

Betty Beale: Washington

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The Talmadge hot dog coup

WASHINGTON — One of these days the people of Japan may erect a statue to Betty Talmadge, self-made millionaire and wife of Sen. Herman Talmadge of Georgia. If they don't, they should.

With the same business acumen that made her a fortune in the ham business, meat broker Talmadge went to Japan in January armed with chicken wienies made by the people who bought out her ham business, and came away with a fat order. "Japanese wienies cost \$2 and \$3 a pound and the quality is awful!" said Mrs. T. "Ours tasted like filet mignon by comparison and I can deliver them to the Japanese trading company for 85 cents a pound including the 25 cent duty. Chicken is high in protein and beef over there costs \$16 a pound."

Mrs. Talmadge is not separating from the senior Senator from Georgia as recently reported. Why, indeed, would she walk out now, having for 35 years put up with a man who goes to bed at 7:30 every night, wakes up around three, reads, goes jogging, then heads for the office? How's that for exciting social life? Maybe Betty's new look after shedding 35 pounds sparked the rumor that changes were afoot. She lost all that weight in two months under the guidance of Dr. Dean Lockwood, head of obesity research at Johns Hopkins.

"He made me swim an hour a day, walk two hours a day and lift weights (on a special machine) 30 minutes a day, starting with 10 minutes. I didn't get any protein until three weeks ago. I started out on vegetables only, then he added fish and now he's added a piece of meat only at lunch." Already trim, she plans to lose about 15 pounds more — while making money as usual.

It was nothing like the embassy chandelier and champagne set, but "it's the best show in town and a whole new world," Buffie Cafritz had told me. So I agreed to do what the pretty, young Washington hostess, mother and manager of a house pictured last



WIFE of Japanese envoy, Mrs. Fumihiko Togo, with Pakistan envoy Sultan Khan.



TRIP to Japan was highly profitable for Mrs. Herman Talmadge.

year in the decorating magazine, *Architectural Digest*, had been doing for a week — visit Muhammad Ali's training camp before his fight last weekend with Jimmy Young.

Admittedly, it wouldn't be the same as seeing Ali in his well-tailored dinner jacket in the glistening, elegant halls of the White House at the formal state dinner for King Hussein and Queen Alya of Jordan, but one should widen one's horizons. Besides, it might be more amusing.

It was. President Ford could add a lot of excitement to his state dinners, I decided, if he would pick up a chair and threaten his guest of honor with a good bang on the head. Or get a stranglehold on Henry Kissinger and make like he was going to put an easy end to Ronald Reagan's favorite talking point. There's just no assessing the extent of pulse-quickenings that such normal actions could produce among the media and the nation as a whole. Not even Jimmy Carter's teeth could stand up against that kind of competition.

When we arrived at the Sheraton Inn at New Carrollton, Md., there was plenty of action in the training room but none in the ring. Ali hadn't arrived yet but Young, in Ali fashion, was swapping cracks, taunts and threats with the audience.

A young woman tells him, "Muhammad Ali is the one positive image that young black people have, now that Martin Luther King is gone." Young wisely says, "I have no comment on that." A young man asks, "Have you written your will yet?" Amid loud jeers Young rushes over to grab him but lets his trainer pull him back.

A young girl pops up and tells him, "I'm sorry, it's time for you to fade away because Our Lord is ready to rise." "How far did you get in school?" Young asks her. "Now tell me, is you madly in love with him?" At that point Ali enters to a burst of cheers and wild rush of photographers. Right off he picks up a chair and starts after Young but is showily restrained with apparent difficulty. Before he starts his running commentary and sparring in the ring, he has a workout on the punching bag, afterwards blowing his nose without

benefit of handkerchief and spitting on the floor.

It's another world, all right. "That's what fascinates me," says Buffie. "You can lose yourself here. Nobody knows you. You can dress as you like." She has on blue jeans and a rust-colored silk blouse that matches her red hair. At that point a feminine onlooker shouts to Ali, "You're pretty." "I know it," says Ali, protecting his face from his sparring partner's blows.

The swinging party given by the president of the American Petroleum Institute and Mrs. Ikard for Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kans.) and his bride, Federal Trade Commissioner Elizabeth Hanford, was full of Senators, music, political prognostications and a surprise visitor. Former Nixon aide Bob Finch was in from California where he's running for Sen. John Tunney's seat. How was his campaign going? Said Finch sadly, he has to spend most of his time answering questions about Nixon. "And I left the White House because I couldn't get through to him."

While part of the party was dancing up a storm in another room, Sen. Bob Griffin of Michigan, Republican whip, was worriedly telling Sens. Henry Bellmon (R-Okla.) and Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) that Jimmy Carter's nomination could wipe out the South for Ford. And over by the roast beef sandwiches Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) was telling Sen. Ed Brooke (R-Mass.) that he should keep his options open about the vice presidential spot because the President will need a strong figure from the Northeast. Brooke was afraid all those pictures of him doing the hustle with Elizabeth Taylor