

MEMORANDUM

W H D
THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Monday, September 5, 1966

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Labor Day, Monday, September 5th, was aptly named -- crescendo of work from 9:00 in the morning til past midnight.

We helicoptered out to the National Airport about 10:00 and flew out to Detroit with a full contingent of Michigan and Ohio Congressmen. There was an hours change in time, so it was only a little past 10:30 when we arrived at Wayne County Airport. And at the very foot of the steps who should ^{there} be but Governor Romney. According to the paper he had outhustled a pack of Democratic politicians to be at the head of the receiving line along with Senator Robert Griffin.

He was very courteous and I consider it a mark of good manners to meet the President at the airport.

Lyndon promptly took him in his car on the ride to Cobell Hall. And I rode with Nancy Williams and Congressman Vivian. But not until we had covered the fence, shaking hands with everybody we could reach and Lyndon had said a few words. However to me the whole impression of Detroit is of a town ^{saturated} ~~associated~~ with political figures, too sophisticated to really care if a President visits. It is a long tradition to go to Detroit on Labor Day. And it is said that the labor party in its hay-day could turn out a crowd of 100,000 in X Cadillac Square. That hay day is long past I think. There was no parade today. Or if so, it was over and left a few echos. There was a scattering of people along the street -- no great turnout. ^{But} And Cobell Hall was respectably full -- some 5,000 the paper said. I really enjoyed seeing Nancy -- a lively, charming woman who took her

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job as wife of the man in charge of the African desk in the State Department in dead earnest, knew everyone of the wives from the African countries and still hears from them -- even has visits from them. It is interesting to remember that the segment of the Democratic party in which I lived in Texas and knew best looked ~~x~~ upon Walter Reuther and Soapy Williams as a way-out ultra liberal branch of the party. And in the years since I have come to know them I like them both very much.

Mayor Cavanagh was quite in evidence, and cheery former Governor Swainson and Senator Hart and Senator McNamara's widow. The whole meeting was a tribute to his memory.

A newspaper man told me later that the proverbial crowd for the Labor Day speech in years past had been mostly brawny men in blue shirts and women in gingham. Now there were almost no blue shirts. Nearly everyone had on coats and ties and looked prosperous, ~~Though~~ there was a great diversity in the faces before me, even spelled out in some of the costumes of the countries from which their ancestors had come -- Poles, Czechs, Lithuanians, Greeks and a sizeable sprinkling of Negroes. I noticed in the back of the hall a "Stop the War" banner. And then a scrambling as the policemen gathered around the small group that had it, and began escorting them from the hall while I hoped that the TV cameras would stay trained on the platform, ~~xxx~~ satisfied in their hope for battle by the presence of

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Romney and Griffin, who had I thought rather discourteously been placed at the very back of the platform and were not introduced. And when Lyndon mentioned Governor Romney's name, a courteous expression of pleasure that he came to meet him, he was roundly booed to my discomfort^{wa}. There was one lone heckler on the left remaining who interrupted Lyndon's talk of a few minutes with shouts of "Let's settle the war in Viet-Nam", and his neighbors around him began to hush him. And then suddenly, right in the middle of the speech, Lyndon departed from his text -- I think he picked it up from the ~~■~~ text of a later speech -- with a statement, "Those troops will come home, those bases will be turned over for constructive peace-time purposes, as soon as that Communist aggression stops. And I may add, ~~will~~ to all whom it may concern, if anyone will show me the time schedule when aggression and ⁱⁿfiltration and 'might makes right' will be halted, then I as President of this country will lay on the table the schedule for the withdrawal of all of our forces from Viet-Nam."

He did it with fine theatre -- the reaction was a thrill to watch. The great hall responded as one man. Everyone rose to their feet ~~and~~ in a prolonged cheer that ^{lasted} ~~layed~~ to rest the heckler for the rest of his speech.

I rode back to the airport with Nancy and Secretary Wirtz and a young and very attractive freshman Congressman named Ford and Congressman O'Hara. Soapy is still resting after an operation for kidney stones. And with all our troubles I had the decency to be properly thankful

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that Lyndon has been blessed with good health. Nothing was ever so tense as the time in the '48 campaign when he lived through a speech or two with the severest kidney stone pains, ~~then~~ had to face whether to have a prolonged operation or not.

