

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Thursday, March 4, 1965

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Was a rather lean day - not enough happening. Yearning for exercise, I walked around the grounds, three times, in the middle of the afternoon, and I met Lyndon about 3:30, going up to the second floor, for his lunch, with McGeorge Bundy. He either doesn't eat at all ^{lunch} or else it's too late in the day for a balanced routine, or so I think.

As I walked I saw the bulbs, tulips and daffodils were up about 3 inches, and the buds were swelling on the trees. Spring will be coming very soon!

Back upstairs, I joined Lyndon's luncheon group, which by now, included Jim Haggerty, of ABC; and Leonard Gold ~~man~~ another ABC man; and Marvin Watson.

Among other things, their mission in coming was to talk to me about the possibility of doing a TV show, ^{about} beautification plans in Washington. It would be filmed over four or five months, probably to be aired at Thanksgiving. A documentary, sort of like their I, Leonardo. I am timid at the thought of that much exposure. I am no authority, just an interested, enthusiastic citizen; I recognize I do have a sort of tool in my hands, by this title I carry, and I want to use it, but I quail ^{shake} at the thought of putting myself forward as a sort of city planner, landscape architect, pedagogue.

I think in my shoes, ^{there} should be someone of exquisite self-assurance who could put other people to work, and who, in the most lady-like fashion, is a real salesman.

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We talked about the show - whether it would be possible to have a sponsor, and decided it would not - that it would have to be made available to all three networks. And in the end, Leonard Goldenson said he would turn the idea over to a director, go to work on a possible script, and then talk with me about it later.

A sad part of the day, ^{was} to have Lynda Bird come over to find me, when I was in Jack Valenti's office - and burst into tears.

I followed her out, ^{The} trouble is a very simple one. She'd finally set her heart on going to Europe this summer. I had been offering it as a plum, planning on it, wishing she wanted to go, promising it to her when she graduated from high school - and now, just now - promising it to her for her 21st birthday. And practically simultaneously, the gold crisis, gold flow out of this country, comes upon us and Lyndon asks everybody to see America first - to limit their travel abroad this summer. So how can the President's daughter choose this summer for four weeks in Europe?

As though that weren't enough, I had the abysmal poor judgement to speak of my plans for her, when she and Lyndon, and I were all together. Poor, dear Lyndon.

Lynda and I comforted each other as best we could, after she returned from class, tearfully, but understanding - and that old, old promise "Another time dear, it will all work out alright."

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Tonight was the eighth of the Congressional receptions, some 50 or so house members including the John Davis' of Georgia; the William Jennings Bryan Dorns - the name delights me - of South Carolina; the Gathings of Arkansas, whom I've known for 25 years or more; Sam Gibbons of Florida, who accompanied me on my last trip; and the ^SHarlongs of Florida, who are responsible for about the gayest family vacation the Johnsons ever had^A to Daytona Beach, all four of us, along with the Thornberrys, many years ago. Otto Passman, who makes life miserable for the State Department; the Bob Sikes of Florida; and the Jamie Whittens of Mississippi.

We got off to a slow start, but did the picture line rather quickly. I thought I noticed that Lyndon was quiet, and not feeling very well. And then, down in the theatre, we saw once more, the movie on the pictures in the White House.

And then, while a noticeably large group departed for the second floor, we heard reminiscences from Eloise Beckworth of Texas, who told the story of how the baby chewed up ^{her White House} ~~his~~ invitation - one I've often quoted. Mrs. Chet Hollofield of California, and Mrs. Hastings Keith ~~as~~ a Massachusetts Republican.

We were in the State Dining Room by 9 o'clock, and it's obvious to me, I've got to limit the drinks passed, or shorten the time spent. This, the eighth, was not one of the best receptions.

Secretary Rusk, whose briefings, in spite of the dismal news he often

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has to convey, are sheer poetry - was absent and not even the redoubtable McNamara, who has been testifying on the Hill, a marathon of days - not even he was very good that night.

And Lyndon was quiet and brief, ^{not} striking the fire, ^{that} ~~the~~ characterized his other performances. The Congressmen seemed appreciative but the evening was rather lusterless.

It was 10 o'clock by the time we were upstairs, no dinner except for the snacks, and the same is true of all of our guests. If they are going to be this long, I shall have to provide something more.

The press is having quite a vendetta with Lyndon, on the subject of his alleged suppression of news, with Joe Alsop ^{wielding} ~~holding~~ a very sharp rapier and Evans and Novack leading the pack.

The question is how to combat, or whether to combat it. How effective can our work be. [?] How much can they tear us down - for the immediate or present - and what affect might it have on the way we appear in history. [?]

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