

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Monday, March 14, 1966

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I slept luxuriously until 10 o'clock. Lyndon still has a sore throat. He's been taking antibiotics. ^{He} gets off of them for 24 hours, the sore throat comes back. Nothing stops him from working, but he is hoarse and physically depleted.

I awoke with a guilty start because I had meant to go and greet 300 wives of the Associated General Contractors, ^{at} 10 o'clock. Hurriedly I dressed and standing in the east room by 10:30, just as they were winding up there tour and I was an unexpected end of it. I find it pleasant, and it takes very little out of me, and apparently means something to those who come through. I like for it to be leisurely, to hear the soft southern voices, like that special moment of recognition with those who come from Texas. There's always some one I met on the campaign trips. It took only 25 minutes.

And then I was back upstairs, for an interview with Rosemarie Tyler Brooks, a negro newspaper woman, who is one of the brightest in the field. We had coffee in the Queen's Room, this was her last story before having a baby, in about a week or two. She had been courteous enough to send me questions before hand, and they were the sort that elicited, or so I thought, rather readable, amusing, and sometimes deep answers. Funny anecdote about the raising of your children; or how did you explain death to them as they were growing up. I thought it went rather well. Sometimes they are bomb shells when they come out in print.

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And then an hour with Dr. ^{LSEN} ~~Eisen~~, in my little sitting room, with Simone watching, to try on glasses frames. Frame after frame. If I must ignobly lean upon this crutch for the rest of my life ^{and} if I'm going to stand on platforms and make little speeches occasionally, I ^{do} better try to pick glasses that are as becoming as possible at all angles. So we had a photographer up, he took pictures, front and profile, and Simone, my TV expert, gave me advice on colors and shapes.

And then I lunched with Bess in my room. Liz joined us and for about two hours, we discussed the trip to the Big Bend country; and luncheon and swimming party for staff wives; some future party for the White House Fellows wives; additions to the Judicial Reception; and to the Indian Dinner.

I had an hour or so of what I call my "idiot work," autographing pictures, and books that contain the happenings of the White House conference on Natural Beauty.

And then Luci gave me 30 minutes of her time, to go over the Christmas Gift list, and the remainder of the Inaugural List; and check names for her wedding invitations. She's already checked her NCS year book, and promises to turn it over to Bess, intact; and there remains only the family list to be prepared by me.

There was a headline today that I've been waiting for. "Nursery ^{is} ~~is~~ Fine Financial Boom ^{and} Beauty Plan." "More than two and one half million will be spent by various agencies in Washington, this year, for beautification."

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I'm glad it included some mention, thinking of our friends the Burtons, a good many of the flowers and shrubs had been donated to the cause by civic minded greenhouses." I was also amused to see that even among the Nurseries there was one who had complaints. The government was snapping up all the available plants and he couldn't keep enough for his own steady customers! Last fall, he said, you couldn't get azaleas within 300 miles.

Tonight the Fortas^{es} are having a dinner, just the sort of an evening I would like to enjoy for three hours, but since Lyndon can't go with me, I decided all I could really do, was to drop in for a drink from 7:30 to 8:00. But it was fun to dress up, feel gay, and leave this compound, to walk into a small group of dear friends - Abe and Carol, Jane and Bill Wirtz; Muriel, Hubert was coming later; and the honoree, Governor Sanchez of Puerto Rico, without his wife. The Sheldon Cohens, who laughed about the six stills that had been discovered on ^{my} ~~their~~ Alabama property; they knew no names and I asked none. And Jane Ickes, among all my friends, the Fortas^{es} are probably the kindest about keeping up with old friends, and remembering to weave them into their lives.

Abe told me that he was to have the meeting with Mrs. Kennedy, to discuss the Kennedy Center, in a few days. He will emerge charmed, I'm sure.

I sat down by Governor Sanchez, and he told me, to my delight, that Lyndon had suggested we might come down to Puerto Rico for the weekend sometime. He's a man for the ^{2. ch. tape} sermon and the beach, and I told the Governor

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I would lobby for it.

But like Cinderella, I departed on the stroke of eight, knowing that they would soon be going into dinner.

Back in the White House, I jumped in the pool alone. So much of my exercise here is alone. I wish I had a built-in friend, very close, that liked to swim, or bowl, or walk, with about 10 minutes notice. Swam 30 laps with that very satisfying feeling of being in physical control of oneself, with all muscles responding as they should, and delicious relaxation of warm water.

And then was back upstairs, and dressed for a quiet dinner with Lyndon by ten.

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