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CPYRGHT

Dinner Stirs Memories Of Close Ties With Spain

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"Seventy three years had elapsed since the discovery of the New World when, on a September morning in the year of grace 1565 the great proud galleons of the Spanish West Indies Fleet . . . dropped their anchors off the shores of Florida."

So began the after dinner remarks last evening of the Spanish ambassador who carried his 70 guests back 400 years across the pages of history.

In the red-draped and tapestried ballroom adorned with Spanish portraits of another era, it was not difficult to traverse the four centuries to the founding of the first European settlement on our shores.

The reason for delving into the days when the Fountain of Youth did not mean the right vitamins, clever cosmetics and vigorous exercise—was the presence of the gracious Spanish Minister of the Interior and Mrs. Alonso Vega who will lead a delegation to the quadricentennial celebration in St. Augustine Sunday through Wednesday.

The two men who will head the American delegation to the celebration, Secretary of Interior Udall and Sen. Holland of Florida, claimed, when replying to the Marques de Merry del Val's toast, a stronger link with Spain than with Great Britain. If Stu Udall notices a coolness the next time he sees Sir Patrick Dean, he'll know why.

"WE HAVE LONG PRETENDED in this country that our history and descent were solely English," said Secretary Udall. "Being from the Southwest, I am one who understands that this is not only wrong, but very badly wrong."

The intrepid conquistadores left such a deep influence on this country and its life, "we in the southwest are as much Spanish as English," he said, "and we are as much another country."

Sen. Holland said of his state: "For more than 250 years we were Spanish. For 144 years we have been North American. It is quite clear, therefore, that we are more Spanish than anything else."

Living proof of this permanent tie was another guest at dinner, the Count de Revillagigedo, 19th Hereditary Governor of Florida.

A direct descendant of Pedro Menendez de Aviles, founder of St. Augustine, he like his male antecedents, is permitted to include this in his title—Count de Revillagigedo y Adelantado Mayor de la Florida.

His very attractive English-speaking wife said her husband has all the public records about that period of Florida in his archives and that Florida now has copies of them all on microfilm.

It somehow made those days seem so close it gave one an eerie feeling.

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE Director and Mrs. W. R. Raborn were at the dinner, the admiral saying that it takes 15 years to make an ace intelligence agent. Being 15 years old, the CIA today has the dedicated men and the expertise that make it the best intelligence service in the world, he said.

The fact that a civilian organization could arrive at this degree of efficiency impressed the brilliant naval officer who was once described as the "papa of the Polaris."

A casual greeting of the admiral's, however, practically unnerved one guest.

"What's going on in the world?" he asked pleasantly.

"Ye gods, if you don't know, we're in a bad way," she replied, visibly shaken.

He knows. He gets reports throughout every 24 hours telling him.

Having retired from the Navy, why did he give up his himself in private industry—

Aerojet—and take a 50 per cent cut in salary?

"Because of this President and what he said to me," replied Raborn, who is Texas-born and a fifth cousin of the late Sam Rayburn.

What did LBJ say to him? "That I was the only man in the country who could do the job," he replied with a twinkle.

SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OAS Jose Mora, recently back from Santo Domingo, paid the highest possible tribute to our OAS Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, who is still there trying to settle the torn country. He praised his tact, his infinite patience, his knowledgeable negotiating.

Undersecretary of State and Mrs. Tom Mann also were present—Tom introducing a new fashion wrinkle—a black dinner vest with his white dinner jacket.

Florida congressmen on hand included Claude Pepper, Paul Rogers, Charles Bennett and William Cramer.

The ambassadors of Greece, Uruguay, Argentina and Chile and their wives, Elizabeth and Leslie Carpenter, Perle Mesta, former Ambassador to Spain and Mrs. Robert Woodward who are now stationed here; Diana MacArthur, the Dale Millers and Betty Burton were others at the to-do that wound up with dancing in the patio to a three-piece orchestra.