

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Wednesday, March 4, 1964

It is really what you could call an official sort of day.

At 10 o'clock this morning, at my request, Senator Russell came over to talk to me about our proposed plan to go into the south on a swing through space installations, beginning with Huntsville, Alabama and then going on into Mississippi, into Louisiana, and finally winding up at Cape Canaveral. This follows the pathway of the rocket, Saturn, the exploratory rocket, the one that brings back facts, all the way from its beginning in Huntsville to its try-outs in the Mississippi-Louisiana areas, to its launch in Cape Canaveral.

I do want to get into at least one of the four states, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana - before June. I'd like to get into two or three but I simply cannot wait until campaign time to go back into the south, or else I will not want to go. And this seems like possibly a good way to get in.

Senator Russell, with good judgment and good words, had some things both pro and con, to say about the plan. Mostly, he thought it would be good as far as Huntsville went, and had doubts about some of the other - all of which he thought could be worked out. And some good suggestions, in case we did go on it.

For his own state of Georgia, which actually isn't included for such a proposed trip, he did have two excellent suggestions. One, concerning the dedication in Atlanta, attached to Emory University, of a research center for the control of communicable diseases. He said that he would call Boisfeuillet A. Jones in HEW and get more information about it and he

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thought it would be a very good thing for me to do, perhaps sometime next month.

Another idea was to go to Warm Springs, Georgia, for a ceremony that takes place every April, as a sort of memorial to President Roosevelt.

I had lunch in my room and worked on the mail.

And then at 3 o'clock, I got dressed up once more, to go down for another picture, but this time a different sort. It was with the Muscular Dystrophy children. I walked into the Library and there they were seated, Roby Whitaker, age 7, and his sister, Cary, age 6, both in wheelchairs, in front of that terrific glare of bright lights and all the TV equipment, very composed and just darling. Cary, all dressed up in her black patent leather Mary Jane's and a little bowler hat with daisies around it, and a crisp dress, and a bright smile, completely unselfconscious, looked rosy and plump and adorable.

Her little brother, Roby, also all dressed up in a sort of Scotch plaid suit, was a little more reticent and quiet.

She had brought me an armful of yellow roses and he had brought me the gold emblem of the association, and they both had a framed photograph of themselves, by that famous photographer, Karsh, signed in their own very nearly legible fashion.

Luci came rushing in at the last minute. I do so wish that child could learn to be on time! She's interested in Muscular Dystrophy because Jack's

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father had it, and that is the reason his family, which has about six children in it, is so hard up financially.

Their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Whitaker, were along, together with the usual group of directors of the Muscular Dystrophy Association, <sup>2</sup>Mr. Ross, the public relations man, and the local representative.

I gave the children autographed copies of the book on Jonathan Visits the White House.

Next on the agenda was the trip to the Women's National Democratic Club, where they were having a tea in my honor, where I stood between Mary <sup>Ch</sup>~~Kieserling~~ <sup>sp</sup> and India Edwards. — Mary's the President of the club - and met 500 women, all members.

<sup>Mary Kieserling</sup>  
A large part of the Cabinet was there. I wish they wouldn't pressure them into coming. There was a good contingent of Senate wives, and then, to my delight, who should walk the line, but Bess Porter Parmenter, although I just had <sup>[a]</sup> chance for a hug and a word, before she disappeared into the crowd.

I was very flattered that Miss Frances Perkins showed up. We met all 500 in a very suprisingly short time of about an hour and fifteen minutes, so that I got off sooner than I expected and had just a little nick of time that enabled me to go in and see appropriately enough my foot doctor, Dr. Charles Turchin, without whom I couldn't get along. And what better time to see him, <sup>[than]</sup> after having been standing in a receiving line, and are on your way to probably

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what will be another one.

The big event of the day <sup>is</sup> the Eleanor Roosevelt Golden Candlestick award of the Women's National Press Club. Dinner, a speech by Lyndon, a presentation of the award, <sup>But</sup> in the custom so usefully set by President Kennedy,

<sup>We</sup> had supper at home first, <sup>and</sup> went to the dinner at 9:20. What a nostalgic evening it was! Tom Corcoran remarked later that - "I didn't know there were that many of us left."

At the head table, besides us, <sup>and</sup> the necessary ladies of the Press Club, <sup>[was]</sup> was Adlai Stevenson, the Hugo Black<sup>s</sup>, the James Roosevelt<sup>s</sup>, the Franklin Roosevelt<sup>s</sup>, the John Roosevelt<sup>s</sup>, and the Curtis Roosevelt<sup>s</sup>, who in his childhood, <sup>was</sup> called Buffy, <sup>I</sup> believe.

