

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Monday, February 8, 1965

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It's odd, how you can get so anaesthetized by your own pain or your own problem that you don't quite fully share the Hell of someone close to you.

Dear Lyndon has been facing the agony of hour to hour decisions, in a situation deadly close to a spreading war, and I have just been living to get through an interview with U. S. News and World Report, on Monday morning, February 8th, so that I knew, but didn't deeply share his predicament.

Well, everything comes and goes, and so did this interview. When it began at 11 o'clock, I was curiously calm and fatalistic. I read a whole straw bag full of information, on highway planting, and city planning, park maintenance and mental health, and the way beautification ties in with the poverty program, through the use of low grade skills, as well as thinking back ~~about~~ - through all my life, to decide why I should really be so interested in it. The examples of what it means to me personally, this importance of beautification, to our nation.

And then I walked into the Treaty Room and there was Mr. Sutherland, who looks rather like Yul Brenner, and about five more people. We sat around poor Andrew Johnson's Cabinet table and they asked me questions. There was a tape recorder and a stenographer. And this lasted for about two hours, sometimes feeling that I'd pulled out a true thought, dressed in rather fresh and interesting language - and sometimes quite sure I was

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rambling, disjointed, and dull.

And then it was over and Bess and I had lunch, talked about the mail, which is getting voluminous; there are more than 3500 letters the last week in January. The moral is 'Don't get sick'.

And, of course, Luci's mail is running about 5 to 1 above Lynda's, much of it on the Catholic instructions, and angrily hostile.

I called the Leonard Marks' and the Warren Woodwards, and the Paul Popples, and the Marvin Watsons, to see if they could come over and swim with me, when the day was done, knowing full well that some of the men wouldn't be through work.

And then Stu Udall came over about 5:30 and we had about an hour's session on the agenda for the beautification meeting next Thursday.

And then down to the pool to Marian Watson, and Leonard Marks (Dorothy's sick), the Paul Popples, and Mary Ellen Woodward, Woody to join us as soon as his plane gets in. To do 20 laps in the pool, soak up the relaxation, wish that Lyndon were doing likewise, and have a good drink and hors d'oeuvres while we shared experiences about the inaugural - and I had a chance to tell each of them how happy they'd made a lot of people.

I really couldn't think of but one mad member of Congress, and only one mad constituent - and he was really more humorous than mad.

It's obvious that Woody is enjoying the prestige and affluence of his job with American Airlines.

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Dear Marvin, never did make it, no surprise to anybody. So when everyone left, I took Marian upstairs with me to wait for her husband, got her settled with some scrap books, and just insisted that she wait for him and have dinner with us. Marvin is the most consistently good humored person I know - that, combined with brains and heart, make him somebody we need very much in our operation, and I want to let his wife know, they're appreciated and enjoyed.

Our husbands finally came over at 10:45. I'd been reading a ton of beautification mail in between. And then we had a good Baptist blessing and dinner, and to bed.

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