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REP. GROSS SHOCKED

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The 'Mink Set' Gets Needled

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By the Associated Press

Rep. H. R. Gross says the Johnson administration's "mink coat set" should cut out its 3 a.m. White House parties and Watusis in the Smithsonian.

"If they want to do this, I suggest they renovate one of the

Columnist Betty Beale Writes on Gross's Charges. Page F-6

burlesque halls for which Washington is fairly notorious," the Iowa Republican said.

"I don't think with a war going on, and the problems this government has to face, that the President of the United States — his family or the vice president — ought to spend time dancing until 3 in the morning."

Gross first made observations on the House floor Tuesday, then elaborated in an interview.

Referring to the opera ball, a midnight dinner-dance for 1,000 held last Friday in the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of History and Technology, he said:

"I was amazed and shocked that they had a \$75 to \$100 per ticket dance at the Smithsonian with the Rev. (Bill D.) Moyers



REP. H. R. GROSS

doing the Watusi and Frug and one woman sent home to get dressed because she was half naked."

Moyers, White House press secretary who is an ordained Baptist minister, was indeed doing the Watusi, as were a dozen ambassadors, half the Cabinet, a number of congressional leaders and their wives.

Mrs. Rudolph E. Carter, wife of a State Department officer, showed up wearing a transparent white lace dress with only a flesh-colored body stocking underneath. Some of her fellow members of the ball's executive committee suggested she go home to put on a slip and she did.

"I guess Washington isn't ready for fashion yet," she said afterwards. "This dress was created by a New York designer specially for this party."

Her husband said, "At first, I was shocked by it. But I figured, 'Oh well, it's fashion. Let her wear it.' It's much sexier without the slip."

The ball is an annual fundraiser, and since part of the money was for the forthcoming John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, a Smithsonian satellite, the champagne dance was held in the museum.

In place of the artifacts exhibits, there were tables in the main corridors for Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara and his wife, the Robert F. Kennedy's former ambassador to the Soviet Union Jewellyn E. Thompson, the Moyers, Mrs. Edward M. Kennedy, Mrs. Nicholas Katzenbach and others.

Many of the same crowd were at a White House party April 27 in honor of Danish Prime Minister Jens Otto Krag and his wife. That party lasted until 3 a.m.

A Bristling Reply

"I'm not anti-dancing," insists Gross.

"But I don't think the President or vice president should be carrying on til morning. And I don't see why the Smithsonian should be made available for his kind of gyrating."

When a colleague suggested the government wouldn't "go to hell" over their partying, Gross bristled and replied:

"I've never made the journey to hell. I don't know whether you go by wheelbarrow or Cadillac or mink coat. I'd describe this as the mink coat set."

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