

November 22, 1974

POOL REPORT
Reception-Banquet-Entertainment

After listening to the Korean "Little Angels" render the "Michigan Fight Song", President Ford busied each one of them and departed the Capitol after five hours of reception, banquet and Korean entertainment by President Chong Hee Park.

There were a number of opposition leaders among the 800 persons who attended the reception and the 100 at the banquet. These included Kim Wan Soo, a Protestant leader; Kim Yong Sam, leader of the New Democratic Party and Kim Sang Man, publisher of the opposition newspaper, Dong-A-Ilbo.

Cardinal Stephen Kim, who has been quietly supportive of the Catholic critics of the government, had been invited. But he is in Rome, so the Bishop of Kwang Su, Victorinus K. Youn, deputy chairman of the Korean Catholic Association of Bishops was on hand. He said he "thought" he represented the Cardinal.

President Ford entered the Capitol's Central Hall, a long room with a high, barreled ceiling, at 6:30 p. m. With President Park and Park's daughter, Miss Kuen Hai Park, he positioned himself in front of a bank of yellow chrysanthemums and began greeting the guests. Before he was finished he had shaken hands with all 750-800 of them -- Korean cabinet officers, the diplomatic corps, American businessmen, government officials and missionaries and Korean politicians and other notables.

The receiving line proceeded uneventfully, except when Ron Nessen's mother-in-law, a Korean woman, approached. The President lit up, seized her in a hug and kissed her. Ock-jin Kim, who had once worked as a legislative intern in Ford's congressional office and had visited him in Grand Rapids, also got a warm greeting from the President, Kim is now information and cultural attache at the Korean Embassy in Iran and said he had returned for the Ford visit.

After an hour and 10 minutes on the receiving line, Ford joined the Parks in a drink, then mounted the stairway to the second floor banquet hall. At a landing on the stair, Ford paused, above an arch proclaiming "Welcome" in red carnations and waved both hands in a greeting to the crowd below.

In the majestic banquet room the head table was athwart one end and three other long tables, perpendicular to it, ran the length of the room. Left to right at the head table were: Kissinger, Mrs. Kim Chong-Pil, wife of the Prime Minister; Chief Justice Min Bok Ki; Miss Park; Ford; Park; Mrs. Min; Speaker of the National Assembly Chong Il Kwon; Mrs. Richard L. Sneider, wife of the U. S. Ambassador; and Prime Minister Kim (Sneider sat among the other guests).

President Park's speech and President Ford's toast were delivered as given except that Ford improvised three paragraphs at the end of his saying that he had been greatly touched by the outpouring of good will by the Korean people; acknowledging that the cheers were not all for him, but for the 230 million people of the United States; and mentioning his trip to the National Cemetery and the fact that Koreans had fought side-by-side with American soldiers.

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The menu included puree of pine nuts, ambrosia casserole, white kimchi, "nine delicacies," fried seagreen, culinary vegetable, fish meuniere, brochette of mushroom and beef, broiled beef, steamed rice, consomee raviole and desert of honey pinenuts, rice ball, fresh apple and persimmon. Beverages were rice wine, champagne and ginseng tea.

After the banquet the guests repaired to the Central Hall where they witnessed a stunning program of ancient Korean court music, folk dancing and singing by the Little Angels. The program included music on the kayageum sanjo, a two-yard-long string instrument; the taigeum, a kind of flute; and a spectacular combination of gorgeously costumed folk dancing coordinated with the playing of 24 drums.

During the surprise finale presentation of the "Fight Song" Ford, grinning broadly, nodded his head to the music and tapped his feet. After he had kissed all of the Little Angels, he sought to plant a kiss on one of the bigger girls, from the National Dance Company. But she coyly turned away, so he confined himself to shaking hands with the other nine girls. He returned to the hotel through streets dense with police and soldiers, but we were cut off from the motorcade.

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