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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Saturday, February 12, 1966

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This was the big day. We had come to speak of it as [']The Party, and nobody doubts what we mean. It's the Lindow's party for Luci, centered around Valentine's day, given by Helene, Luci's best friend through NCS days.

Bill Hitchcock, ^{Luci's} ~~her~~ "brother," and Ann Pitman are up from Austin and Susan and Jim Raye from Hale Center, and Mr. and Mrs. Nugent were driving from Waukegan, to spend the weekend with us. It will be our first meeting. They are here for the party, and then on to Florida.

Such was the setting of a day of joyous reunion, somewhat of an easy, awkward first meeting, approached with simple good will, and gala anticipation.

But the regular business of the day went forward.

In the morning, I met with Mrs Provenson in the Queen's Room for about two hours of work on my speech - the Roadbuilders Association in Denver, but it was interrupted by a question - Would I go to the Lincoln Memorial with Lyndon, to lay a wreath? it was Lincoln's birthday. Of course I would.

On about five minutes notice, I was off with him. How good to get a few minutes in the car alone! It was a brief and impressive ceremony at the Lincoln Memorial. John Sparkman read the Gettysburg Address. Lyndon placed a wreath and stood for a very long moment, with his head bowed, in front of Lincoln's statue. I hope I have the grace to understand the weight of all the conflicting strains of thought and hope that went through his mind. And then the five other wreaths were laid, one by Sevilla-Sacasa, Dean of

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the Diplomatic Corps; one by the Mexican delegation, Ambassador Margain, the only other nation represented. I spotted the ^{Teller} ~~Taes~~, and we went over to speak a moment, and then we were off to the White House.

In the meantime, Luci had met the Nugents at Howard Johnson's in Chevy Chase, and escorted them back to the White House, and they were up in the Solarium, the tower of my little Princess.

We joined Lyndon for lunch, eight of us, including the Rayes, and the light, the laughter, ease, the good mixing of the lunch was Lyndon. "Well, Mrs. Nugent, Pat's been a pretty good boy. Gets in before daylight every morning."

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And then I had a long delicious nap, signed the mail, worked at my desk, and then it was time to get ready for the party. I wore my yellow chiffon, Jean Louis put my hair up, in what I hoped was a queenly array on the top of my head, and I took Mr. and Mrs. Nugent to the City Tavern in Georgetown, for once in my life, with Luci ahead of me, at no urging. —
So thrilled, so appreciative, wanting to prove her responsibility by arriving as the hostess requested, at a quarter of eight.

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Mrs. Nugent is an amputee, and it is very hard for her to get in and out of cars. She said she would like to sit in front with the chauffeur, it was easier. I flinched ^{from} ~~with~~ the press reaction this trivial bit would cause, and said, "Oh no. I believe you'll be real comfortable on the back seat, next to the window." She looked very pretty in a turquoise dress, her manner easy, warm - and Mr. Nugent is very young looking, quite like Pat, a nice mixture of dignified respect, and easy friendliness.

It was drizzling rain, but as we drove up to City Tavern, there was enough Press and cameras to cover a great opening night. The stars had already gone in, Luci and Pat - I lived up to it with the best smile I could, as the three of us hurried in out of the rain.

What an amazing, delightful mixture of ^a party it was! Mrs. Lindow, who looked beautiful and elegant in a white beaded dress and elaborate hairdo, had wanted Luci to make up the list - and Luci, as only she could, had included friends from 18 to 70. How extraordinarily generous it was of the Lindows to want it that way!

There was ^{Lessie} ~~Lucy~~ Grant from her NCS days; Ann Pitman, the only one of their Austin friends who'd been able to ^{to come} ~~afford it~~; and from her years of romance with the Page School, Bob Barcus, Don Anderson, and Hitch - all qualifying as brothers.

Two of the most decorative couples in town, Ed. and Barbara Hower, and Nancy and Dick Dickerson - whom Luci considers her own special friends. At

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least one couple from the campaign trail, the William Feldsteins. Her skiing friends, David and Cecily Corcoran; Ann Hand, she used to sit for the five little Hands, Lloyd was somewhere around the world with the Vice President. Midshipman Leroy Bates from her brief encounter with the Academy. My own good friends the Hale Boggs, who have that ~~stubborn~~ ^{Southern} habit of including one's children, in their own circle of friends.

