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Minsky's? Nope, Smithsonian Staid Capital Museum Gets Nude Look

CPYRGHT

By PAUL HEALY

Washington, May 11 (NEWS Bureau)—Blushing for the first time in its 120 years, the Smithsonian Institution admitted embarrassment over playing host to late-night revels enlivened by a frugging White House aid and a matron in a transparent dress.

Washington has been buzzing merrily about the swinging opera ball for 1,000 held in the institution's museum of history and technology last Friday.

Front-page newspaper pictures Sunday showed Presidential Press Secretary Bill Moyers wildly doing either the frug or watusi and Mrs. Rudolph E. Carter, wife of a State Department officer, in a white lace dress revealing a flesh-colored body stocking underneath. The ball's executive committee sent Mrs. Carter home to put on a slip.

That Was Burlesque

The champagne dance—a fundraiser for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts—was denounced on the House floor by an outraged Rep. H. R. Gross (R-Iowa) yesterday. Gross said the "exhibitionist dancing" by the "mink coat set" should have taken place in a burlesque house rather than the hallowed Smithsonian.

One Smithsonian official who declined to be quoted told the NEWS: "I guess we're about as shocked as anyone." But after polling the top institution officials, press officer George Berk-lacy issued this statement:

"We fully expect to weather the adverse criticism. The Smithsonian Institution is honored that the museum was selected for the site for the ball but sorry that Congressman Gross called attention to the unfortunate situation."

Back to France

The ball attended this year by half the Cabinet and dozens of ambassadors and Congressional leaders, was held at the French Embassy last year and there was a feeling today that it may go back there next year.

Like Gross, Rep. Durward Hall (R-Mo.) today said he was especially horrified by the picture of the madly dancing press secretary because Moyers is an ordained Baptist minister.

"It's certainly unseemly for a parson out in my country—the Ozarks—to be dancing down on his knees," Hall said.

"The frug is fine body exercise for young people—I have nothing against it—but it's suggestive and lewd for adults, especially those in our government who claim maturity. I'm disgusted with the situation."



(Associated Press Wirephotos)
Bill Moyers (foto left) doing his dance and Mrs. Rudolph Carter (foto right), after she went home for her slip, at the Smithsonian.

The 31-year-old Moyers—said to be the aid closest to President Johnson—was reported enormously embarrassed by the publicity.

Rep. Michael Kirwan (D-Ohio), a powerful member of the subcommittee which handles funds for the Smithsonian, declined comment on Moyers' gay abandon but had an observation to make about the furor over Mrs. Carter.

"The point is when she showed up the Smithsonian didn't let her in," Kirwan said. "They told her to go home and get dressed, as they should have."

He added that if the top-echelon champagne party in the museum was the worst thing the U.S. has done, it doesn't have much to worry about.