

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, February 11, 1964 WHD

I hoarded my strength like a miser, waiting for the Diplomatic Reception, getting up only to get my hair done, so that I would be - look as well as possible for the seven o'clock reception, which was ~~being~~ business suit.

About 6:45 the Dean, the Ambassador of Nicaragua, came upstairs without Mrs. Sevilla-Sacasa, who is still taking care of their very ill little child, just out of NIH. And also the Ambassador of the Netherlands and Madame ^{Van Roijen} Benroyan came up because they would be leaving very soon. It was, rather, to say goodby. Chief Justice and Mrs. Warren who are always on hand as an ornament and stand-by, the Secretary of State and Mrs. Rusk. I'm getting so I have the inclination to just go up and lean when I'm around either one of them. And I'm delighted to say that ^{my} old friend, John Sparkman and Ivo Sparkman were there, he's down the line just a little bit, in foreign affairs and the others were out of town. And Angie and Robin Duke.

The Spanish Ambassador, a very handsome man, was there too to present a letter to the President, something about their recognition of Russia. He and Lyndon disappeared for awhile while we had a, the rest of us, had a drink and some conversation. And then Lyndon, the DEan of the Corps., Lynda Bird and I, the Secretary and Mrs. Rusk, came down stairs preceeded by full pomp and panoply of flags, we stopped and had our picture made at the bottom, and then walked into the Blue Room to receive in proper protocol order, the Ambassadors from all the countries, the Charge d'affairs, and the four new Ambassadors who were there to present their credentials, Ambassador of the Dominican Republic and Mrs. Bonilla, the Ambassador from the Kingdom of

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Libya and Mrs. Abidia, the Ambassador of Peru, and Mrs. Pastor, who replaced the Berkme^{er}s, who had been here ^{since} ~~such~~ time began, and the Ambassador from Sweden and Mrs. deBesche. Then came by, the OAS Ambassadors who had been held in another room, I hope with ample drinks and plenty of hostessing from members of the Cabinet, came by to be greeted by us in their turn.

Later on, Margy McNamara and I were talking about it and she said, Yes, she thought it had helped out to have the Cabinet wives hostessing in various rooms, and that she would always be glad to do it, - But she thought it would be a very useful thing if we could even send them a list of those that had accepted at such future functions or maybe - I suggested that we could get together for a cup of tea and just about forty-five minutes of briefing, passing out the list of those coming and just say - I hope that each of you will light on all of those that you know like a duck on a June bug, and help make them feel at home - or perhaps choose those that seem to be left alone and uncomfortable. I think it's a good system but not one yet thoroughly worked out, although I did see Jane Freeman, busily engaged in talking to several of them. And, of course, Mrs. Rusk, always does a superb job and Phyllis Dillon is just as kind, and socially smooth as anybody could possibly be.

Besides the Cabinet itself, there was quite a coterie from the State Department there - the Balls, the Harriman's, the David Belts of AID

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and many of those who make the wheels turn, right on to Mrs. Wilroy, who is the hostess at Blair House.

And then a sizeable group of under-secretaries, I hope to give them a chance for a gay evening that we might not get around to with them at the White House in any other way, and also I do, it would have been my joy to know that they were really working on the Ambassadors whose party it was, to mix and mingle with them. . . . The Cy Vance^s from the Defense Department, the Katzenbach^s from Justice, Franklin Roosevelt^s from Commerce, and of course, our newly appointed man to help on a broad field, Tom Mann, as well as the coterie from Lyndon's office ^{staff} there, the MacGeorge Bundy^s, the Larry O'Brien^s, Reedy^s, Salinger^s, ^{Chlosingers} Slessinger^s - I was glad to see ^{Chlosinger} Slessinger there and got a chance to dance with him. All of this group already were in the East Room because most of them ~~whom~~ we had shaken hands with many times, so that ^[when] we finished with the last Ambassador, we too went in the East Room, the band struck up and we began a very merry dance. The Dean led off with me, and then I had a whirl with everybody, from the French Ambassador to Dobrynin of Russia, which I am sure, caused all the ladies to get out their pads and pencils and the group of reporters, ^{but} that he was covering the territory because ^{he} ~~it~~ got around to Lynda Bird too. He said that Siberia was a land ^{endless} that I ought to see, that it was ~~in this~~, it was full of vast forests and diamonds. I don't know whether he was using that as a figure of speech or whether he

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actually meant some untold mineral wealth or maybe even diamonds themselves. I was beginning to worry that an Arab wouldn't dance with me, when delightfully enough, the gentleman from Kuwait, who has one of the most beautiful wives in the Corps came up and we did a waltz around the floor. I suggested to Lyndon when I got a chance to dance with him, that he get geographical - from continent to continent, so to speak, in his dancing - and I noticed that he did it and did it beautifully.

It was pleasant to run into the people I've known through our travels, the Knuth-Winterfeldts of Denmark, the Ambassador of Cyprus and Mrs. Rossides, when I was dancing with him we consoled with each other about his unhappy Island; the Diops from Senegal, and Madame Platzer of Austria, whom I've known in speech class, and my old friends, misamigos especiales, the Ambassador of Mexico and Senora Carrillo-Flores. If Ambassador Matsas of Greece was there, I didn't get to dance with him, and more is the pity. Mrs. Menemencioglu from Turkey was there, looking as beautifully dressed as usual, and our recent friend and houseguest, Ambassador and Mrs. Knappstein from Germany. Also Lady Ashenheim, the Ambassador of Jamaica, memories of one of the most pleasant little trips we had. And Mrs. Tejera-Paris, wife of the Ambassador of Venezuela, who is a member of my international club and one of the most attractive members of the whole Ambassadorial Corp. The new Ahmeds, brother and sister-in-law to the Ahmeds who just left, of Pakistan, were among the most attractive couples on the floor, but I looked in vain for the handsome face of B. K. Nehru of India. The Ambassador and Mrs. Engen

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Norway brought back memories of one of our last and most pleasant journeys - the one to the Scandinavian countries. ~~AE~~

A few, not as many as I would have liked because it's so colorful, came in their native costumes, and these were nearly always from the African continent. I remember one gentleman ⁱⁿ and a black beaded hat, and vast robes of red and green and black sort of plaid, that he had thrown around his shoulder like a cape or serape and a big belt full of ornaments.

Next time, we must try to figure out some music that is particularly appealing, but is popular in the continent of Africa - and some that's popular in Asia, because I think we would have gotten more of the representatives from those two continents on the floor dancing, if we'd had something that they felt - well, that was their favorite.

That was a good buffet in the dining room - going all the way from steamship roast of beef and whole turkeys and hams, ^{to} our always reliable chili con Queso, but I didn't get that far down and after dancing with as many as I could find, it suddenly dawned on me that I was beginning to get a little weak in the knees and I murmured goodbye to one or two at about eight-thirty and went upstairs, climbed in bed, had supper on a tray, a good long talk with Lynda, and early to sleep, hearing later that Lyndon stayed and danced until 9:30 and that many said that it had been the gayest White House reception for foreign Diplomats that they could remember. I'd give a lot, if that's not just nice party talk, ^{with} because this is our one point of contact with most of them, ~~that~~ those from Africa, with those from Asia, the whole year, perhaps in our whole administration, and I would

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like for it to be a pleasant and memorable one.