

For Immediate Release
Tuesday, March 16, 1976

THE WHITE HOUSE
OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY TO MRS. FORD

The President and Mrs. Ford will host a black-tie dinner honoring His Excellency the Prime Minister of Ireland and Mrs. Cosgrave Wednesday, March 17 at 8:00 PM.

Ben Vereen, singer/dancer/actor, will entertain in the East Room following dinner.

Mrs. Ford has chosen centerpieces which depict "The Winners Circle" of the Kentucky Derby. Bronze sculptures of Kentucky Derby winners will be placed on beds of natural bark covered with moss and hedged with southern smilax and frosted tulip votive candles. Embedded in the moss will be shamrock, ferns and ivy accented by gerbera daisies. Flowering white quince will give the tree affect.

The round tables will be draped with tableclothes of green and white cotton plaid with a ruffled border. Tables will be set with the Johnson China, Monroe vermeil flatwear and the Kennedy Morgantown crystal.

Hanging plants of swedish ivy, tradescantia, begonias and ferns along with ficus trees will be used in the State Dining Room. Apple blossom, flowering pear and crab apple trees will line the Grand Hall. Arrangements of white tulips, pussy willow, apple blossoms and bells of Ireland will be throughout the State Floor.

Robert King and Michael Bonnet, Floral Arts, Inc., of Washington, D.C. have coordinated the decoration. The bronzes have been loaned to the White House by the Kentucky Derby Museum at Churchill Downs in Louisville, Kentucky; Long Gallery in Houston, Texas; and from the private collection of Mr. Paul Mellon.

The menu: Poached Columbia River Salmon; Fleurons; Supreme of Royal Squab Veronique; Wild Rice; Broiled Tomatoes with Artichoke Hearts; Bibb Lettuce Salad; Brie Cheese; Baked Alaska Flambe; Black Cherries with Irish Mist; Irish Coffee.

Wines: Chappellet, Johannisberg Riesling; Saint Michelle, Cabernet Sauvignon; Schramsberg, Blanc de Blancs.

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