

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Thursday, February 13, 1964

It was a full day of the British. Lyndon had lunch at the Embassy as the guest of the Prime Minister, Sir Douglas Hume -- a stag luncheon, with a working group.

Then in the afternoon, Robin Duke picked me up and we went to ~~the~~ tea at the Embassy, ^{where there were} ~~We had along~~ Mrs. Rusk, Mrs. McNamara, Phyllis Dillon, Eunice Shriver, Ethel Kennedy, that ancient, but still redoubtable dowager, Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, ^{Dun} of Barton Oaks, Mrs. Nicholas Longworth, ⁸⁰ ~~88~~ years old plus one day, and the ^{spriest} ~~springest~~ of the lot. The British party, including of course, Mrs. R. A. Butler, Mrs. Maxwell Taylor, and Jackie's mother, Mrs. Hugh Auchincloss.

Our hostess, elegant and serene, Lady Ormsby-Gore, I had seen earlier that morning in what was undoubtedly one of the funniest pictures of the year. ^{by} ~~she~~, being sedate and dignified, and utterly above -- and in company with the Beatles - mop-headed foursome from Great Britain, who are here singing, and starting all the teenagers into a frenzy of cheers, and near-hysteria! It would have taken the poise of Lady Ormsy-Gore, to appear with the Beatles, and still come out unscathed.

Lady Ormsby-Gore settled me on a couch and while they passed delicious tea, refreshments which nobody needed (everybody had had a big luncheon) and then brought around guest after guest to chat with me. One of the most interesting was Mrs. Bliss, although a little deaf and difficult to talk to, ^{[who] has} ~~had~~ accumulated one of the world's most beautiful list of

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possessions. The grounds of Dunbarton Oaks are exquisite. And then, she has there now, the great Columbian Art exhibit, which is high on my agenda of something to go to. She's filled her life with a lot of beauty and knowledge and let a lot of it spill over into the beloved city of Washington.

Then came the big event of the day - the dinner for the British, for which I had purchased a new red evening dress and was going to use, for the first time, my hairpiece, which I hoped, would make me look dignified and elegant. Alas! What a let-down - to walk in and hear Lyndon say, "Why did you let them make you look like you were 65 years old."

We met Sir Alec and Lady Douglas Hume, the Butlers and Ormsby-Gore's at the front door at about a quarter of eight and took them upstairs to the Yellow Room where, with the usual small group, including both the Secretary of State and Virginia Rusk, and our keeper, Angie Duke. We had a drink, a little pleasant conversation, and then went in to exchange the gifts. We are counting heavily on her real interest in gardening, for my gift to her was a vast series of gardening plus books, some magnolia seeds from my old, loved home, the Elms. If she really doesn't like gardening all that much, I hope she's got enough attic space to put them in. We also gave a document signed by Thomas Jefferson, which I would like to have kept myself, and the National

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Geographic map case which I think *can* hardly be beat, to the Prime Minister, as a man's gift, *from* a man.

Sir Alec and Lady Douglas Hume gave us a handsome pair of crown Staffordshire ~~hand-painted~~ *hawk owls and an* antique George III silver desk set - in spite of the paper having called it "a sweetmeat basket."

We went down the, by now, almost familiar *stairs*, to the tune of "Hail to the Chief", with full pomp and display, flags, red-coated Marine Band, coterie of photographers, and an almost too-lengthy stop for picture taking, and then on into the East Room to stand in line. This time I had someone behind me, *who* very clearly gave me the names, which was a great help, because I like to know in the one instant that I see that individual (I may not get back to them all evening long) ~~that~~ that's a guest in my home, and I want to have a one minute exchange of eyes, if nothing else. Besides, I just don't want to murmur "glub" as I introduce the individual to the lady standing by me.

The guest list, as usual was a montage; from the Hill there were the Russell Long's, and the Clinton Anderson's, and the Jack Brooks' of Texas. From the wider field of politics, the Governor of Minnesota and Mrs. Rolvaag, Mayor Dick Daley of Chicago, and that coming young couple, the Eugene Wyman's from Los Angeles, California - I think that he's National Committeeman.

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Among old friends, it was especially nice to see Abe and Carol Fortas there, and Tom Corcoran with his little daughter, whose eyes were out on stems. It was clearly a fairy dream of a night for her. And then the Ed Weisl^s down from New York - the first public appearance of Alice since the removal of her jaw - and a very courageous thing for her to do.

