

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, February 16, 1965

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This was another eventful day, beginning first with a brief meeting with Robert Dowling, in the lovely living room of the Carlyle. He wanted to talk beautification with me, and particularly to tell me about his own project, Sterling Gardens, a large tract of forest land, only an hour's drive from New York City, that his Company purchased from the Harrimans and had carefully planned into an ideal community, where the jobs and income are based on those twin giants of today, research and education. That is, they have either given or made advantageous arrangements with, New York University to establish a Science Center there, a sort of a Science campus, and as a corollary, some industrial research plants in the area. And they have produced a fabulous garden in this forest land, millions of tulips and azaleas and blooming shrubs and flowers, that attract tourists about eight or nine months a year, ranging from President Truman and Princess Beatrix of Holland, to bus loads of school children from the New York streets, who were coming on nature tours.

It's a non-profit organization and a very imaginative concept. Mr. Dowling said, "To have beauty, you have to have money." He also said, "You have to have local pride, you have to think your city is the best of all cities." And he talked in the tone in which Italians used to say of their own cities, - "I'm Florentine." Or whatever, with the assurance, that was the best of all places to be from.

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Beautification is certainly exposing me to interesting people of achievement!

Then, I flew home and in the afternoon delivered the Heart Award, to Mrs. Chloe Gifford. The American Heart Association had asked to give me their Distinguished Service Award, but I felt like it was sheer make believe for me to accept it, because I haven't done anything. On the other hand, if I accepted it and then gave it, in a White House ceremony, to the hardest working volunteer we could locate, that would achieve their purpose of publicity and my purpose of being fair and making volunteers stand a little taller. Mrs. Chloe Gifford, of Lexington, Kentucky, has done everything from collect money on her one block to be a director on the Board of the American Heart Association, over a period of fifteen faithful years.

A Dallas doctor, Dr. Carlton Chapman, presented me with a gold plaque, in a maroon lined leather case. I gave it to her in front of a battery of television and newsreel cameras.

And then tonight, was the third reception for the Congress. It turned out to be an A plus one. Pictures first in the Green Room, and a moment of conversation with each of them. And then drinks, and then the men off for their briefing with Rusk, now back from Florida, McNamara, and Kermit Gordon.

And I took the ladies down to watch, (for me it's the fourth time) the movie on the history of the White House and the families who have lived within it.

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But when it was over, came a runner to say that the men were deeply engrossed in conversation and it would probably be another 30 minutes! So I was glad I had stashed out, ^{at} least two ladies - Lera Thomas and Mrs. Dan Flood of Pennsylvania, who were willing to tell an interesting or moving, ~~or interesting~~ experience of their own. And I asked a new member, Mrs. Jonathan Bingham. And then I got a volunteer, who turned out to be the most delightful of all, Mrs. William Bates, of my 81st Club, from Massachusetts. She told of how her pigtailed five year old, accompanied her husband onto the floor when he was to be sworn in. Children ^{had} ~~have~~ the privilege of the floor, in those days, and suddenly she looked down and as her husband was ~~solemnly~~ solemnly raising his hand to be sworn in, so too was the five year old!

Jim Ketchum gave us his well-tailored, amusing anecdotes and then with fresh drinks, we strolled through the library, the china room and the Vermeil room, and back upstairs to meet the men.

It was one of those evenings when everything clicks. The men had had a marvelously exciting, electric sort of a time. Several of them came up to me and said they had never had an experience like that in the White House.

The Porter Hardys and I talked about Luci's going down to be Azalea Queen; and the Bob Jones reminisced with me about my trip to Huntsville. There were old timers like Mike Kerwin; and Manny Celler, the Dean of the House,

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And from the Texas delegation, the Jack Brooks, the Jake Pickles; and the John Youngs, ^{Jane} ~~Jean~~ looking 20 pounds thinner, after her grueling battle with illness. For months her little girl has been sick with a serious, undiagnosed trouble, which they fear is muscular dystrophy.

With quite a few of the members I've been on campaign trips - the Roman Puckinskis, the L. H. Fountains of North Carolina, the Joe Evans of Tennessee.

Everybody stayed late because everybody was having a good time. And it was after ten when I went upstairs, ready to go straight to bed with the pleasant assurance that this had been a good night's work, with our fellow laborers in the Congress.

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