

May 29, 1975

POOL REPORT #12

Embassy Residence to the
Royal Palace

Ford from residence to Palace in motorcade at 8:36 p.m. Black tie. Small band of spectators waved at him from across the street from the residence. (This pool did not witness antechamber receiving line at Palace...check pool #11 for that.)

At the dinner, Ford sat to left of King. Giscard sat to King's right at long table, seating 108-gentlemen guests. According to a "household official" ...dining room is called "Grand Gallerie" and is one of two major dining halls in the 200-year old palace. Magnificent 50-foot ceilings, with arches and 3 murals depicting sunrise, noontime, and sunset. There were six massive chandeliers... (each the size of a motorcycle according to one witness). On the tables were six four-foot-high candleabras, interspersed with bouquets of red and pink carnations. A string sextet played on balcony alcove at one end of hall... Dinner served by male waiters in tailcoats and knee britches... half of them wore black and white uniforms, the others wore brilliant red and gold. The "official" said those wearing red and gold were allowed to "touch" the wine service... while those in black could not. There was one female wine stewardess observed.

At one point in the dinner, King Baudouin was seen leaning forward to talk with a dinner guest, allowing Presidents Ford and Giscard to converse slightly behind the King. Pool, kept waiting in Palace downstairs... informed later that Ford and Giscard were indeed meeting privately upstairs. Nessen, a guest this evening, will have to give read-out on that private session which ended shortly before 11:00 p.m. local time. Pool was able to witness staircase departure, at 11:13 p.m.... the King and his younger brother Albert escorted Ford and Giscard and a large crowd of advisors down the marble staircase... lined with black and white uniformed Palace guards wearing tall furry hats with feather plumes... and bearing long sabres.

Four stopped at bottom of stairs and chatted animatedly while photographers elbowed their way in to snap pictures. None of the conversation could be heard in the echo-y hall. Ford motorcade proceeded to Residence by 11:20 p.m.

The dinner menu consisted of: consommé, smoked Scottish salmon, duck with cherries, potato cakes, and strawberry parfait.

Ann Compton
Dick Ryan

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