

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Wednesday, August 3, 1966

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I worked with Ashton on the list for pictures for Okamoto, ^kAdkins, Knudson. I called good friends to help them -- Ashton herself, Marie, June White, Eloise Thornberry, Mary Rather, Willie Day Taylor, Weeze Deathe. We had a little meeting with the three photographers.

The house was humming. As I went up and down in the elevator, a painter, oblivious to the comings and goings of all of us was touching up the gold leaf -- it had just been painted the week before and a huge piece of plumbing material carried upstairs had damaged it. Washable curtains all over the house have been down and are going back up. Bess and the reliable Mr. West were rounding up from the store-house long, unused screens and finding every hair dryer they can, to turn the East Hall ^{into} the Jean Louis beauty parlor for the last touch-up on Saturday morning.

The Lincoln Room itself is the habitat of Priscilla and her two fitters and vast clouds of pink ^{long tulle} ~~too~~ that the bridesmaids will wear and a rack full of the long pink dresses. How charming -- under the hems ~~and~~ the name of each bridesmaid is embroidered -- the occasion and the date. And a sewing machine takes its place in the corner opposite the desk that Lincoln used ~~at~~ at his summer home in the outskirts of Washington.

The first big event of the ~~day~~ ^{day} is Luci's party for the staff. She has given each one of them an autographed picture of her and Pat strolling across the White House lawn. It is not Luci to be content with just a formal thank-you. So it took her nearly all night to write for each of them something that could

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be for him alone. To Nick Salvadore, the Chef: "To Nick, with deep appreciation for yummy fried eggs and homemade toast. But most of all for your delightful sense of humor, your ever-smiling face and your friendship, Luci and Pat." For Mildred Stegall who had been with Lyndon since he was in the House of Representatives: "With deep appreciation for baby-sitting and birthdays, but most of all for your love and countless kindnesses." For Sandy Fox who does the wonderful calligraphy here at the White House and also much of the artistic thinking that goes into our parties: "To Sandy Fox, alias Santa Claus, with deep appreciation for your time, talent, and ingenuity toward making our stay here delightful." To Ferdinand, the pastry chef, who is baking her 6-foot tall wedding cake of 7 tiers, "For birthday cakes, surprise cakes, and your ever-thoughtfulness and understanding, we shall always be grateful." But the child had stayed up nearly all night. They told me later she stayed up until 2:30 and got up at 7:00 signing them. So at about 11:00 she went back to sleep and we woke her at ~~12:00~~ 2:00 just to get ready for the party.

And her Daddy, who does the most surprising things, went into her room at 7:30 and found her working at her desk and was scared to death because he thought she had been up all night. But I was pleased that he would care so much. We are both concerned right now that she not be exhausted on Saturday.

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The staff party was an unqualified success. I took Mr. and Mrs. Nugent downstairs with me. Luci was at the head of the line greeting everyone. I was next, and then I introduced them to Mrs. Nugent and Mr. Nugent.

The guests were the 100 or more cooks, butlers, telephone operators, folks from the dispensary, seamstresses, the crippled pantry boy who is one of Luci's favorites -- she helped nurse him through the accident when he lost both his legs. The doorman^e of whom Preston Bruce, who looks more like an Ambassador, is sort of the dean, the girls from Lyndon's office -- Yolanda, Marie, Vicki, Juanita. All of the doctors -- ~~Blackley~~ ^{Buckley} Fox, and Luci's beloved Dr. Young. And Miss Chapowicki from their office. And two of Luci's special favorites, Bob Knudsen, who has photographed her around the clock and around the continent. And Jim Ketchum, the Curator, with whom she has a particular rapport. He helped her do her paper on the furniture and art of the White House. And of course it would not have been a party without Zephyr. I would like to have seen what Luci Baines wrote on her picture. And Mr. Traphes Bryant -- it is hard to say who tried the most to comfort whom after Him was killed -- Luci or Mr. Bryant. And Luci's very special friends I consider -- all of the telephone operators. They took turns -- 4 or 5 or 6 -- coming, staying 20 minutes and then others taking their place. Miss Beverly Cole and Miss Mary Crow are two of the real old-timers. And Margaret Deeb, though Luci doesn't know it, has lived with the black book for the last three months. It is the Bible -- it contains all the information about this wedding. And dear Willie Day whose habitat in

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the basement houses all the gifts and from it go the thank-you letters. And ~~Kristin~~ ^{Kristin} Anderson who is in charge of answering Luci's mail and looks scarcely older than Luci herself.