We had a hurried bite aloft on the 30-minute flight to Battle Creek. Advance men in planning these trips don't regard meals as a necessity, and you get absolutely ravenous. And here was an entirely different picture. The airport was jammed, there was a holiday mood, everyone was smiling. The arrival of a President was something to be remembered. I believe that it had not happened in a good many decades.

There were an estimated 65,000 people along the way to the Battle Creek sanitarium, and nobody more thrilled than I. I had been ~~here~~ here 42 years ago when I was 11 with Aunt Effie for a rather long stay at the Battle Creek sanitarium where she was a patient and I just came along because ~~she~~ she wanted me to see something of the country, and there was really nothing else to do with me.

The reason for the speech was to celebrate the 100th anniversary of this health center -- famous in its day and still functioning. Memories rushed through my mind of the great white building and its park-like surroundings, and of Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, pink of cheek and quick of step in his 80's, bicycling around -- always dressed in a ^{fresh} ~~very~~ white suit -- conducting early morning calisthenics for everybody gathered out in front of the building about 7:30 before breakfast. "Vitamins were one of the biggest

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words in the vocabulary of the sanitarium. And they were brand new to my world then, ^{and} And I think to most ~~of the~~ people. Sunbathing was a very important part of the regime. Cereals of all sort -- mostly whole grain -- dry or cooked. ^{we} We had it in great variety -- and since then, so has the whole world. He was a pioneer indeed, Dr. Kellogg, and therefore unpopular with the medical profession who considered him by and large a "quack" -- or that's my memory of 40 years ago.

I remember sitting in the dining room and hearing a ripple of excitement run through the crowd -- "there goes Senator Lafolette," "there go the owners of the Ringling Bros. Circus." A lot of famous people came here in that day.

Not surprisingly it was smaller than I remembered. Things usually are 40 years later. But very much the same. We talked in front of the main building on a platform, and the grounds were jammed with people. The Director of the Institute gave me my own admission card dated in 1923! It showed that I've actually spent two months and that I returned again two years later. That Aunt Effie had been some five times. And this time I made my small speech with assurance and pleasure.

After saluting Battle Creek Sanitarium and its 100 years, Lyndon talked of the health achievements of his Administration and of its aspirations to give to the world the knowledge we had learned in combatting disease.

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The freshman Congressman he hoped to help, Paul Todd, was at our side every moment. There was no direct plea to elect him -- just praise for his good work, as Lyndon had been doing all along with the Members.

We were late -- we put on steam -- we raced through the interior of the sanitarium on roller skates. This I regretted. I would ^{have} liked to linger. And then we hurried back to the airport for the short ride to Dayton, Ohio which only last week had been boiling with enough racial unrest to bring out the National Guards. There was no sign of it when we arrived at Cox Airport where about 5,000 were lined up along the fence. I later heard that some of them had waited as long as eight hours. And the school band had been playing briskly for an hour before we arrived. Lyndon and I were first off the plane with Governor James A. Rhodes close behind him. And always at hand the Congressman he hoped to help here -- Rodney Love. He talked, we shook hands. Senator Frank Lausche, that authentic maverick of the Democratic party, met us and went with us the rest of the day -- a real barometer that Lyndon stands well in Ohio.

We drove to the Montgomery County ~~fair~~ fair grounds where there was a huge good-natured crowd. The holiday atmosphere prevailed everywhere. And the day is a case of "it gets better as it goes along",

With Lyndon's enthusiasm rising in direct ratio to the crowd's enthusiasm and size. Some prize steers were lined up for us to see --

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poled hereford and black angus. Then we were on the stage facing a grandstand jammed with people, and between us and the grandstand, a solid mass of humanity that flowed on up to the left.

// Lyndon's talk was on youth and the need for all young people to enter public service for some period of their lives.

