

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

WHD  
Wednesday, September 7, 1966

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It was an A-plus day in the White House -- full of activity, and I thought, of achievement. Lyndon had asked Max Brooks and Roy White and Bill Heath and Dr. Grover and Gordon Bunshaft to come for breakfast at 9:00 to talk about the LBJ Library. Between telephone and staff, he was tied up. I took them in for a breakfast of poached and scrambled eggs and bacon and sausage and toast. He joined us after awhile and the conversation centered on the stone material for the library. Texas shellstone is too soft to use for flooring. And Bunshaft has considerable hesitance about using it. We all agree that there should be a <sup>tanish</sup>tanish-beige material because that is the overall color of the campus. He has heard of a soft beige granite from a New Mexico quarry that he wants to look into. He spoke of a material in the Freer Gallery. And we all piled into Lyndon's car -- nine of us, because with Lyndon only a minute lapses between a suggestion and the act -- and walked up and down in front of the gallery to the concern of the guard, I think, who didn't know what would be happening next. It is a handsome old building of another day, rather <sup>classier</sup>~~classy~~. I like the material well enough, and I am sorry to say goodbye to shellstone if we do, although there is always a chance that it won't weather well. Some <sup>shellstone</sup>buildings had streaked and turned gray. <sup>#</sup>I am unsure about the basic concept of the Library -- that great monolithic wall with no windows worries me like a face without eyes. But I like the play of shadows from the design around the top and the band of light that will make it look like it is floating at night. And the

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terrace all across the south wall. He has taken away the ramp, and that is an improvement. I like the long building that houses the three units -- the Lyndon Johnson School of Public Service, the Archives of the University, and the Latin-American collection. It makes quite a magnificent complex joined to the main University by a handsome <sup>mall</sup> ~~well~~. The simple fact is that I have no qualifications to judge a building of this character that must last for the ages, <sup>and</sup> And I carry my responsibilities uneasily. And I know we should have had an exhibit man and a writer who had ~~read~~ really lived inside Lyndon's skin to pluck out from his 32 or 33 years in public life the important nuggets and then to show them in graphic, interesting, dramatic fashion. <sup>Where to find</sup> ~~Well defined through~~ such people is <sup>the</sup> a job that faces us.

I said goodbye to the Library group a little past 10:00 and went for that 4-hour ritual of getting a permanent and having a hamburger in the chair. And then about 2:30, back upstairs to sign mail, talk with Bess. Then down to the East Room to meet the 5 young winners who were there rehearsing. And then on to the theatre for an hour of looking at Tom Atkins wedding pictures. They are splendid. It has been a Herculean job of editing. We could practically wrap up the Capitol dome in the footage. Delightful music ties it together, and there is a script that has a bit of poetry and sentiment and is quite well done I think, but will have to be watched carefully. I had to tell Tommy that I must read it all and edit it. I could see that it made him nervous because he has got a deadline for finishing the whole thing and this pushes him. I too feel pushed and harried. Between reading Jim Bishop's

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book for any inaccuracies about me, and the script for "The Living White House", and the script for this movie, and the 5 or so speeches involved in the trip to California, Arizona, and New Mexico, I feel that I am carrying more than I can handle. But it has been a long, happy summer, and ~~it is just~~ it is just time to get back to work.

The next event of the day was Mrs. Longworth coming for tea. She and I have a date to have a picture made for the United Givers Fund, and that is somehow too bald, too unadorned by hospitality, so I asked her to come about 30 minutes early and have a cup of tea and a bit of talk. She brought me a book, "Cowboys and Kings", letters written by her father to the famous men of his day with <sup>An inscription</sup> ~~the description~~ from her saying that she expects the President will find some of the situations much the same today. She is getting her books in order and she was talking about running into clippings about her own wedding—<sup>a</sup> Even old letters received decades ago and not opened. What an interesting job for somebody! She thought the wedding was marvelous and seems to really like both Lynda and Luci.

Lyndon came in with a word of banter. She does, I am sure, like him. I think it is because they are somewhat alike. They are both brave and tough.

