

through rose-colored glasses and other times when I observed him with a jaundiced eye.

For instance, I was on the opposite side when he advised the United States not to become involved in the second World War. But what fascinates me about Joe Kennedy is my feeling that future generations will consider him quite an important figure in the history of our times. He may remain in the background, but I believe he had a great deal of influence in the election of his son to the Presidency. It's also my opinion that nobody exerts a greater force on what John F. Kennedy does in office.

Don't misunderstand: I see nothing wrong or menacing about this. Joe Kennedy's wide experience suits him to serve as a kind of sounding board for Jack's proposals—to be an elder statesman akin to those who are called upon for advice in several other countries.

There is no doubt about the religious sincerity of the Kennedys. I can remember years ago in Boston seeing Joe and his lovely wife Rose walking down the street escorting their entire brood to Sunday services—they made quite an impressive sight!

He's a truly devoted son of Erin, too. In a London barbershop, I once overheard a man who had hot towels on his face debating the comparative loveliness of the English and Irish countryside. The barber was holding out for the superiority of England, but the man under the towels was maintaining that "the Irish countryside is more beautiful than any."

Of course, Ireland's defender turned out to be Joe Kennedy, who at that time was our ambassador to Britain. As ambassador, Kennedy might have avoided such a controversy, but it wasn't in Joe not to speak his mind—or let anyone have the better of the Irish!



Perle
Mesta

SO FAR as I am concerned, Perle Mesta was a "hostess with the mostest" long before the show about her ("Call Me Madam") opened on Broadway. She is one of the most vivacious and warmhearted women I have ever been privileged to know.

Of course, when I first met Perle some 40 years ago, she wasn't a lady diplomat nor an influential member of the national Democratic organization; these things still lay in the future. But she was a lovely woman—and a lucky one, being the daughter of a rich real-estate and oil man and the wife of a similarly prominent and wealthy steel manufacturer.

Some people may think of Perle as being tough. I'm sure she is capable of being quite "hard-boiled" in a difficult situation, but essentially Perle is a perfectly delightful person; her many friends know they can always depend on her for aid and understanding, whatever their problem may be.

It so happened that we disagreed during the 1960 Presidential campaign: I supported Kennedy, Perle didn't. But she is an extremely loyal and high-principled individual; she became a great friend of President Truman's family when she stood up for Harry's inalienable right as a father to defend his daughter against what he considered unfair criticism!

Covering her activities as U.S. Minister to Luxembourg after the war, I found that she was no mere ornament to the diplomatic service. Luxembourg is a small but vital country in the European alliance. Perle realized this very well and did a yeoman job of making friends for us all the time she was there.

Once, before giving a diplomatic dinner, I saw her spend a full hour shuffling and reshuffling the place cards in order that her guests would be seated just so. After the affair, she packed every leftover loaf of bread and bottle of milk—even table linens—into her car and went off to give these things to the aged and needy people of Luxembourg.

Europeans gained more respect for us through a representative like Perle Mesta than through some of our stiff-collared, professional diplomats who fail to reach down and communicate with the people. Would that the United States had more Perle Mestas!



J. Edgar
Hoover

I HAVE KNOWN J. Edgar Hoover for many years and never think of him as a policeman at all, but as a friend and a really charming human being. Normally, he is quiet and gentle, but he can get rough and tough if he has to.

Walking along the street with him one day in Washington, we came upon a flower peddler who was whipping his horse mercilessly because it wouldn't move. Suddenly, Edgar darted across the street, grabbed the whip out of the peddler's hands, and gave him a wallop. When the horse decided to take off, Edgar ran after it and grabbed its bridle. All in all, it was quite a forceful display by the director of our Federal Bureau of Investigation!

He is truly a man of many sides. Conditioned like a champion fighter, he keeps himself in splen-

did physical shape—he practices yoga and can high-jump his own height—yet he loves classical music. He has spent both time and money on various children's activities.

Though the FBI doesn't like to talk about it, several attempts have been made on Edgar's life. I know that once a man came at him from behind with a blackjack, but Edgar, a master at jujitsu, immediately threw him to the ground.

His efficiency was proved personally to me a few years ago when I got a crank letter from somewhere in Iowa. I reported the threat and was simply flabbergasted when the FBI was able to identify and arrest the man in an astonishing four days!

Edgar is a deeply devout man; I know several congregations have vied for his membership. He has a nice house with a pretty patio near the capital, and in general he leads a quiet and contented life.

I know that more than once Edgar has turned down much higher jobs in the Government to remain at the head of the FBI. He's neither a Republican nor a Democrat, but a truly dedicated public servant.

For recreation, he likes to swim, hike, and go to the movies. In Florida he attends the dog and horse races, but I don't know if he ever bets. On television, he prefers Westerns to mysteries, and as for books, he never touches a mystery story—naturally!



Adolf
Hitler

ADOLF HITLER earns a place on my "unforgettable people" list by the sheer fact that this little chit of an Austrian corporal altered the lines of history, twisted the fate of the entire world, and brought so many fantastic, horrible events to pass.

It was during the early '30s, the era of the Munich beer-hall *putsche*, that I first heard Hitler's name. I managed to meet him by getting thrown into the same jail he occupied. I accomplished this feat by purposely throwing a brick through a shop window.

It took a few days, but by bribing the guard I was able to get moved to the cell alongside Hitler's. I got to know him quite well in jail, and my remarks led him to think I was in favor of his National Socialism.

Hitler realized my real feelings on the morning of Feb. 28, 1933, when he read my account of the fire which had swept the *Reichstag* (the German parliament) the night before. By pure luck, I happened to be out for a stroll when I saw

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