I've seldom enjoyed a White House party more because it meant something to all the guests. When the party seemed at its height, Luci went to the microphone and made a beautiful, simple, touching speech that soon had the whole room in tears or smiles. The butler beside me breathed, "She's a doll."

As I walked around the room chatting with group after group everybody talked about how much we are going to miss that ^{girl.} ~~group.~~ I told them that this was the first party that she had planned -- and she had, back in February. It was her special request that we get enough help for just that one hour or so, so that everybody could leave his post of duty and come to hear her say goodbye and thank you to them.

We had my favorite refreshment -- a huge punch bowl full of strong coffee with great mounds of ice cream. And I told everybody this was what we served at Luci's birthday parties from the time she was three years old in the backyard at 30th Place or at Dillman -- to all the mothers while their children swung or came down the slide or blew up balloons -- all those long years from about 3 to about 11 when sophistication overtook such parties.

It was interesting to hear as I walked around of how many years many of them had been at the White House. Back to the earliest of President Eisenhower's time, back through Truman's time, some even as early as

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President Roosevelt.

Well, it was an unqualified success, and Luci stood out at the door and handed out her photographs which will I believe be cherished. And I, her mother, was the proudest of them all.

Lyndon had come in to shake hands for about 15 minutes, and that was the final touch for it.

Later I saw the wedding dress pictures. Bob Knudsen brought them to me. No one had seen them. I appreciated him keeping it between just us. I was angry at myself. I had been there and watched it. And I should have realized that Luci, atop those boxes, looked more like a mannequin showing off a dress than like a bride. It is the bride I want the picture of, not the train -- not even overwhelmingly the dress. Later we showed them to Luci. She does not like any of the pictures on the floor. So they are out. And she is quite right -- her face is much more winsome, more delicate, more poised to take flight into the world than the pictures that are on top of the pyramids of boxes because those were made in the early part of the ordeal of two hours when she was still fresh.

Well, we will have to see what the artist can do in brushing out the appearance of the boxes.

Luci's party for her bridesmaids was at 6:30 in the solarium. The solarium has made history in a small domestic way during the 2 years and 8 months that Luci has used it. Tonight, it was full of pretty girls dressed in slacks and shifts and ready to relax. And the gay buffet table with the

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lovely little yellow flower center piece right underneath Luci's signature picture with an impish, grinning face that she or Helene had drawn more than a year ago for her 18th birthday party.

The menu was crabmeat crapes -- my favorite -- and tomato baskets filled with chicken salad with fresh fruit garnished with sugared grapes and mint leaves.

Mrs. Nugent, who is right at home with these young folks, and I sat on the sofa and watched the opening of the gifts. Luci had them all stacked in a basket and went from bridesmaid to bridesmaid -- to Lynda Bird first -- and gave them the lovingly wrapped packages. A gold charm and bracelet with a little floral bouquet -- the bridal bouquet we hoped it looked like -- centered with the deep pink rubys -- tiny ones -- and on each charm, the name of the bridesmaid and "A bouquet of friendship and love - Luci - 8/6/66".

There were squeals and hugs and more tears.

And by 9:00 the party was over and everybody could have gone to bed. But nobody seemed in the mood. So we went downstairs to the theatre and watched an old movie "Home From the Hills" because I had told Lynda Bird I would like to see George Hamilton in it. I had read William Humphrey's book. It's about East Texas and the big thicket area. The picture was made close to ~~Paris~~ Paris, Texas. And I know the type of people. Right in the middle of the movie in walked Lyndon with Mr. Nugent. It appeared that he had been out to the ball game to see the Washington Redskins and the Baltimore Colts. Pat and his daddy, for his bachelor party, had taken all the young

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men who will be in the wedding out to a private room at the stadium -- ~~The~~
~~Dugout~~ -- and they had had a spread of hamburgers and hot dogs and soft
drinks and watched the ball game. Undoubtedly the most unique and certainly
the most harmless bachelor party. I really think it was delightful of Pat to
have hit on that idea. No wild rides home at 2:00 a.m. after too many
drinks for a party such as this. And it was innocence not cleverness that
marked his decision I am sure.

Lyndon and I began shepherding Luci up to bed about 11:00, and she
really was in bed by 12:00 I think.

They stopped ~~home~~ from the Hill [long enough to see] because Lyndon
wanted to ^{see} an interview with Jerry Nugent in Viet-Nam that CBS had done
out on Hill 41. He was handsome, very masculine, and brief-spoken. ~~P~~ Lyndon
had an unusually heavy amount of night reading -- most of it bad, burdensome, --
it is heavy going for him these days.

We talked about the few days after the wedding. I had thoroughly intended
to take off. I will not. I am of some help to him just being here and he lets
me know it.