

from Betty Beale column:

...s. Getty
 but it never got
 about. Unlike some we won't
 mention, she didn't tip off her favorite
 columnist within the hour.

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The wife of the Marine Corps Com-
 mandant, Mrs. Robert Cushman, regrets
 that she broke all protocol and stood and
 made a speech in the middle of President
 and Mrs. Nixon's dinner for the Mel
 Lairds. Contrary to the first report,
 however, she rose and clinked her glass
 only once, but that was enough to cause
 everyone to hold their breath.

"Of course, I was wrong, but I had
 wanted for so long to say something nice
 about the President. I knew it wasn't
 protocol, but I can remember hearing
 about other people stepping out of line,"
 said Audrey Cushman. "I certainly don't

want to hurt the Marine Corps because I
 love them so much and have worked so
 hard for them. Those who know me will
 know that I was doing something kind
 rather than misbehaving."

The unprecedented action by an offi-
 cial guest at a formal dinner in the state
 dining room brought an embarrassed
 hush to the entire room, particularly the
 part about the brutality of the press
 toward Nixon. Said one high official's
 wife, "It was too long and too serious for
 the atmosphere of the dinner. It was
 supposed to be a fun party and after-
 wards there was this dull, deaf silence.
 Everybody had to start all over again."

It seemed unlikely that the General
 would be demoted for what must have
 been music to Nixonian ears.