaced father and said, "Just pretend, daddy, she's wearing a bikini bathing suit.")

The handsome Mrs. Luce with a haircut ("I got tired of fooling around with it.") was here for the bimonthly meeting of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. She is the first and only woman



AT EMBASSY — From left, Herbert Stein, Frederick Dent, Jens Krag, Mrs. Berndt von Staden

member of that prestigious group which includes such powerhouses as presidential possibilities Nelson Rockefeller and John Connally, atomic scientist Edward Teller and presidents Ed Land of Polaroid and Bill Baker of Bell Telephone Laboratories.

While at a private dinner party for recent Ambassador to Argentina and Mrs. John Davis Lodge, she read her parody on Hamlet's soliloquy which appeared in the New York Times. It begins: "To impeach; or not to impeach; that is the question./Whether 'tis better for the party to suffer/The slings and arrows of outrageous Nixon./Or now to drown him in his sea of troubles."

Listening were Vice President and Mrs. Gerald Ford — Betty wearing a sparkly black Oscar de la Renta dinner suit with soft white blouse. Size 8 is now too big in the waist for her.

HEW Secretary Caspar Weinberger's wife eyed her enviously. She had a tomato and some lettuce leaves while the rest ate a full-course dinner. In order to confine herself to 500 calories a day (plus vitamins) on the party circuit, Jane calls her hostess in advance and requests a separate plate of virtually nothing. She's getting in trim to give a speech in Santa Barbara in Pat Nixon's place (who could get that trim?): will tell Pat's

educational sorority Alpha Delta Kappa "What's Right With America."

"You will never get me to say we are in a recession," said Herbert Stein, the administration's big-gun economist at a German Embassy reception. "A recession is a state of mind. A recession is a slowdown when the other party is in power."

The reception was for a great Dane, handsome Jens Otto Krag, who was honored at two or three jazzy White House state dances when LBJ was there and Krag was prime minister of Denmark.

At that time he was married to Danish actress Helle Virkner. Now he comes to Washington as a permanent representative of the Common Market, ensconced in the Douglas Dillons' former expensive and Frenchy abode, and hostesses are happy to note, he's single. But they will never know where to seat him at a dinner.

Although he represents nine countries, he insisted he doesn't rate the title of ambassador. "But everybody on official business in Washington has a title," he was told. "I am just Mr. Krag," was his response. "But," pursued a puzzled hostess, "Do you know where your name comes on the list of precedence?" "Yes, last," grinned the unworried Krag.

Secretary of Commerce Fred Dent was there looking tall, handsome and as strong as any two-legged man you know. But back in '56 he had one leg amputated for the same reason young Teddy Kennedy Jr., did. He doesn't even limp, and he plays a good net game of tennis, shoots golf in the 80s and dances. He wrote Sen. Kennedy, offering to talk to Teddy about his experience, but the Senator simply thanked him for the offer without taking him up on it.

Shirley Temple Black was the reason for the dinner given last weekend by chief of the Egyptian mission Ashrat Ghorbal. But as laudatory as Ghorbal was about Shirley, who is headed for his country at her own expense on behalf of the Food and Agricultural Organization, Charles Black's comments were the kind that make a woman's heart sing.

"For 23 years I have been married to Shirley, and I can tell you that every day has been a new reel," said the handsome Black who is going with her. "I have never been tempted to join that bachelor's group the ambassador referred to since marrying. I carry my share of beauty with me." The famous Temple dimples dimpled. No wonder they stay happily married.

Shirley has quit her Environmental Protective Agency job to work on the crucial problem of insufficient food. "I am very concerned about food production, about fish and protein products. I want to again show my love for the people in Egypt," said Mrs. Black, whose peacock blue eyeshadow emphasized her flawless complexion and matched her brocade gown.