Suddenly in front of us, out in the mass of humanity, a banner went up, "Thou Shalt Not Kill". And we could see scuffling around a small group with the police moving in and linking their arms around them. Later I heard that there were about 35 of the protestors. From time to time, they let out a chant, "Bring the boys home", or "Peace in Viet-Nam". But mostly they just stood facing the police or swaying backwards and forward like a strange sort of dance. People around them announced their hostility by raising banners, "Hurray for LBJ" everytime the protestors shouted or by breaking into extra loud applause whenever Lyndon reached a good point in his speech.

I could see that several of them wore long hair and beards. The next day I read a very thoughtful editorial about their behavior. Their revolt happens to be almost terribly negative. It is a sterile thing. It is a frantic effort of some of today's young to find a tangible method of revolt against the velvet prison of affluence, conformity, and isolation. Many ⁷ to bizzare in strategic spots gives people a lot of exposure in this day of saturation coverage of a major event by television. As a result many of

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the young confuse it with action. They think that they are doing something when they are noticed by the TV cameras. //

I rode back to the airport with Mrs. Love and Frasier Reems. Mrs. Love was ecstatic because the crowd had been estimated at as high as 75,000. And we flew to Columbus, Ohio. And then began what was actually the crescendo point of the day.

We were already an hour or so late when we started driving to the Fairfield County fair grounds in Lancaster. I rode with Congressman Love and John Bush and Mrs. ^{Muller?} ~~Muller~~, the wife of the Congressman from that District.

Dark was falling, and it had been a long time since our light lunch. The airport itself was crowded, but it didn't end there. There was a solid mass of people along the streets, and Lyndon stopped again and again and again -- even in the dark -- getting out of the car, using the bull horn for a few words. As soon as he came to a halt, people began to run pell-mell toward his car. I would put the window down and smile and shake hands with the people that stopped and stuck their heads in and said, "Is that Lady Bird?" But one had to be very careful because when his car picked up and started, ours had to start at once. The window must be up and the people safely back, ^{and} The night was deepening and the stops mounted -- 8, 9, 10. I asked Jerry to go up and tell him that we were two hours late and I didn't want him to get exhausted. I didn't make a sale. We stopped

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for the 11th and the 12th time. I heard a message over the intercom from the advance man at the Lancaster ~~Fair~~ Fair Grounds, "Sir, the crowds have been waiting for three hours and it is beginning to rain", in the most plainti~~ve~~^{ve} voice. Still we stopped for the 13th time, 14th time. Once I heard over the intercom, "Is there a dairy queen place anywhere around?" "No." And then an urgent plea to have something waiting when we reached the grandstand at Lancaster. I could have eaten anything. I could imagine how Lyndon who had poured energy, words, smiles, handshakes, out into this mass of humanity for some solid 10 or more hours, needed the lift of some quick sugar.

The next day the paper said, "He was their kind of President, and they were his kind of people, ⁱⁿ Central Ohio."

Finally, at last, we reached the fair grounds. It must have been approaching 9:00 -- some two hours late. As we rode around the race track up to the speaker's stand, I was moving like an automaton but Lyndon was still ~~accelerated~~^{exhilarated}. One newsman said, "If crossroads Ohio were his ~~meet~~^{most}, Lancaster was the President's triumph." And indeed it was. The applause was wild, the people were all smiling. It was a magnificent climax to the day. The rain even miraculously had stopped just before we reached the fair grounds. The Garden Club ladies presented me with a bouquet that was a real work of art.

Once in the middle of his speech there came a swift burst of rain. Nobody moved from their seats. It stopped within about 2 minutes. As

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far as we could see there were people in all directions. There were 26 school bands, the Congressman's wife, Mrs. Moeller[?], leaned over to tell me.

At last the day was over and some two~~and~~ one half hours behind schedule we were back in the cars headed for the airport. It had been an hilarious day -- not the least was having such political opposites as Walter Reuther and Senator Lausche in the plane together. And the presence of Governor Romney and Governor Rhodes which Lyndon accepted gratefully and gracefully, though which threw the newspapers and some of the Democrats into a twiddle.

Finally, weary, elated, we were on the plane. I felt like a vessel into which more scenes, people, ~~and~~ motions, had been poured than it could hold, ~~And I~~ [✓] was running over. But it had been a triumphant Labor Day. And instead of depleting him, I had the earnest feeling that it is actually an injection of confidence and strength for Lyndon.