

1965

TUESDAY, APRIL 20

Tuesday, April 20, the day of the Italian Visit. The Prime Minister, Mr. Aldo Moro, arrived for a ceremony on the South Lawn at 11:00 o'clock in brilliant weather, Military stiff and colorful, 19 gun salute, the two anthems, the exchange of speeches, the routine I am coming to know well. The Prime Minister was handsome, fortyish, soft spoken and modest looking. And right behind him trotted Fanfani, buoyant, outgoing. He was the Prime Minister when we were in Italy in 1962. Jack remarked that he would hate to be preceding Fanfani down a long flight of stairs if he were the Prime Minister. Fanfani is now Rusk's opposite number. The only unusual feature was a group of very attractive young women lined up--I don't know exactly why--close to the reviewing stand, headed by Ann Hand, including Mary Margaret, Mary V, Barbara Howar.

Lyndon took the Prime Minister to his office for a talk and then later after twelve I joined them in the Rose Garden and took my first pictures with my long unused movie camera, film vintage 1958. How that did amuse Oakie! But I want to get started again with it. And then we walked across Lafayette Square to Decatur House, escorting Prime Minister Moro to his luncheon date, the Secretary of the Treasury, amid the crowd of tourists and squealing children on vacation from school. It is impossible for me to walk in such a situation and make any sensible conversation and to leave off being self conscious.

The big event of the day, of course, was the dinner for the Prime

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Minister for that night. I briefed my house guests with the list of those coming. Actually as I looked at it I began to think that all America was Italian ^{that} ~~but~~ when Columbus got here he had really taken over the place. Everybody's name seemed to end with an "i" such as the Antoninis of the Labor Council or the de Medicis, Italian newspaper people, or the Jack Valentis or with an "o", Congressmen Rodino, Giaimo, Addabbo, Vigorito, Annunzio. Among them Senator John Sherman Cooper stood out rather unexpectedly. In the Cabinet there was, of course, the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, Mr. Celebrezze. And from the Court, Justice and Mrs. Goldberg. The Leroy Collins were there and the Livingston Biddles and Richard Dietrich who had given to the White House the wonderful Sulley ^{or} Fannie ^{de} Kimball. And from the art world there was Anna Moffo (Mrs. Mario Lanfranche) and Gio and Carl ^o Minotti, the playwright, and John Chiardi the portrait editor of the Saturday Review of Literature. My friends the Armand Hammers were there from Campo Bello. [#] The newspaper world was represented by Betty Beale, and Marianne Means and her date, the Fortune Popes of El Progresso, and the Church ^{by} ~~of~~ the Apostolic Delegate, Mr. Egidio Vagnozzi and by Cardinal Sheehan of Baltimore, and, of course, from Texas we had the Negleys and the Odoms and the Bill B ^{Quinn} ~~Brown~~ from Port Lavaca. Nobody had more fun than Nancy Negley. It has meant a lot to me to have them and the Odoms as house guests, even though I have spent practically no time with them but I have arranged for a car and a tour.

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And Mrs. Nicholas Longworth--what a parade of Washington she has seen--sat on Lyndon's left, and George Meany labored along on his cane. He has probably seen almost as many State dinners as Mrs. Longworth. The Adam Gimbels of Saks Fifth Avenue were there. In compliment to our guests we had Pomodoro Moro, an Asparagus Bari, [?] that is the name of the town the Prime Minister comes from.

Fanfani was very easy to talk to even without English or only bits of English. He talked about the dinners at Villa Tevana and Villa Medava. He picked a rose for me in the garden. Of course, the inevitable possible trip to Italy. The Prime Minister was kind and gentle and pleasant but not easy to talk to. I could see Lyndon was having a good time with Mrs. Longworth and I was grateful. The toasts were long and doubly so because of translation and it was well past ten when we left for coffee in the parlor and then the treat of the evening to hear Leontyne Price. I introduced her-- about two sentences. I am grateful that some columnist later wrote that it was graceful. I thought her program was splendid, well-balanced-- Handel, Puccini, "Summertime" from Porgy and Bess and winding up with "He's Got the Whole World in His Hand." They must have been not more than twenty minutes, probably less. She seemed nervous and actually I wished she had gone on. She had been a Medal of Freedom winner and had not been able to attend the ceremony because she was touring Europe. So Lyndon awarded her the medal when she finished the program. It was

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very impressive, great presence, but I felt somehow I had not accomplished what I wanted to in making her feel that it was a very special night, that we appreciated and enjoyed her talent so much.

Dear Nancy is wonderful help in making a party go. She was busy taking care of guests that I had pointed out. There was dancing in the foyer, but I took Lyndon's hand and hopefully threaded him through the crowds and we were upstairs a moment before twelve. It had been a day of all-out for a visiting Chief of State. He had even attended a part of a Cabinet meeting. I don't know when more personal effort has been expended on one. Altogether I think it has been satisfactory. At least I think they ^{Fanfani} ~~had been~~ Italian Ambassador, Mr. ~~Picasso~~ was in a glow. The Foreign Minister Fanfani was in no ways subdued by being here as second man.