

US in dilemma over state gifts

What can you do with a stuffed boar's head?

WASHINGTON (AP) — Still bristling over the star-spangled earmuffs you got for Christmas?

Consider poor Uncle Sam. He's got a room full of, uh, "unique" gifts from foreign dignitaries.

Like the stuffed boar's head that Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev once presented to Henry Kissinger.

Or the orange, green and black watercolor that Korean President Park Chung-hee gave Carl Albert, former Speaker of the House.

Or — for that matter — the oriental rug with the seal of the Pakistan Air Force in the middle that was presented to Gen. George S. Brown, chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The items are among 1,200 logged by the General Services Administration since 1974 when it took charge of handling foreign gifts.

Along with dozens of watches, silver tea sets, engraved cigarette boxes, silk scarves and carved elephants — and a wooden map of Gabon — they are kept in a vault deep in the basement of a downtown government building, normally seen only by an omnipresent electric eye.

Many of the more desirable items, like the \$100,000 diamond from the President of Zaire to the late Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey, D-Minn., are on public display in museums.

Some gifts, such as the Baluch rug from Pakistan, are being used by the State Department for official government business — a practice encouraged by the GSA.

And Central State University in Edmond, Okla. has the two volumes of "Korea's Economy, Past and Present" that Sen. Dewey Bartlett, R-Okla., once received.

But other gifts, like the collection of double-chinned, bespectacled bronze, plaster and porcelain busts of Kissinger — marked "donor unknown" — or the lamp with an ostrich egg base, are gathering dust.

The untanned African leopard skins from Chad have been destroyed. They rotted and became smelly, an official explained.

Most everyone who turned over a gift willingly told who gave it.

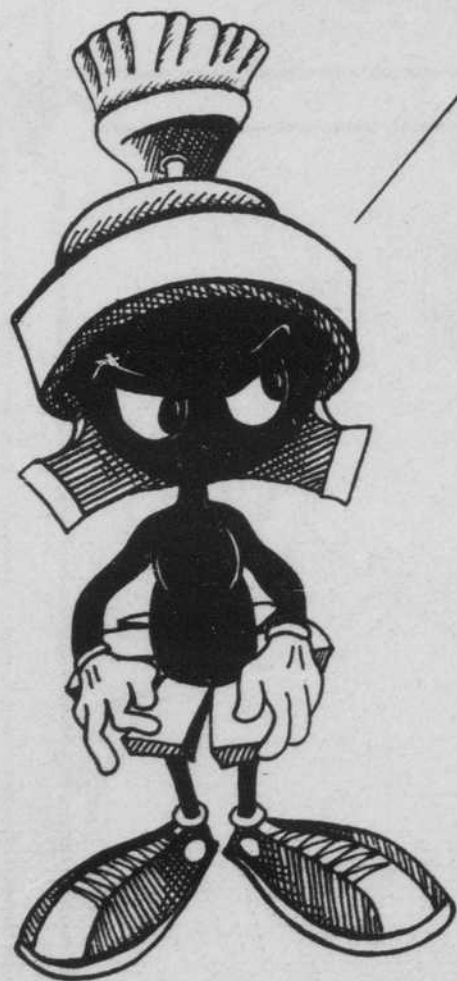
But not the CIA. The watches, gems, silver trays, candelabra and even a snake skin writing set all marked from "a foreign government."

If the gifts keep piling up, the government may consider selling off some of the items, possibly at auction. But Nancy Rosenberg, one of the GSA officials in charge of these gifts, said folks still are blushing about the embarrassment of a previous auction held five years ago in San Francisco — as far away as possible, she said, "to cause the least amount of embarrassment." to foreign governments.



Drawing by Jim Payne

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PROVO, Utah (AP) — A live two-headed calf donated to Brigham Young University will help students better understand anatomy, says BYU animal science professor Keith Hoopes.

The calf, donated by a Scipio farmer, is being kept at the BYU dairy farm in Spanish Fork.

"They are quite unusual," Hoopes said. "We had one donated to us about 15 years ago and it lived for 26 days."

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