

August 30, 1975

POOL REPORT #6

Reception Before Dinner on the Lawn of the Slocum Estate

Pre-Ford Arrival -- The canary yellow Rolls Royce was driven onto the front lawn by its owners, but they were encouraged to leave by John Slocum himself. It was the same car that was used in the Great Gatsby and now is owned by an auto dealer in Newport who tries very hard to get publicity for his car. Parts of the movie Great Gatsby were filmed a half mile down the road from the Slocum place at an estate called Rosecliffe.

Before the President arrived Jim Field, Rhode Island State GOP Chairman, told us that all of the 1,100 persons who had paid \$125 a plate to attend the dinner were invited to the reception. Among those who greeted the President first when he arrived exactly at 7:00 p.m. were Mrs. John Slocum and persons identified to us as John Drexel and his wife, Slocum's cousins who are the owners of the elaborate "press room". Mrs. William Wood-Prince of Chicago and Mr. and Mrs. Jim Van Allen, Mrs. Sheila Cianci and Mrs. James Taft.

Field told us that Mrs. Hugh Auchincloss, mother of Jackie Onassis, also was present. Field also said that this was a state-wide dinner, but local reporters were a bit skeptical and warned us that it was in Field's interest to try and paint the dinner as state-wide. Most of the participants were from the Newport area according to our local colleagues.

Field pointed out that this is the first time a Republican President has ever spoken to a fund-raising event in Rhode Island,

We have a program which lists all of the participants, but some of the names that were mentioned to us included Wiley Buchanan, Mrs. Harvey Firestone and Mrs. George Vanderbilt. We saw Russ Train, William Middendorf and William Seidman there, with Seidman overheard referring to some of the crowd as "the super richies."

There were about half a dozen youngsters standing at the gate preparing to be the first to greet the President, when we got there a few minutes before he did. It wasn't long before someone found room for them back about 50 yards in the yard, and when the President arrived other guests surged in front of them and they didn't ever get to greet the President.

The President shook hands as he arrived and worked his way toward the house, shaking hands and making small talk as he went, arriving at the house with drink already in hand. The reception finished inside the house. As guests lined up to have their photos taken with the President, one middle aged lady had difficulty in keeping her hands off the President.

The room in which the reception ended is best described as 19th century grandiose, ochre marble walls, green marble pillars, winding staircase fringed fabric lampshades, deep red oriental rug, large vases of flowers you could never afford to send your mother, a grandfather clock dominating one corner, ancestral paintings dominated the walls and a musty smell dominated it all.

Shortly before the President came into the house, a lady came down the stairway with 2-year old Alix Foley. Startled by the excitement, the child burst into tears. They finally settled her down, but when the President picked her up she started crying again. Her mother and father are Dr. and Mrs. Foley. He said he has been the Slocum family physician for 30 years and now is a professor of medicine at Cornell University in New York. He is a Slocum house guest for the weekend. President went from the reception to the dinner which is open coverage.

Aldo Beckman
Margie Michaels

FYI: Local reporters told us that Slocum is descended from Miles Standish and Mrs. Slocum is a descendent of Sam Houston. Her money from railroads.