

1965

THURSDAY, APRIL 8 (*Incomplete*)

I went in the morning with Carl Rowan to the Smithsonian to see the USIA's exhibit, "Architecture USA," a startling collection, beautifully exhibited, of the very modern superworks of such architects as Mies van der Rohe, Phillip Johnson, Paul Rudolph, I.M. Pei, high glass and steel apartment buildings, university buildings. The most startling of the lot perhaps, the Astrodome, a dome topped stadium, the only covered stadium in the country--at least that I ever heard of--in Houston, Texas about to open in a week or so. Frank Lloyd Wright and the Guggenheim Art Museum were practically passe! It was a magnificent exhibit but I missed the simplicity ^{of} ~~for~~ a simple three bedroom house, a John Citizen sort of house or a low cost housing development. If I were a Soviet Citizen, I would be looking for where somebody like me lived in the United States. One of the most interesting things was a display of kitchen equipment and materials. I expressed my feeling to Carl and he said he would see what they could do about adding one or two exhibits of ordinary houses.

Back at the White House I studied for the meeting ^{of} ~~a~~ *our Committee on* a more beautiful Capitol. Each meeting of something like this is to me like climbing a mountain. They came at two o'clock. Most of them are remarkably loyal about showing up. Mary Lasker, bless her. Walter Washington, one of the most interested members. Bill Walter ^{PN} ~~er~~. Libby Rowe was late because of a meeting of the National Planning Commission

Thursday, April 8 (Continued)

which was about the same time. Walter Tobriner. Walker Stone slipped in late and Adam Rumoshosky of the API to report on what filling stations were doing around the country. Probably the most enthusiastic member, Mrs. Kitt Haynes, President of the National Capital Garden Club League, and Victor Gruen, with a dour face ^{and} ~~with~~ a very articulate tongue, and Nat Owings, who designed Pennsylvania Avenue for the future. Absent was our sparkplug, Stuart Udall because there was a Cabinet Meeting at exactly the same time. But the head of the Park Service took over in his place after I had made my few remarks and there was big news. First, to repeat what had been announced two days before that the Japanese Government was going to give between three thousand and four thousand flowering Cherry Trees, the double variety, to be planted in the open space around the Washington Monument. Second, the fabulous news that ^{U A} Lawrence Rockefeller from his Foundation is going to give \$100,000. \$75,000 of it is to be spent on a parkway, long owned but never developed of the National Park Service, the ^{Walla} ~~Watch~~ Branch Parkway in Northeast Washington--a dreary 38 acre ravine. They will plant, put in walks, clean up. The whole project will cost far more, but this is the beginning. The rest of it will be spent on cleaning the statues of Washington. And then, Theron Perkins has sent a check to purchase a sizeable number--I think 200--azaleas from Landon, (This does two goods at once) ^N to be planted elsewhere in this city.

This was a day for reporting. All of the Subcommittee Chairmen reported to their heart's content for over two hours. Walter Washington,

Thursday, April 8 (Continued)

whose interest in beautification is tied up with people, people, people because he is head of the Housing Authority, had perhaps the most to say. The battle of getting rid of automobiles, absolutely ^{rid} ~~and~~, was conducted by Victor Gruen. I loved the sentence from the Washington Post the next day, "when the First Lady planted pansies on the mall and dug in azalea bushes elsewhere in Washington, she set a chain of plantings in motion which is already adding banks of color to areas of Washington that have not seen a flower bed in many a year." Everybody is getting into the act. The Kiwanis Club for the youth gardens, all sort of area developmental associations and mostly just individuals, individuals, individuals! What we need most is school children who will start liking to be neat and maybe the habit will spread through their families and their communities. We were in the Yellow Room. It was two hours well spent. It ended with ice tea and cookies. More and more this becomes a part of my life that I enjoy and feel means something.

1965

Thursday, April 8th

When the Committee left, I went over to Operation Fish Room, though we must stop calling it that, and then to Lyndon's little office to talk with Horace and Marvin about the work to be done there.

And then for desk work. And then quite late, despairing of Lyndon coming home to dinner, to the pool for one of the real pleasures of the White House -- the warm, caressing water and the dream of being in a lazy tropical vacation spot. The mural of the Virgin Islands multiplies the delight of that swimming pool.

Well after 10 o'clock, dinner with Lyndon. His days are like the toughest ones of the Senate Majority Leader.