

POOL REPORT # 6
LUNCHEON AND COFFEE AT MONCLOA PALACE
May 31, 1975

Mrs. Ford arrived at the Moncloa Palace at 2:14 pm in a black Imperial. The undulating siren of the car driven by the security guards preceding her began to blair, as they pulled to a stop it soon became obvious that the siren was stuck. The guards leaped from the car and they threw up the hood and instead of worrying about security, they attempted to disconnect it. Mrs. Ford entered the Palace. Three minutes later the President arrived with the President Of The Government, Carlos Arias Navarro and escorted him into the three story Renaissance style Palace which was built in 1953 on the site of an older building destroyed during the Spanish Civil War (for more complete history we refer you to the green bible). The Palace is constructed of light stone for the first story, and pink brick for the two top stories.

Ford and Arias were followed by Kissinger and Foreign Minister Pedro Cortina Mauri. The Luncheon was in the Hall of Columns (Salon), a room which takes its name from the arched columns around the room. Large cheery room with window lights in the ceiling and French doors opening onto the grass patio from which one has a spectacular view of the distant valleys and mountains.

The luncheon was at a long rectangular table with ten persons on either side. A large floral arrangement featuring red rose buds and zinnias served as the centerpiece of the banquet table. There were figurines. Above was a large goldleaf and crystal chandelier. There were also a variety of floral arrangements on tables about the room.

The President sat in the middle of the group facing the French doors with President Arias on his right and the Second Vice President and the Minister of Finance, Rafael Cabello Alba on his left. Kissinger sat opposite him with Cortina on his right and Lieutenant General Francisco Gallegos, the Army Minister on his left. The American party also included Nessen, U. S. Ambassador Wells Stabler, Rumsfeld, Counsellor Robert Hartmann, General Scowcroft, Sonnenfeldt, and Secretary Hartman. We were admitted briefly when the group was first seated and Cabello was chiding Kissinger about someone who was unable to appreciate Kissinger's humor. "But the British Chairman appreciated your humor", Cabello said. We were not able to pick up any of the other conversation. We were escorted in again for the toasts which we were told were piped into the press room and carried live on Spanish Radio and TV. When the toasts were finished they repaired to the patio for coffee.

The Palace stands on a hilltop in the middle of a landscaped tract with a variety of pines, cedar, poplars, norfolk pine, and what appeared to be a variety of sycamores called platanos. Some are planted in ornamental patterns and the President approached the Palace along a roadway flanked by platanos that form an arch overhead.

Steve Bell, ABC
Bill Ringle,

#

#

#