And a very generous contingent from our staff - the Abells, and the Carpenters, Patsy and Marie and Vicki; and, of course, Ashton and her husband - often Luci's chaperons and always her favorites. The Bill Moyers, the Marvin Watsons - they don't go out much and I was delighted to see them having fun. Luci's old boss, Dr. Kraskin, who said ruefully, "You may have gained a son-in-law, but I've lost a mighty good employee."

I was delighted that Luci put on the Philip Nichols - she's worked with Lyndon since 1939. There was Juanita, Mildred Stegall, and, of course, Willie Day Taylor - whose ^{has} tended to Luci all of her little life. It was sort of old home week, - delicious, and cozy, and full of 'you remember when'.

Nobody had more fun than Dr. Travel, who really loves Luci. I saw her dancing the frug with some young White House aide; and I think Perle Mesta, who looked quite regal, in a marvelous gown and jewels, never missed a dance either. I must say the full dress uniforms of the five or six White House aides that Luci had asked, lent color and glamor to the

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party and to the dancing.

Diana and Donald were there, and the Dale Millers - and two of the other very decorative couples around town, the young Taswell^J Shepherds; and Woody and Maryellen Woodward. Woody used to help me warm Luci's bottle. While I put on the coffee pot for his breakfast, when he first came to work for us, and stayed with us at 30th Place in 1948, and has been doing things for her ever since.

And Homer Thornberry represented his family, and sat on my right. For so many years, on 30th Place, the three Thornberry children were Luci's constant companions and best friends.

The dinner menu was painted on a tray, trompe l'oeil, I believe would be the name. It was Consumme^{me} True Love, Capon Virginia ala Luci, Wild Rice Patrick, Asparagus Waukegan, Pexdenales Salad, and Cherries Flambe and Petit-fours in the shape of Valentines. It was delicious, but the dancing was so good, Sidney played when I was half through a course, I would start on the floor with somebody and dance so long that I would get back to find that that course disappeared!

At one end of the ballroom, Mrs. Lindow had a small garden made of a flowering shrubs and plants, and in the center of it, what should there be but our two doves from the White House, in their pagoda-shaped bird cage, emitting their quiet little coos!

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Our host made a very nice toast when the champagne followed the dessert, and then there began a round of toasts by young people, of great variety and charm.

Stafford Hutchinson's was very amusing - he's a born actor. He lauded the institution of matrimony - "no family should be without it."

Bill Hitchcock's was sweet and very natural, and youthfully earnest. And then came Joe Ness, a very handsome young man, one of Pat's friends, there were six or eight of his friends who had driven down from Waukegan, and from Marquette. It was smooth and very well done and I was so glad to hear from the other side of the house. I didn't want it to be only Luci's party.

Stevie Steinert's, he's another one of Luci's Page friends, was predictably sentimental.

And then came the surprise of the evening. Ann Hand, who, when she married Lloyd, at the age of 18, was studying for opera, sang her toast - "Love is a Many Splendored Thing." She and the song were beautiful.

Homer and I had been muttering to each other about - "Wonder if Lyndon's coming?" "Do you think one of us should better go and phone?" I did so want him to come, but not to pressure him.

And about that time Hale Boggs took his glass in hand and said, "I propose the toast to the President of the United States." At that precise moment, and a ripple went through the gathering, almost like the ruffle of drums, in strode

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Lyndon from the back door. Perfect timing, but I found later completely unplanned.

Mrs. Lindow, thoughtful of every detail, had had a chair waiting in case he did come, which she drew up beside her, and he was just in time to hear Luci's own answering toast. We couldn't have asked for more. I was very proud - modest, sincere, grateful, charming, natural.

And then we all danced some more - Lyndon with Mrs. Lindow, and with Luci, and me. Mr. Nugent, it turned out, was a good dancer, and on the floor every minute. Nobody explained or mentioned why Mrs. Nugent did not dance. Some of us, of course, knew, and I murmured it to a few - and I was pleased to see Perle Mesta coming over and chatting with her, as several of the guests did, indeed, when the table began to empty with dancing.

There had been one other delightful little toast, that added a fillip - David Corcoran, a poem he composed while sitting at the table, about their skiing trip - gently amusing, calling Luci his little snow bunny.

It was a perfectly delicious, wonderful party and I was reluctant to go, but about 12:20 I accompanied Lyndon and Homer home, leaving the party to go on for another hour and a half.

And all reports afterward, that it was the most genuine, happy mixing, with the most diverse crowd - all drawn there by one reason, we love Luci. a little

Lyndon and I read the Sunday papers until/after two o'clock Luci came

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in, her Princess Margaret dress, looking indeed, like a little princess and still floating on air. The day has been perfect and it is over.

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