

MEMORANDUM

Checked Feb. 9, '77

Tuesday, March 1, 1966

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Mar. 1 - Elizabeth Beach / Doug Cate
 Mar 6 - Rose Quers - Dale & Jewell?
 Arthur Krings
 Mar 7 - Doug
 Mar. 10 - over, Pagel
 " 13

~~will~~ Probably be remembered by the Chef as the day of birthday cakes. A even big, really wonderful one, for Muriel Humphrey at lunch; and a bigger one for Mr. Justice Black's 80th birthday, at dinner.

In the morning, I recorded and did some desk work. Some social planning with Bess, and then at noon, began a party I had really looked forward to, and planned myself. There's no group I like better than the Cabinet wives, and I had thought what fun for us all to get together, just us, no press, for a very informal party, celebrating Muriel's birthday. She'd spent her real birthday with her husband, in the Far East, so we were a bit late.

So I had asked them to come at 12 and anybody that wanted to, could bowl. I had bowled with a number of them up at Camp David, in the summer; or we could swim. Between the pool at Camp David and here, I have been swimming with most of them, and know they enjoy it.

I met them downstairs about 12, Muriel fresh from her good score, Sunday night, had elected to bowl also; and Jane Wirtz and Lee Udall, chose bowling. I had called Jane Freeman earlier, to suggest that she be the hostess in the swimming pool, and Margie McNamara went with her. Whatx But alas, we had two genuine cripples, Mary Jane Connor with a broken ankle and Virginia Rusk, with a broken toe. And another two, Mrs. Weaver and Trudy Fowler ^{who} were elected to sit it out with them and watch the bowling.

We got in about 30 minutes of good exercise, with Jane Wirtz throwing the gentlest, and the straightest ball; Lee Udall the most enthusiastic - it

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comes from keeping up with her husband, I suppose; and Muriel, coming within one or two of beating me, which brought much laughter.

It was after one when we were back upstairs, ^{that she} for a sherry, ~~so we~~ opened one gift, a mexican straw bag, called by Liz, a "Survival Kit for a Traveling Lady" - dark glasses, black plastic rain hat, extra pair of hose, (good ~~guard~~ for boarding helicopters), pretty little things for Muriel's trips. And then went in to lunch.

Ann Celebrezze had joined us. I had done a rather corny thing, completely dismissing protocol, except having Muriel on my right, passing a tray of flowers and if you choose a red tulip, you sat at the place ~~at the table~~ where there was a red tulip, just like Mrs. Smith from Suburbia. And it happened that Ann Celebrezze sat on my left. She's one of the really good people I've met in Washington. Her warm ^{smile} ~~style~~ is an accurate mirror of her warm and gentle heart, and character.

We had a good time talking about the Spanish class and our children and with the chatter around the table, so did everybody have a good time.

I will never learn to be a continental diner. We had two wines and too much, but delicious food. At a pause in the conversation, Trudy did the exactly right thing and said, "Muriel, I think all of us would like it if you would tell us about your trip to the Far East."

Mostly for Muriel, I really do think, it was mostly being with her husband, and she knew that he was doing something very important, and very difficult, and therein lay the significance and the pleasure for her.

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The birthday cake was a smashing success, beautifully decorated with a spray of red roses, and with pictures of Muriel's life, ranging from a young ~~one~~ ^{Muriel}, surrounded by her small children, and a very bouncing Hubert, to the one at the Inauguration, where she's dancing with Lyndon and I with Hubert.

The one at Monticello, all the Cabinet wives lined up beside us.

All of this is Bess' doing, and she's great at it.

Then we opened the rest of the presents, and what a bright bunch of women these are. Lee Udall's was given with a poem, which she'd written about seven o'clock that morning, as soon as she'd gotten Stu off to the office, in praise of Muriel's many fine qualities.

There were only two absent, Mrs. John Gardner, who'd gone to California for the birth of her first grandchild; and ~~Mrs.~~ Lydia Katzenbach, in bed with a cold. She sent an absolutely zany pair of dark glasses, without identification we could almost have recognized them as being her gift.

And a delightful accumulation of amusing things, including one sentimental and valuable one, from Trudy Fowler's own kitchen, an open hearth colonial ^{late} kitchen, dating back to the 18th Century, in which all of her friends gather for entertainment. The gift was a mold, itself more than a hundred years old, to put cheeses or jellies in, for a lovely buffet.

Next on the program, and it is here that I began to feel that I had a captive audience, for I really tried to explain that it was only for those who felt self-

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indulgent enough, to take a couple of hours off, ²from the days obligation, and would those who had to go to the dentist, or pick up a child, or go to a tea, or committee meeting, please say goodbye the minute they wanted to?

But anyhow, next on the program, we went down to the Movie theatre to see about 20 minutes of my home movies, melodramas, "my mother was a lady," with exclamations from me about how and when it was done.

~~Then~~ Last April, in Texas, when Margie and I took pictures of the bluebonnets and we later showed the Udalls, and many other people we know. And then the trip of all the Cabinet wives, down into Virginia last May.

And about that point, several did leave, and the rest ~~of~~ settled down to see A Thousand Clowns, with Jason Robards, a right whimsical story, totally unrelated to our lives, which are a pretty regimented lot, with due consideration for all the rules.

Several of the guests drifted out midway, feeling, I'm afraid, rather embarrassed, but three of us stayed to the end, Muriel, and Margie and I.

It was 5:30 when the day came to an end. We'd had pink lemonade and popcorn passed during the show, one of Bess' delightful thoughts, but as I assessed the day, I decided that format would work, ²in the relaxed atmosphere of Camp David in the summertime, but not in the busy life of Cabinet wives in the rather formal surroundings of the White House.

