

# 'Citizens' Hail Simon

By William Gildea

The name of President Ford received polite applause; the name of Ronald Reagan evoked vigorous and sustained applause, whistles, cheers.

One of the guests said that former President Nixon had suffered "a bum rap" and that he was supporting Nixon's legal defense. So were many others in the audience.

They had come to the Shoreham Hotel the other night, 500 strong, for "A Salute to Leadership," and the first in a series of "Bicentennial awards" to be given by the United States Citizens Association, founded a year ago by one of Nixon's ardent friends and supporters, Rabbi Baruch Korff.

The principal speaker and one of the honored guests was William E. Simon. Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.) hailed him as "the greatest Secretary of the Treasury since Alexander Hamilton" at the close of an introduction that roused the dinner guests to a standing ovation.

Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz declared of another award recipient, "If we had more men in Congress like him and his two colleagues at this table it would be a damned sight better place." The honoree was Sen. Carl T. Curtis (R-Neb.); his colleagues, Thurmond and James A. McClure (R-Idaho).

Why the awards? "We believe that in recognizing service we will inspire others to emulate those who are honored," said Korff before the dinner.

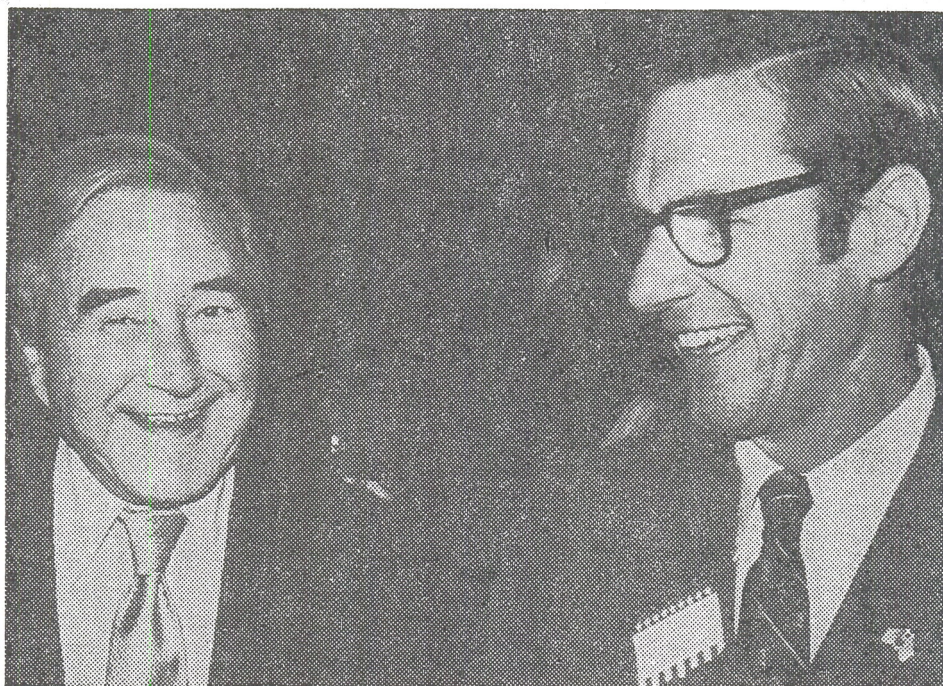
Korff stressed that Nixon's "a friend of mine" with whom he communicates "almost weekly." And certainly Nixon would have been among friends and admirers—had he been at the dinner. The guests were predominantly white, older,

See KORFF, C3, Col. 4



By James K.W. Atherton—The Washington Post

First Lady Betty Ford poses before the 18-foot



By James A. Parcell—The Washington Post

Rabbi Korff, left, and Treasury Secretary Simon at the awards ceremonies.

*KORFF, From CI*

Republican, and, judging from the applause when a telegram from Reagan was read, conservative.

Simon, like Curtis, said there was "more right than wrong with America" and elaborated with a story about a Virginia woman who presented Nixon with a homemade American flag in the oval office. The former President remarked that it must have taken much work, to which she agreed. "There are 78,000 stitches in that flag," she replied. "It was all worthwhile because every one of those stitches stands for something that is right with America."

Simon praised the work of Korff's group and said, "I want you to know how en-

couraging it is to receive a bouquet from those whose friendship and judgment I value."

Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov was given an award. Another honored was Adm. Arleigh A. Burke, former chief of naval operations, who called for "dedicated, hardheaded, practical men" to lead the country.

Others receiving awards

were Rabbi Herzel Kranz and Mary P. McLaughlin, both of Silver Spring, presented by Maryland Bicentennial Commission chairman Louise Gore; Reed J. Irvine, founder of Accuracy in Media; Gabriele Pitcairn Pendleton of Bryn Athyn, Pa., who has supported Vietnam veterans among numerous causes, and Mildred S. Stein, wife of Nixon economic advisor Herbert

Stein, cited for her volunteer work among the needy.

Mrs. McLaughlin said she was no relation to another Nixon friend from the religious community, John J. McLaughlin, but that her husband, Jack, was treasurer of the Korff organization. Her husband, she confided, had received some "critical mail" by mistake when the other McLaughlin— —who also

attended the dinner—left the Jesuit order and married.

Korff, who was given a scroll himself by Simon, said he hoped to hold many similar award presentations around the country during the bicentennial year, including four or five more in Washington. The next one here, he said, will be Feb. 22, George Washington's birthday.