Presently we went downstairs and sat side by side on a sofa in the Library with a little boy about 5 between us who was a symbol of what United Givers Fund does to help children in need. She made his quiet little face light up by showing him a jewel she had on her shoulder -- a beetle

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that turned out to be a watch when you flipped the catch and the beetle's wings flew up. It was a wedding gift from her mother, she said. I walked with her to the door, and then returned to the China Room to meet the group from the ~~Arthritis~~ <sup>Arthritis</sup> and ~~rheumatism~~ <sup>rheumatism</sup> association and have my picture made with the little girl <sup>who</sup> ~~that~~ is their poster child this year.

// And then upstairs for just a little bit of rest -- how weary I find myself after a day of merely thinking and ~~work~~ meeting people! But there were only about 30 minutes to rest before time to dress for the big event of the day. It was the reception in honor of the winners of the ~~Tchaikovsky~~ <sup>Tchaikovsky</sup> Competition. While I was putting on my red lace, Lyndon called and said, "What's this about me supposed to make a speech to introduce them?" "Nobody ever told me. I am so tired I don't think I can do it. Won't you do it?" My heart sank. He said, "I've got this in front of me, what I am supposed to say." I said "How about reading it to me." He did and the words were wonderful, so very right for the President to say, so impossible for me to say. I urged him to go on and do it, feeling cruel with every word I said. # A few times here in the White House there has been an entertainment that I've been very proud of, that I think is just right. Tonight was one of those. Dorothy McCardle called it "one of the most artistically brilliant evenings ever held at the White House." And Paul Hume\$ said, "Not since the memorable night when Pablo Casals played there have so many of this country's distinguished musicians come together in that historic room."

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The guests were all seated in the East Room by 7:10, and I was waiting anxiously for Lyndon who came swinging along, his fatigue hidden. I went straight to a seat in the front row, and he to the podium. And here was <sup>the</sup> single flaw of the evening -- no spotlight came on him. In complete darkness, he spoke, quietly and in his warmest vein, welcoming the young winners of the Tchaikovsky competition. I relaxed when he said "Tchaikovsky" right. He had asked me how. Saying to them that they were indeed a national treasure, that they wore the brightest badge of all -- the pride and admiration of their countrymen. You have achieved much in the country <sup>where</sup> ~~which~~ we have many differences by lifting <sup>our</sup> ~~their~~ thoughts from those things that make us adversaries, <sup>to</sup> the things that make us brothers."

And then there was the performance. Van Cliburn was the master of ceremonies. Erich Leinsdorf was sort of a shepherd in charge of all the young winners, and invaluable to us. I called him myself when we first began to plan it. In fact, I had worked more on this than on most of our entertainments.

The first winner was a bass baritone, Simon Estes -- a tall, handsome Negro who sang an Aria from Eugene Onegin in Russian and then a spiritual, "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child". And next a Cellist, Stephen Kates. His instrument is one I know least in all the field. His second piece, "Capriccio" was a delightful piece of showmanship. You didn't have to know anything about a Cello to like it. I liked it for his acting. And

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then another Negro, Veronica Tyler, elegantly gowned, beautiful. She sang a piece from Puccini. And then another spiritual, "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands". The fourth winner was Misha Dichter, a pianist, who according to TIME the Russian people had preferred to the one who won first place. And his "Danse Russe" by Stravinsky made the walls rock. He had a pixie look and great showmanship. In fact, they were all actors as well as musicians. And then a little flurry passed through the room for when Veronica Tyler Erich Leinsdorf had come to the piano to accompany her. I was absolutely delighted to see that Lyndon was apparently enjoying it. He was clapping heartily for everyone. They could practically all have come back for an encore if they had listened.

And then it was time for the last, Jane Marsh, the first prize winner, a Soprano, the second American to take the highest laurels in the Tchaikovsky Competition. Van Cliburn of course had been the first.

She sang three numbers, none of which were familiar to me. "Ain't It a Pretty Night", great vehicle for her voice and for her acting, and then a Tchaikovsky "Lullaby". And then an absolutely wild thing from Puccini. I asked her about it later, and she said the young girl had just been deeply hurt by her lover and she is going to commit suicide. I had seen tears and rage and pain gather on her face. She is really a marvelous actress.

Then with thunderous applause it was all over. I had worried that it would be too long. It was not one moment too long. I took Van Cliburn's arm, and Lyndon got Jane Marsh, and we went into the Blue Room where

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the photographers were lined up for pictures of us with the five winners who had performed, with all of the winners, with Erich and Van Cliburn. And then the receiving line. It was indeed a star-studded audience -- some 240 musicians and lovers of music.

