

1964

Tuesday, July 14th

In the midst of a month dedicated to living it up, doing what I want to, to being lazy, to being with Lynda and Luci, this is a rather busy day. It began by a trip to the Ellipse, ^{to see} ~~where~~ a nutritional van, ~~to see~~ a kitchen-on wheels donated by the American Freedom from Hunger Foundation, driven by two Peace Corps volunteers, staffed by home economists in all of the ten Central American and South American countries which it is going to travel through, and with food provided by the Alliance for Progress program and the AID. This van was parked on the Ellipse, ready to begin its trip to Peru. My job was to inspect and dedicate it -- in other words, to bring it to the attention of the American public through the gathered news media -- and most of them ^{leftovers} who hadn't gone out to San Francisco ^{where} were gathered round -- a sizable contingent of the press. Thomas Mann greeted me. Ambassador Sevilla-Sacasca was there, heading the list of some eight or nine Latin American Ambassadors or Charges, Dr. Foreman, Director of Operation Nino, which is a part of the Alliance for Progress food program, and the head of the American Freedom from Hunger Foundation -- I believe his name is Mr. Sugden.

I had an interesting explanation of how the van will operate in Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rico, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, making known to the women in

1964

Tuesday, July 14th (continued)

villages better ways of feeding their pre-school-age children with what their government makes available locally, together with the powdered milk and the corn meal from our government.

I said a few words -- about three sentences -- in Spanish, which I had practiced the night before with Yolanda and ^{General} ~~Etzel~~ Lopez-Maguire, and came off all right.

Back at the White House, I spent some time with Mr. West, going over things that need repair, replacement, or that I need information about -- some of the necessary backup of housekeeping. And then to a delightful luncheon at Margy McNamara's, taking Lynda with me. It was on the back terrace, looking out on her small garden -- a perfect summer setting, with a fountain and dogwood trees. Virginia Rusk, Mary Ellen Monroney, a lady whose husband used to work with Bob Montgomery, Mrs. Carroll, the wife of the President of George Washington. Margy is just about my favorite Cabinet wife. So, happily, I liked them all, and I am so pleased that Lynda Bird was at home with them and that they wanted her.

In the afternoon I had an hour or so to work with Bess and Ashton, and then the party of the day in the Blue Room, to meet the secretaries from the West Wing, the East Wing, and, probably most important of all, the telephone operators, those kindly, understanding sweet voices

1964

Tuesday, July 14th (continued)

on the other end of the line from eight A. M. till midnight. They were SO nice. A lot of the ladies said something like this, "I've been here twenty-one years and I have never been upstairs before," or, "I've been here a long time and I've never been invited over in this fashion."

I shook hands with everybody in the Blue Room, and in the State Dining Room we had drinks and refreshments. I had asked the department heads, like Mrs. Myer Feldman, Mrs. Lee White, Mrs. Hobart Taylor, Mrs. George Reedy, and so forth, to help me by being assistant hostesses. Mary Bundy was out of town, but Mrs. Larry O'Brien was here and Judith Moyers, although Marjorie, I am so sorry, had to miss it, and Mrs. Goldman I was especially glad to have.

In groups, Liz herded us in front of the fireplace underneath Lincoln to have our pictures made. I am sure I will have a busy day of autographing soon. And I had Ashton Gonella and one or two more close ones upstairs, expecting any of the girls who wanted to walk up and see the second floor.

Lyndon came in before it was over and quietly walked around and met as many as he could. The whole party was Bill Moyers' idea, and I believe it was an hour and a half well spent.

At the end of it I happened to be with Wendy Marcus and I said casually, "Come on upstairs," and it wound up by us having about an hour's conversation, something I'd really been wanting to do, because Wendy is

1964

Tuesday, July 14th (continued)

the daughter of dear friends, and I think I heard more about her job and her life the last few years than I've heard in all the months that she's been here, also about her trips with Lynda and Luci -- Luci she's especially fond of.

I had a moderately early dinner with Lyndon about 9:30 and then went down to see the last part of Beckett, along with Luci and her beau. Nowhere near as good as the stage play, I thought, with the King not as strong as Sir Laurence Olivier's King. I believe Anthony Quinn played the same part. But good entertainment.