I thought it was about time we worked in some Texans and so I had Joe Albritton, the Stanley Marcus' of Dallas, Cameron McElroy, from my own home town of Marshall, the Bill ^{Noels} ~~Nowell~~'s of Odessa, and Marlin Sandlin of Houston, who'se head of the English speaking union, and David Searles, also of Houston. My friend Alec Rose of the Hatter's Union, represented Labor, and from the field of education, there were Dr. and Mrs. Courtney Smith of Swarthmore College - he heads the Rhoads Scholarship Program; the ED Russell^s of Cond^e ~~may~~-Nast, Vogue and so forth; Dr. and Mrs. Nabrit^s of Howard University and a couple of negro educators from a Virginia college, I believe Dr. and Mrs. Philip Butcher. Oh, yes, from the publishing world, I certainly shouldn't have forgotten my friends, ^{the} John Carter^s of McCalls.

And then, if one could be so daring as to lump culture and entertainment together, ^{Allen} ~~Ben~~ Drury, my old friend; Albert Finney, that bright new young English actor who leaps nimbly from bed to bed in Tom Jones, ^{on} the movie screens today, ^{and} is the rage of the young girls; ^{Myer} ~~Myer~~ Davis, who led the famous band for so many years and has played for six Presidents and tonight he played for his seventh - for us;

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and our friends since about 1939, Eric^d and Ann Leinsdorf, he's the conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra; and John Steinbeck, one of my really favorite authors; and, certainly not to be forgotten by himself or ignored by anybody else, Mr. Milton Berle, of Beverly Hills, California, always on hand when the Democratic Party is in need of help.

There were about 130 of us, seated at round tables for 10 each, with the head table for 20. I had a really good time with Sir Alec on my right and Mr. Butler on my left. Lyndon's toast was no less true because
"it's been said over and over, 'the kind of government we have today was born on the fields of Runnymede; our system of fair play was lifted right out of the ^{Classic} ~~traffic~~ debates in your House of Commons; our concepts of human rights and freedoms come from many sources, but ^{then} ~~that~~ taproots were nourished in English soil and watered with English blood.'" And then he got a little laughter into it when he referred to himself and ^{Sir} Alec as country boys and said "One thing we shared in common, this Scotch highlander and this Texas rancher, was a love of the land." He got a laugh - I don't know how wry he may have been - I mean on the part of some of the others, when he said he would permit no fundamental differences between the two nations as long as Sir Alec is Prime Minister and others may judge how long that may be.

?!
Ch
tape

After Sir Alec's graceful and decorous toast, in which the only time he touched on the subject of their trade with Cuba, ^gwas to say that

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we may have to send buses to Cuba but we will not let anything fundamental interfere between us.

And after the Strolling Strings had wound among us, bringing their magic and their melody, we got up and went into the East Room and started dancing. About 200 more people joined us, including the Ambassadors [^] that now diminishing line of Ambassadors [^] from the Commonwealth countries. I had asked Diana and Donald to come because he has dual citizenship, Scotch as well as United States, besides she had worked hard enough the night before trying to keep the French-speaking people happy and the people that she had known from her work on the African desk happy, that I thought she deserved to see somebody who meant a lot to her husband's background - they both come from Scotland.

I wonder if it could have been my imagination when I thought I saw the twosome dancing from Pakistan and India. [?] I'm not - I don't quite remember whether it was Mrs. Ahmed and Mr. Nehru or the other way around. At any rate, everyone got into the spirit of things and it was a lot of delightful dancing. There were cabaret tables seated around and champagne being passed so that anybody that didn't want to dance could sit down and be comfortable.

Dancing is one of my favorite joys and I had a pleasant turn with Bill Walden, chairman of the Commission on Fine Arts; and my tall friend, Bill Batt of ARA, but rather soon I took up my stand in the hall to tell people goodbye. The Prime Minister and Lady Douglas Hume left shortly after 11 but I stayed downstairs until close to 12 because there

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were many people that I really just yearned to visit with, especially the Weisk's, especially the Texans, most particularly Cameron and Lucille McElroy. At one point, I saw the Prime Minister having a very earnest tete-a-tete with Walter Lippmann, dean of the ^{Columbian} ~~colonies~~, over in the corner. That was a conversation I would like to have eaves-dropped on.

Among the 200 who came in after dinner to dance, I noticed a lot of 1960 Johnson advance people, just the kind of folks I want to have around me. And then there were members of the British party whom we had not been able to invite to the dinner, and a lot of State Department workers as well as some of the Johnson staff, a little glitter for the late hours, and a lot of love.