All the parents of the 13 winners had been invited. And that was a happy note to me. Mr. Alexander Zinchuk, the Minister Counselor from the Embassy of the USSR had sat in the front row in the absence of the Dobrynins who are in Moscow.

Composers ranged from Richard Adler, our handsome young friend who brought a pretty little blond kitten-of-a-girl, to the venerable Rudolf Friml. If I remember correctly, he goes as far back as Rose Marie. His presence caused a wave of excitement in the crowd. And he looked rather like a gay ~~little~~ little <sup>guy</sup>nome. And there was Ferde Grofe in his wheelchair who had composed the music for "The Salute to Congress".

Pianists ranged from Rudolf Serkin to Victor Borge who had brought a two-foot wooden spoon as a gag gift, to Ralph Votapek.

Among opera singers there was Roberta Peters and Jerome Hines and Robert Merrill, Mildred Miller and Eileen Farrell, plump, hearty, radiating happiness. And Richard Tucker. And two who had sung at our Inaugural -- Todd Duncan and Theresa Coleman, who later was in happy conversation with Claudia Marsh. It was Charles who helped her get through music school long ago.

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And there were friends with ~~the~~<sup>a</sup> musical bent -- the Eugene Carusis and the Oscar Cox~~o~~<sup>w</sup> and the Richard Dietrichs and the John Hayes -- he has just been appointed as an Ambassador. I was particularly delighted to have Jane Mc~~D~~onough, Mary Lasker's secretary and her mother who had been our old friend from Lyndon's first days in Congress in 1937.

And the critics were there of course -- Howard Taubman, Paul Hume, and the Winthrop Sargents from the New Yorker.

There were conductors -- Howard Mitchell of the National Symphony, Robert Whitney of the Louisville Orchestra who had helped us out with the Festival of Arts. And Ezra Rachlin of our own Austin Symphony, as well as the Fort Worth Symphon~~y~~ now.

I was particularly delighted to have a moment with Gerald Wagner and talk about the honeymoon. He knew all about the ~~Nun's~~<sup>tu</sup> that Luci had gone swimming and boating with. He even added the detail that one of them always wore a bright red bathing suit.

And we had invited ~~those~~<sup>those</sup> that had given us the music for the wedding -- Robert Twynham, the organist and the head of the choir, and Bess, who is wonderful about remembering people, had asked the ~~Harvard~~ Harold Spivackes. She is the Director of the University of Maryland Madrigal Singers who ~~gave~~ gave us such delightful music at Christmastime -- one of the happiest entertainments I can remember. And Roy Meachams of the Post-Newsweek Stations who has been so helpful in writing those introductions of artists for me.



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The Congress was rather sparsely represented with Claiborne Pell and Frank Thompson. And from the rest of Government, there were Dr. and Mrs. Barnaby Keeney, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. And the Roger Stevens, Chairman of the Council on the Arts. And the Charles Frankels. He is the Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

There were Directors of Musical schools and festivals, such as the James Cains of Aspen, and the Walter Hendls of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, and Dr. Charles Kent of the Peabody Conservatory.

There were others ~~from~~ from the world of entertainment -- Elia Kazan and the David Susskinds. The Peter Duchins who had played for us at the wedding. And the Lee Evans who had played for us at that never-to-be-forgotten party for the <sup>Krags</sup>~~Crags~~.

When the receiving line was over I told Lyndon, who seemed to have gotten over being tired and had hugged Erich Leinsdorf as he came down the line and also hugged John Steinbeck, that I was going into visit but he could go back to work. However, he went into the buffet and joined the most chattering throng I've practically ever heard there. It was a happy party. So many people knew each other, or knew each other's work. There were reunions of singers and composers and conductors. Someone connected with the opera in San Francisco began at once to try to persuade me to stop there for their opening night. Everybody was ravenous. Lyndon stayed until

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nearly 10:00, and I stayed almost an hour afterward talking with each of the winners and their families, basking in the glow of a really good party.

The next day a newspaper man said, "It was a heartwarming night and for music ~~the~~ the White House seemed wholly at ease as a background for the young musicians of the country."

Nobody was prettier than Lynda Bird who in her short ~~black~~ black floating chiffon cocktail dress with the black velvet dots made every head turn.

The last guest left about 11:15, and the curtain rang down on one of our best days.