So much for good intentions. I'm devoted to Muriel, and wanted to have the party for her, to gently underline that point. What a day of eating, with

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scarcely an hour and a half before the next party would begin, and this one, thought of by Lyndon sometime Sunday, and ^{hardly} yet all the guests chosen by him. The invitations phoned Monday morning, and the list completed by Bess and me.

It turned out to be a smashing success, in honor of the 80th birthday of Mr. Justice Hugo Black and Elizabeth.

We gathered at 7:30 in the Yellow Room, the Blacks accompanied by his daughter, Jo-Jo and her husband, Dr. and Mrs. Mario Peseresi; and his son and daughter-in-law, the Hugo Blacks, Jr., from Miami; and Elizabeth's son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Deneret.

Once more, this was the late birthday party. The Justice had celebrated his birthday on the weekend, and his children had gathered from Miami, Florida and somewhere in New Jersey, had hardly had time to get home before another call came, "Would they return for a party at the White House?" I felt it was a great compliment to us and the Justice, ² that they did. Only one couldn't, that was his son in New Mexico, who was filing to run for the State Senate and must do it in person. If he returned, he would miss the filing date, ^{and} since ¹ his host and his honoree were the men they were, they heartily approved his decision to stay and file.

Lyndon had suggested that we ask the Sparkmans and the Hills, and the Congressman from his district, Bob Jones. Only Senator Sparkman and Mr. s Jones were there. The Hills had a dinner they couldn't get out, Ivo ill, Bob Jones in Germany.

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But I was delighted to have some Alabama representation for this great man from Alabama. And a young admirer from ^{our} ~~my~~ own office, Doug Cater~~s~~, whom I grow fonder of all the time.

And from the old days we shared together, Tom Corcoran and Ben Cohen. I remember a party honoring some anniversary of Mr. Justice Black's going on the court. It had been held on the Corcoran's house during Peggy's lifetime.

It was a great pleasure to have them both there.

And from the Court there was Chief Justice and Mrs. Warren; Bill Douglas, ruddy faced and full of conversation about the Big Ben^d country, he says it's too late in the season for me to go April 1st. And the Tom Clarks who had accompanied us to dinner at the Blacks. And the newest Justice, Abe Fortas, who ^{had} argued before Mr. Justice Black ^a case for a young Texas Congressman, Lyndon Johnson, who had won by a very slim margin, ^{the} Democratic nomination for the Senate, and whose name was about to be stricken off of the ballot by the order of a Texas Federal Judge.

Judge and Mrs. Skelly Wright~~s~~ were very special friends of the Blacks; and the Thurmond Arnolds, and the Paul Porters, were old friends of ours and theirs, [?] [and very fresh in years that we knew them.] This completed the list of 29.

It was a successful party from the moment the guests arrived until the last goodbye!

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I had them alone in the Yellow Room for about 30 minutes, Lyndon was late. We went in for dinner at 8:30. I had Mr. Justice Black on my right and Bill Douglas on my left. It was a delicious dinner and much talk with ^{the} Justice about my trip to Alabama. He knew all about it, and I learned about the life that he and Elizabeth lead, in a quiet apartment in Florida, which they keep and have several weeks in during recesses in the winter and spring months. And he plays tennis every day. ~~She's~~ ^{It's} hard put to stay up with him. It's only within the last few years that men his son's age can beat him. I thought of my daddy when I noticed how this pleased him.

Bill Douglas and I talked about the Texas Explorers Club. The Jim ^{Bowman} ~~Behners~~ and the Bob Burlesons, and his trip down the Rio Grande. He really roughs ^{it} without any help from the Park Service. His book will be out in the fall. It includes a chapter about the Big Bend country and about our own hill country. A strange man to be so interested in wild flowers, ^{from} but he is, ~~xxx~~ the Holy Land ^{to} the Edwards Plateau. He assured me that Dr. Correll knew more about the varieties than anybody I could find. I want to get to know him better.

With the birthday cake and champagne, ^{we} had toasts. Lyndon's sentimental, quite a eulogy and absolutely true. And then the Justice's response, he wryly said, "It sounded like Lyndon was preaching ^{my} ~~his~~ funeral." and then went on to deliver sort of a capsule of his years in Washington, references interwoven to how Lyndon had been a part of them. You could have heard

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a pin drop. I felt a sense of history; I was so delighted that Lyndon, with whom only a moment elapses between a thought and an act, had caused this party to happen.

In the toast there was one reference to the Patillos, two of whom he had known in his growing up years, in Alabama. One of them had been his Sunday school teacher, and ^{Mr.} another a neighbor. I cherished this; I long felt a special closeness to Justice Black, and this added to it. One of the loveliest lines - a sort of thanks to the Lord, to the world, for all the happiness that has been mine. And then with a little bow to Elizabeth, "One of the principle causes of it now, is the lady on the President's right."

I loved it all and so did the other guests and most of all, I believe, the children.

As soon as we were back in the Yellow Room, I suggested that perhaps the young people, Hugo's and Elizabeth's children, might like to see the Lincoln Room, and the Queen's Room. It turned out, to my amazement, that practically everybody wanted to. I conducted the tour myself, complete with vignettes from the day of Churchill and FDR; and ~~how~~ having Carl Sandburg and his family for tea in the Lincoln Room; and finding Luci in ~~the~~ her nightgown, surrounded by Algebra and Latin, and chewed pencils, and notebooks, hard at study in the Treaty Room, just as I was conducting a group on a sightseeing tour, precisely as tonight.

Seldom have I had people more appreciative. Lyndon came in, bringing

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pictures and medals and little mementoes, for ^{the} Justice and his children, and Elizabeth's son, and by 11 everybody was gone, but I had that very female feeling of self-satisfaction, having put on a really good party, though the credit for the real thoughtfulness goes to Lyndon.

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