

Betty Beale: Washington

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Scranton's repair of UN damage

WASHINGTON — Bill Scranton, who unhappily and grudgingly took on the job of Ambassador to the UN, was asked by President Ford the other day how he liked it. "It's terrible, the problems are impossible, the hours are much too long — and I love it," he told Ford. The reluctant Scranton is surprised that the post turned out to be such a fascinating challenge. "When I took over there wasn't a single member of a black African delegation speaking to the U.S. delegation," he said at the dinner given for him by Iranian Ambassador Ardeshir Zahedi.

Said Zahedi, "You couldn't buy what Bill Scranton has done for your country for \$50 billion." The arrogance of Pat Moynihan had made cooperation between nations impossible. But "Bill changed that in 48 hours," said Zahedi. "He visited every ambassador and told him the views of the United States and said he would be very glad to hear his views."

About Zahedi, Scranton said, "He has such depth of perception about his own area and about us. America knows him better than any other ambassador to the United States." Then he added, "Primarily because of Elizabeth Taylor." Liz wasn't there. She had stayed over in Iran, when the charter flight returned, to have a private audience with Empress Farah who is interested in Taylor's plans to build a hospital in Botswana.

Scranton was fresh in from a weekend at nearby Airlie House where, as one of the Committee of 20, he interviewed White House Fellows applicants. One member of the committee who has never bothered to come to one of these sessions, he said, was Robert Abplanalp, Nixon's great friend. Although he has not removed himself from the committee, Abplanalp takes no interest.