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Capitol Punishment

A Helping Hand For the Needy

By Art Buchwald

Once in a while I have a fantasy that is so great I want to share it with everybody.

This is my latest pipe dream.

A man comes into my office with a large suitcase. "Hi," he says. "My name's Nelson Rockefeller, but my friends call me Rocky."

"I'm sorry," I say. "I'm not interested in buying anything."

"No, you don't understand, I'm going to be Vice President of the United States and, in order to prove here is no conflict of interest, I've decided to give up all my worldly goods."

"That's very nice, but why come to me?"

"Well," Rockefeller replies, "I just don't want to give my worldly goods to anybody. I want to give my fortune to a person who has a responsibility toward the public and will not abuse the power that money brings—someone who won't just throw it away on wine, women and song."

"I can see that," I say.

"Happy and I were talking the other night with some friends and your name came up. They said you would be the only person who would know what to do with great sums of wealth."

I blush. "That's very nice, Rocky, but I just couldn't accept your money. After all, I hardly know you."

"Look," Rocky says, opening up the suitcase. "I've talked it over with my brothers and they are in complete agreement. They want to make you an honorary member of the family. They can't think of anybody they'd rather share their empire with."

I hold up my hand. "I'm sorry, but taking another man's fortune is out of the question. Just for curiosity's



By Harry Natheyan—The Washington Post

President and Mrs. Ford toast Italian President Giovanni Leone at last night's state dinner at the White House. At far right is Mrs. Leone.

A Fine Evening for Italian-American Relations

By Donnie Radcliffe and Dorothy McCordle

President Ford will go to Italy sometime in the near future and his acceptance of that invitation was announced last night by Italian President Giovanni Leone at a White House state dinner in the visiting leader's honor.

"We assure you of warm welcome from our people," Leone told Mr. Ford and 120

other guests during toasts in the State Dining Room.

Later, Mrs. Egidio Ortona, wife of the Italian ambassador, said no definite date had been set for the visit.

The mention of the forthcoming Italian trip was a brief one in the remarks by Leone. It came at the end of a warm response to Mr. Ford's toast, and the Italian President focused on four major reassertions.

"Mentioning a faithful and loyal friendship between

Italy and the United States, the Atlantic Alliance as "an instrument for detente and peace," a need to build a united Europe to complement that alliance, Leone concluded with his country's support of the United States' policy of detente.

"If these four points are reconfirmed—and they already have been confirmed in our talks today—then I thank God for allowing me to represent Italy in this great country," he said.

Mr. Ford, emphasizing that around 10 per cent of the American people have ancestral ties or backgrounds originating in Italy, lauded "the superb artists, outstanding individuals in science, very renowned athletes, and many, many people in public life" who have contributed to the growth of this country.

He said the "broadest" relationship with Italy came in its contributions to "grace, humanity, tolerance

and awareness of beauty." "Mark Twain once wrote—and he was not very complimentary to foreigners—but he said once 'the creator made Italy from the designs of Michaelangelo.' It was probably the best thing he ever said about any foreigner."

Mr. Ford lauded what he termed a "frank and candid" talk with Leone about mutual problems and hailed his visitor's "wise statesmanship" and "great knowledge"

of the problems of Europe and the rest of the world.

Leone appeared touched by the Fords' hospitality and noted the special attention paid to his wife and three sons, who have accompanied him.

"In Italy we tend to hide our family away and I have broken away to bring my wife and sons, a fine family of sound moral values."

The remarks held special

See DINNER, B3, Col. 2

A Ragtime Night for The Leones

By Isabelle Shelton

Star-News Staff Writer

There was something for everybody at last night's White House State Dinner for President Giovanni Leone of Italy.

Those down-and-out stock brokers that Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Alan Greenspan was bleeding for last week might have found some comfort in the after-dinner entertainment in the East Room, supplied by Gunther Schuller and his New England Conservatory Ragtime Ensemble.

THE GROUP presented a program composed almost entirely of Scott Joplin music, and one of the numbers was called "Wall Street Rag." Schuller explained it had been written 60 years ago by Joplin to memorialize "a kind of crash on Wall Street back in 1908."

Themes in the song, he said, memorialized "the melancholy of the stock broker," and a suggestion that "good times are a comin'," as the crowd in the packed East Room laughed.

Greenspan, who was a guest, disappeared before reporters could ask his reaction to the song.

For the fashion minded, there was the Italian president's wife, her thick black hair and deeply tanned skin handsomely set off by a white crepe sleeveless gown by Italian designer Valentino. The bodice and skirt of the dress were decorated with sequins and seed pearls, and white ostrich feathers lined the hem.

For reporters, there was news from Secretary of State Henry Kissinger about phone calls he has received from former President Nixon, and from Mrs. Warren Burger, wife of the Chief Justice, there was news about her husband, who was injured last weekend in a bicycle accident.

Kissinger said he had spoken to Mr. Nixon on the telephone several times since the former president returned home to San Clemente, Calif., after his resignation early in August. He indicated that Mr. Nixon had initiated most of the calls, and said the most recent call—made by Nixon—came about a week ago.

"It had nothing to do with foreign policy and nothing to do with the pardon," the secretary of state told the ring of reporters who surrounded him in the Blue Room. Asked what the two had discussed, Kissinger said: "I don't think I ought to talk about it. It had



nothing to do with politics — just his health and spirit."

