

1965

Tuesday, May 18th

WHD

Began with my second cup of coffee with the Peter Hurds on the Truman Balcony, discussing Lyndon's portrait.

My main interest this year is achieving some of the physical things that will set Lyndon's place in history. He will make his own record, good or bad, but to preserve it some things must be done.

One I want is a good portrait. Most of all, I want the establishment of a Library, and that is up to the University of Texas at present. Third, and this is small, I want the little boyhood home in Johnson City to be well done and to be a success. I think it is.

Mr. Hurd and his charming wife, Henriette, sister of Andrew Wyeth, and I talked about the difficulties -- how many sittings. We all decided it would be ideal if it could be done at the Ranch. The dining room, with its huge picture window, a north light, would be the best place for sittings, maybe two hours a day, preferably the morning. I played it hard about the difficulties <sup>that</sup> ~~there~~ would be encountered with our sitter, many of his own personality, more of the job he holds.

Then I arranged for special tours for those guests of ours who hadn't seen the Second Floor or perhaps had not gone over the State rooms as closely as they liked. The Goldbergs, the Gibsons, any of the Texans who could, and, of course, the Hurds.

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But the most important thing in my day was the beginning of the ABC project, which I hope will speak to the whole country and sow some seeds of interest in nationwide beautification. I have never been more scared of anything or felt less confident or competent to undertake it!

So we began it in the easiest way, walking around on the South Grounds of the White House and telling Mr. Secondari about the President's park, how it has grown since the days of Thomas Jefferson, the trees that the Presidents had planted to remember them by, from John Quincy Adams in 1826 to Lyndon Johnson in 1964.

I had my refresher with our wonderful gardener, Mr. Williams. I will leave here thinking he is one of my best friends.

And then rushed to the Rose Garden, late, for an announcement that Lyndon was making to an assembled group of newspaper people and poverty program people about grants to Project Head Start. Over 1600 grants to form about 9500 pre-school centers that will serve 375,000 children this summer for eight weeks, five and six year olds, to make them better material to work with when school opens in the Fall.

Very wisely, there were on the steps leading down to the Rose Garden, behind Lyndon, four of the children who are going to be enrolled in the Head Start program -- youngsters with their mothers, one from Gum Springs, Virginia -- I am glad we haven't forgotten the rural areas -- and

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Sargent Shriver, the best salesman in town, to explain about it, when Lyndon had finished his own speech, to any of the newspaper people who wanted to ask questions.

One thing they expect to discover among these 375,000 children are 100,000 eye difficulties, and this is what Luci is interested in. I hope your work equals her interest, and I think it will. Lyndon is entitled to be real angry with me for holding him up a good five minutes while I was walking around the grounds. He just said, "Next time be on time when we are holding a meeting which you are going to be in on." A very measured reply, dear man, for somebody who had been up until five o'clock wrestling with a problem of the magnitude he had!

Then I went down to the theater with Simone to view some of the ABC film -- cold, wet Spring, everything mitigating against us, had kept it from being as good as it could be. Well, we can just work!

Lunch on a tray and then makeup, Simone and Mrs. Brown helpfully hovering, and then to the South Grounds. What an enormous crew it takes! John Secondari in charge. A good script, but most of this I just talked, because this is a familiar field that I know and love. Three and a half hours, and it will probably be two or three minutes on

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the screen. It's amazing what a lot of work goes into these things.

Then to get dressed for the second big event of the day, the return reception of ~~our~~ President and Mrs. Pak<sup>1</sup> at the Mayflower. One of those enormous barbarous things. I am sure everybody does their utmost to make them gracious and lovely and, indeed, the table was magnificent, a regular banquet, and Mrs. Pak<sup>R</sup> like a flower in her brilliant red Korean dress with white birds of good omen embroidered around the hem. I was told that it symbolized Mrs. Pak's<sup>R</sup> good wishes for the happiness of the President and the First Lady of the United States.

The only trouble is there are thousands of people, so it seems, in a room meant for hundreds. The population explosion is certainly getting to politics.

Lyndon towered over most of them and made his way purposefully enough, while Mrs. Pak<sup>R</sup> and I did our best to follow, speaking to right and left, smiling and shaking hands, totally ceremonial, and hardly a chance for a real warm encounter. We were home early and Lyndon and I had an early dinner, for him -- 8:30 or so.

And then, really totally tired, he was in bed at eleven. I have no estimate of President Pak<sup>k</sup>, but Mrs. Pak<sup>R</sup> certainly got an A with all who met her for her role. Interest graciously expressed, beauty, and

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an untiring gratitude for all the things we wanted to show her -- a lesson to me and all who go on foreign missions.