

## THE WHITE HOUSE

Thursday, July 14, 1966

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Dog days have set in. There is an air of weariness, irritability, tenseness around the White House. How can I combat it? Two ways for myself and my side. I can thank all those people who do such a good job day after day all year unnoticed. I don't do enough of that. This is one of Lyndon's ~~specialties~~ wonderful qualities. He roars when he is angry -- he thanks sweetly the moment that he feels like it in colorful language. In his life he has endeared a host of people to him in that way.

The mood of the day was not helped by an article by Drew Pearson. "LBJ Is Unable to Shake Three Irritations - George Hamilton's draft status, his stubborn daughter Lynda Bird's trip to Europe, and Luci's insistence on a big wedding -- while the boys are dying in Viet-Nam."

John and the Negley's had spent the night with us. There was an article in the paper about the reception he had hosted the night before as Commissioner General of the International Exposition - Hemis-Fair - for the members of the Texas delegation and the Ambassadors of all the countries concerned. And what was the headline? "Connally to Miss Wedding". Hemis Fair is a pretty important thing. But it took second billing in Isabelle Shelton's story for the fact that John wouldn't be at the wedding.

Oh, delightfully, Nellie will. She will fly back from midway in the trip -- she and Nancy. I am so pleased at that.

I spent the morning at my desk. And then went down for the 11:00 swearing-in of Barnaby Keeney as Director of the Humanities Commission. In the East Room, a speech by Lyndon, <sup>?</sup>board of reminiscence between me and

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Mrs. Keeney about that marvelous day at Brown when Lyndon got the honorary degree. And another day -- the day of the multitudes -- during the campaign when we saw all of New England and the cars nearly burned up.

We stood in line and met all of the guests. Members of the Commission, his family and friends, art-minded folks in town, including Mrs. Bliss who spoke to me in the line about wanting to see me sometime. I shall over a tea cup quietly. It will be the greatest pleasure to discuss with her Dumbarton Oaks, beautification, or whatever is on her mind.

And then I went with Simone and Bess to the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception to review the seating plan. On the way Simone proposed to me a sort of a "meet the press" interview with me and Luci and a TV panel. But with each succeeding word, I withdrew more and more and finally just said no, no, no.

The Shrine of course is open to the public, and as we drove up not only was the public there in full force but a cameraman at the foot of the lengthy steps -- nothing to do but dismount with a smile and murmur yes, we were going in to review some plans, and mount the steps.

I am staggered by the immensity of it. We counted sections, sat down in pews to estimate how many, comfortably, on a hot August day could occupy them, and multiplied and planned, where to seat the Cabinet and the Senate and the House ~~and~~ and of course at first the families.

I was asked if I would like to sit beyond the rail in the several pews usually reserved for officiating or visiting clergy -- much, much closer to the great canopyed altar in the center. That was an easy answer. No.

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I want to sit with all the guests. It would offend my sense of propriety for us to move into a section reserved for the Catholic clergy. We, who are not even Catholics.

I was <sup>aghast</sup> ~~agitated~~ <sup>at</sup> however of the long, long distance away the guests will be from the bride and groom since the service would last more than an hour. I asked Bess if all the wedding party -- 24 of them -- would stand or kneel. They have no pews to kneel against there around that great altar. In her calm smiling way she said they were experimenting -- she and the Monsignor -- with small satin stools that might ease it a bit for them.

We talked about the flower arrangements -- a bank of three trees on each side of the altar, round, clipped, decorated with white blossoms, a white bouquet on every fourth pew. I saw where the 100-voice choir would sit -- up in the loft. But no <sup>Mendelson</sup> ~~Mendelson~~ or <sup>Lowengrin</sup> ~~Lowengrin~~. For that I am sad. We should to have it over and over again at the White House. We need <sup>not</sup> ~~we~~ worry about whether the service will be heard by the wedding guests -- far away though it is. All the officiating clergy wear wireless mikes, but what of the bride and groom? They will have to have very clear voices indeed.

Even inside the church every tourist had a camera, and I was constantly being photographed.

Back at the White House there was a stag luncheon for the Prime Minister of Australia. John and Alfred went to it. So Nancy and I had lunch alone. And then the most delicious luxury. I had an hour and half nap. Two remedies for all ailments are sleep and work. So next I applied myself to the second of these.

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I had an hour session with Margaret Deeb who so efficiently prepared the wedding list which is broken down into all sort of categories. Relatives, friends, National Cathedral, Camp Mystic, doctors, Nugent relatives, Pat's friends, clergy.

Because I love to use all the beautiful places of this wonderful house and not just confine myself to the second floor, I had chosen the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden for my long staff sessions. It was pleasant there under the arbor with clusters of green grapes above us and the lovely green sweep <sup>up</sup> sauzia, clipped and perfect, with the fountain tinkling at the end of the garden, and the two of us comfortably spread out with our notebooks and papers on the cushioned wicker furniture.

I hope Margaret left with the real understanding of how much I appreciate her excellent work.

My next appointment was Sharon Francis who is chief letter-writer and speech writer of "Operation Beautification", and what a job that is turning into.

Weekly the letters are running 201, 223, 246 -- fed by the flame of all the newspaper and magazine articles and by speeches and alas by local controversy.

The best thing this morning in the Barnaby Keeney line was to meet <sup>?</sup> Bagdikian ~~Badickian~~ who had written a marvelous article in Saturday Evening Post, and I had a chance to tell him so face to face with full admiration.

Sharon and I had accumulated business -- how to answer the dozens of letters about the Grand Canyon controversy, the building of the dam on it.

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And the possibility of a special small office for her. She would adore it. It would relieve the situation -- the crowding, the sometimes difficulty of two very different people in one office.

We spent a very productive hour I think.

How often I remember A. W. 's maxim. "The best fertilizer for any man's ranch is the footsteps of the owner."

With Margaret and Sharon I had had a glass of iced tea. But by the time Ashton came at 7:30 it was very pleasant to have a gin and tonic as the lovely evening settled around us and the Washington Monument turned from white to pink to dark.

I dictated lists for pictures to be made during the wedding reception, a small list of Luci's most sentimental or somehow very special gifts, answered mail. And finally at 9:00 I sent that dear girl home and I went to the bowling alley. But not before Luci came fluttering in. "Momma, momma." Woefully distressed because "Womens Wear Daily" had broken release on her bridesmaids dresses and she thought also on her wedding gown. ~~XXXX~~ "Momma, why would anybody do something so mean?" Personally I didn't think it was any great matter.

Two games of bowling and then back upstairs to wait for Lyndon. I phoned and he said he would be at dinner at 10:00. It was 10:50 when he came with Bob Kintner.

By that time Lyndon is ravenous. It is very hard for him to restrain him self.

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Whenever we return from the Ranch, we have gained ~~some~~ weight and we are each determined to lose. For me, three pounds; for him, more.

It takes enormous will power when it comes to hours of work at any job that lays before him. It is hard to summon up when it comes to leaving off that desert -- that second helping of something he likes.

I was pleased to see how quiet and easy and full of good ideas -- calmly presented -- Bob Kintner was. He is working into being a very valuable member of the team.