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Thursday, July 23rd

Was one of those days that might make the staff at the White House go out and campaign Republican. Lyndon had a stag luncheon for business leaders that mushroomed to 254. We used the East Room and the staff performed beautifully. And then he took them into the State Dining Room for the briefing with Rusk and McNamara and charts.

When it was 3:30 and I still heard clapping echoing from down below, I began to get nervous because I knew that the Mormon Tabernacle Choir was coming to perform in the East Room at 4:30 -- 350 strong, plus guests -- and the room had to be transformed from dining room into theater, including bleachers, because the choir was stacked from floor to ceiling, so to speak. It must have been a good luncheon. They were still calling cars at about four o'clock.

I had been reading the delightful variety of stories about Luci at Interlochen, one with hair stringy, horn-rimmed glasses and the most comical of expressions of distress on her face, biting her lip, was entitled "Luci Goofed." And another, really quite attractive, of Van Cliburn, Luci (pretty this time) and the kind-faced patriarchal President of Interlochen, Dr. Joseph E. Maddy. I had spent a part of the morning dictating letters for the last gifts that have come to the White House -- the beautiful John Singer Sargent from Whitney Warren of a woman

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and a mosquito net; a small portrait of Benjamin Franklin by St. Aubin; and two clocks. And then dealing unsuccessfully with the problem of clothes from a store here, a call to Texas, a fitting with Diana's dress-maker. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir was late -- their fault, I am grateful it wasn't ours, beginning just a little bit before five, which made it impossible for Lyndon to be there for the concert because he had an appointment with the Prime Minister of Malaysia at five. He strode in, gave them a delightful welcome, recalling the fact that Thomas Jefferson, who loved music, couldn't afford to have musicians around the White House because of the necessity of economy in this Republic, and so he hired gardeners who could play instruments as well. He recalled pleasantly his visit with President McKay of the Mormons. And then he pointed his finger at Senators Frank Church and Frank Moss and told them that just as soon as they had listened to a song or two they'd better get back up on the Hill and help pass his Economy Bill.

He listened to a stirring rendition of The Battle Hymn of the Republic and then left in a run while the rest of us listened to this great choir, unpaid and drawn from all walks of American life -- really one of America's great musical institutions, singing This is My Country and Crossing the Bar and finally, for an encore, the words on the bottom

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of the Statue of Liberty, "Give me your tired, your poor." It was a thrilling experience. We had asked all the Utah delegation and those Senators and Congressmen who had a sizable number of Mormons in their constituency, such as the Gale McGees of Wyoming, the Frank Churches of Idaho, and of course Secretary Udall and his brother Morris Udall, both of whom are Mormons. I was pleased to see that Bess had asked the Ezra Taft Bensons. However, they were not there.

Mary Love Bailey had come on early. She is invited to the State Dinner next Monday night, so I had included her, ~~and~~ a very touching sight ^{was} ~~with~~ Mr. Justice Frankfurter in his wheel chair, frail as a shadow. And I saw the Paul Humes (he's the music critic). I had asked Lorraine McGee and Phyllis Moss to give us the names of about six couples that they would particularly like to invite -- people whom it would mean something to among their Mormon friends or their constituents.

And afterwards as I stood in line at the entrance to the State Dining Room and shook hands with everybody, Phyllis came up to me and said, "You're making votes every minute," and Lorraine said, "This means a lot to all of us and our friends." I feel sorry about not having taken the trip out West and would like so much to do anything I can for them.

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A little past six there was a quick change of pace when I went over to Lyndon's office to join the Dukes and go to the reception given by Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, this time, I am glad to say, at his own embassy, the Malaysian Embassy. They are always so much more colorful and attractive and unique, and mean something when they take place in the embassy of the country rather than at the Mayflower Hotel, where they are all catered and identical.

The Tunku took us first into a private room where he presented me with a bolt of maroon and silver handwoven "sankit" -- very exotic, and for Lyndon a malacca cane, which he brandished menacingly at the photographers. I shouldn't have said private because although there were no guests there, there were a multitude of photographers. And then a most delightful gift -- an enormous box of the tiniest Malaysian orchids -- fragile pink, small spotted ones no larger than your fingernail -- a great variety, and none that I was familiar with.

Then we took our seats with the Ambassador and Datine Ong. And actually had some of the refreshments -- something one seldom does at these affairs. And I am so glad they did -- they brought in a tray of long but sturdy straws with tiny meat cubes skewered on the ends. About two inches of meat cubes and a hot sauce into which you dipped the meat, then put it in your mouth and slipped it off. Served

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with it was rice, in compact little squares about the size of a dice, more like our own grits or mush than rice, but very bland and delicious with the hot meat sauce. As a Southwestern, adopted, I took to it at once. Datine Ong said she had been cooking for two days. It requires an elaborate preparation.

Then out into the canopied garden, where we walked among the guests, but not so crowded as it is in hotels, and were back in our car in about forty minutes' time.

Lynda Bird had had a busy day, too. She had pinned a lot of volunteers who are working for Lyndon down at the headquarters for the volunteers for the Democratic National Committee. She put the little gold pins in the shape of a number four crossed with the initials LBJ. She gave the pins to all those workers who have already put in their first forty hours of time to Lyndon locally. They range from teen-agers to senior citizens, and one lady had put in 360 hours.—Mrs. John F. Dowd, who is a lawyer as well as Democratic worker. The co-chairmen of this committee's Four for Sixty-four volunteer program are Scooter Miller, Mrs. Birch Bayh, and Lindy Boggs.

Lyndon left by helicopter for Valley Forge to see the gathering of Boy Scouts -- thousands of them -- 70,000 I think, from all over the United States. What a mankiller of a day for him this has been. And I,

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glad the staff didn't have to cook supper for anybody, stopped by the mansion just long enough to thank all of them that I saw and then go on out to the Walter Ridders, who were having an informal dinner dance for the Hubert Humphreys. I was only going to stay for a drink or two, because it is absurd to be a woman alone at a dance, but there comes a time when you want to get away from the White House. It was a delightful party. Their house, surrounded by tall trees, looks straight down on the Potomac. There were many of my favorite people. Adlai Stevenson, the Jim Rows, Karl Louchheim, ^{Scottie} D. Lanchan and her husband were there. Angie and Robin came when they had finished with the reception, but no Senatorial people, not even the guest of honor, because the Poverty Bill is up and will probably be voted on. Sure enough, we got word that the vote was set for 9:30. I left a little after nine, had a sandwich out of the icebox.

Today has been a landmark -- a big step forward for the Poverty Bill. It passed. But there are big hurdles for it to go over and it will be the chief target of the gathering efforts of the Republicans from now on.

Lyndon can do so much in such a short while. He returned from Valley Forge about 10:30, the round trip having taken only about three hours -- staggering tired, but feeling good, I think, about the accomplishments

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of the week. The business men's lunch had been a great success. And the progress of the Poverty Bill -- it too acted as sort of a shot of adrenalin amidst the gathering fears and clouds of the riots in Harlem, the talk of the backlash, the rapid growth of Col water in polls and in everybody's conversation.