WHEN REPORTERS pressed for more details on the latter, Kissinger said: "I think what I saw Ron Ziegler say on TV was right. It's a terrible adjustment for him."

Asked why the former president is getting weekly foreign policy briefings, which are flown to San Clemente on a government courier plane, Kissinger replied: "Because the President wants him to."

Mrs. Burger said her husband came home from Bethesda Naval Medical Center where he had been recuperating from his bicycle accident, because "he was freezing out there. They don't turn on the heat in the hospital until October 1." She "put him to bed with a heating pad and some warm blankets, and he is getting along fine," she reported.

For the three young sons of President Leone who accompanied him on the trip, the White House party was a gay evening. The Fords' 17-year-old daughter Susan, and her date, Gardner Britt, the three young Leones and a friend they had brought along, plus four young girls rounded up by Susan, made up their own table of 10 in the State Dining Room. "We hit it off just fine," Susan said.

The other girls in the group were three schoolmates of Susan's at Holton-Arms School: Barbara Manfuso and twins Elison and Reagan Golubin, plus Lise Courtney Howe, 21, who is the daughter of Betty Ford's special assistant, Mrs. Nancy Howe.

Lise Courtney reported that the Italians all spoke fluid English, and seemed well acquainted with contemporary American goings on. They commented about Linus in the "Peanuts" comic strip, among other things.

THE AUDIENCE in the East Room obviously

See LEONES, C-4

Italy's First Lady: Effective Boo

By BERNADINE MORRIS

When President Giovanni Leone of Italy pays a state visit to Washington on Wednesday, the slender, attractive woman with the thick, dark wavy hair at his side is bound to command more than the usual attention.

One reason will be her wardrobe. Vittoria Leone, the President's wife, wears clothes well, enjoys wearing clothes and, beyond that, is regarded by her countrymen as their ambassador of fashion.

Last year, on a state visit to Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland and even France, her dresses dazzled. In Italy, where fashion—from fabrics and accessories through clothes—is the number one industry (automobiles rank second), this is more than a matter of pride.

Italians feel that having an attractive, clothes-minded First Lady can call attention to the country's products and spur exports. After all, Italy still generally ranks second to France in the world fashion stakes, and in a country beset with the economic difficulties that Italy has, having someone like Mrs. Leone to act as a showcase is an important factor.

So today, just before she leaves for the United States, Mrs. Leone will have Valentino, Rome's leading couturier, supervise the final fittings of her wardrobe. It includes a white evening gown for dinner at the White House Wednesday and a pink one for a dinner at the Italian Embassy the following night. Valentino cut short a trip to New York to be present at the fittings.

Well Fitted for Her Role

"She's the only First Lady we've had since the Queen [Queen Maria José, who left along with King Umberto in 1946] who can serve as a showcase for Italian fashion," said Count Rodolfo Crespi recently. A social figure around Rome with ties to the fashion industry, he added, "There's no other chance for Italy—the only other showcase we could have is actresses, and Sophia Loren is dressed by Dior."

Though Donna Vittoria, as she is known to Italians, worries sometimes about appearing too frivolous, she admits a long-standing interest in clothes.

"I always liked dresses," she said. And she takes the trouble to acquire the perfect handbag and the right shoes to go with them. As a result, Mrs. Leone, who is of medium height—she appears taller than her husband—always is immaculately groomed.

Mrs. Leone said she honestly believes Italian fashion is the best in the world.

"I like the fantasy, the inventiveness, the marvelous color," she said in a recent interview in one of the myriad drawing rooms of the 16th-century Quirinale Palace she has called home for the last two and a half years. "Our designers are very clever, full of taste."

She was dressed neatly but elegantly in a pale gray satin shirt and narrow gray wool skirt. The skirt covered her knees, but then her skirts always cover

her knees and she is delighted that hemlines are lengthening.

"I can understand when a dress is shorter, it can make a woman look younger," she explained, "but I prefer to wear this length because I don't like my knees."

Even when her husband was simply a successful Rome lawyer and she didn't have to worry about diplomacy, Donna Vittoria never went to Paris to buy clothes.

"Sometimes, when I went to a boutique, I would see something French and I'd buy it if I liked it," she said. "I don't do that any more."

She regards this as a small sacrifice.

When she's alone in the palace or spending weekends in her country place near Ostia, just outside Rome, Mrs. Leone generally wears pants. But she never does in public—another sacrifice.

Like Queen Elizabeth II, Mrs. Leone wears small hats that show her face when she appears in public, but she said she prefers small hats anyway.

Most of the time, Donna Vittoria is dressed by Valentino who, she feels, has the proper touch of elegance and refinement. But she will occasionally add clothes by such designers as Princess Irene Galitzine, Pino Lancetti and Renato Balestra, all couturiers in Rome. She fills in her custom-made wardrobe with ready-to-wear, including simple summer dresses, a long skirt, shirts and pants because "I'm always running out of things at the last minute," she said. Besides, "It's fun to pick them from the rack—I really don't like fittings."

Fittings aside, Mrs. Leone loves shopping and regrets she doesn't have as much time for it as she used to.

"I like the search," she said. "I'm always expecting something marvelous in the next place."

Mrs. Leone's husband and their three sons are her worst critics.

"Sometimes," she recalled, "I want to buy something funny and frivolous, and then the family gets upset and they tell