And in the audience, such old-timers as Thurman Arnold, Roberta Barrows, Diana Hopkins Baxter (she's the daughter of Harry Hopkins), the Francis Biddle<sup>s</sup>, the Oscar Chapman<sup>s</sup>. Ben Cohen was at the head table too, and I spotted Tom Corcoran out in the audience. And delightfully enough, Helen Gahagan Douglas, and Jane Ickes!

I had the pleasure of sitting next to Adlai Stevenson, which I'm getting to find more and more a good way to spend an evening. He always protests that he has not the vaguest idea what he is going to say, and then he gets up and says something utterly appropriate, with every last word chiseled and

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polished.

Lyndon presented the award to Judge Anna M. Cross, Commissioner of Corrections in New York City.)

And then Mrs. Cross got up and told of all the years she had known Mrs. Roosevelt, and that whenever Mrs. Roosevelt returned from one of her trips, she would call her up and say, "Can I come to see your people, (she meant the prisoners) and show them my slides?" Because she said, "They didn't have any chance to get out, so they couldn't keep up as well, in the outside world." Imagine her doing that!

And then Lyndon made his speech, and it turned out to be the first black tie Press conference in history. <sup>It</sup> Because he announced 10 of the 50 new feminine jobs in government, which he hopes to produce within the next month or so. The ranged all the way from the Interstate Commerce Commission, which went to a very good looking young woman, Virginia May Brown, 38 years old; to an Ambassadorship, which went to Mrs. Catherine White, the widow of E. B. White, the country was not announced.

Others included, were Mrs. Leon <sup>Key</sup>serling, whom I had just been with that afternoon; India Edwards - and how the audience did clap when they got around to her; Mrs. Norman Chandler, and Barbara Bowling - and they were very glad to hear that she was going to get a job, as special assistant to the Chief of Protocol; and Rose McKee, one of their own Washington News

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women, to be Director of the Office of Public Information of the Small Business Administration. There were several that I didn't know much about. And there was Mrs. Agnes Meyer, to the U. S. Delegation to Venezuela for the inauguration. Of course, that's not exactly a job; rather that's a brief honor.

There was line in his speech that I liked particularly, that he quoted from Scott Fitzgerald, which defined America as ..... a willingness of the heart. And he compared that to the thrust of Eleanor Roosevelt's own impact on America, her own willingness of the heart.

We finished with the dinner and left about 10:20 - and Oh, what an early night it would have been if we had gone on home then. But we didn't.

We went to Betty Beale's for a party - and on the way Lyndon remarked that he had told Helen Gahagan Douglas to go on over to the White House and spend the night.

We were almost the first arrivals at Betty Beale's, naturally. I wonder how she managed to get there first; [and you know, she was so flustered, she made what I thought was a very unsophisticated remark for somebody as sophisticated as Betty is.] We said, "Betty, how did you get here so fast? How did you get your car out of the garage." And she said, "I didn't, I took a taxi and I just told Adlai to get the car and go on by and pick up his suitcase at the hotel, and come on over." Which gave Lyndon any amount of opportunity

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to tease her, and how he did <sup>die</sup> ~~create~~ it.

The Dale Miller<sup>s</sup> came in, and Perle Mesta; the Thornberry's were with us. There was quite a coterie of Senators, including Senator McCarthy, Senator Gale McG<sup>hee</sup>, Hubert Humphrey; and the Biddle<sup>s</sup> came along presently. And Tom Corcoran, and that's when I heard him say, "I didn't know there were so many of us still around." A terribly appropriate remark for the evening.

We didn't stay long but - we didn't go home either. We went on from their to <sup>The name</sup> ~~Mary Ann~~ Means and, here there was a somewhat different crowd - a rather younger crowd. All of the Roosevelts, nearly, were congregated there. At one moment, <sup>there</sup> was a perfect time for a picture, <sup>when</sup> there were three Roosevelt boys <sup>James</sup>, Franklin and John - and Lyndon, all together, with their heads almost cheek to cheek, in close conversation - in what would have made a wonderful picture.

I got Phil Potter to come over on the sofa and sit and talk to me <sup>very</sup> quietly for awhile <sup>I</sup> I can't talk to a whole room full of people <sup>about</sup> India, about what he thought would happen when Nehru was no longer there - he doesn't think there is a chance of Indira succeeding him - nor does he think there is any <sup>death</sup> ~~birth~~ of leadership. In fact, I would say he was an India lover, and he says so are his children, in spite of never having had any good meat or really anything good at all to eat, while they were there.

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~~Mary Ann~~ <sup>Maria</sup> Means herself, looked absolutely ravishing - like a mermaid, I would say - in a blue-green, <sup>n</sup>iridescent, sequined gown that fit her like her skin - low neck, low back. Jack and Mary Margaret pried themselves loose about midnight, <sup>e</sup>and went sensibly home, but it was one o'clock before we got back to the White House.

And then after reading all the things that were waiting for us on the bed, <sup>o</sup>it was later than 2<sup>e</sup> when we went to sleep - at the end of a very Washington day.