

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Monday, September 19, 1966

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I had that rare, delicious feeling of having been given a day of time. I had allotted all of Monday to accompany Lyndon on a trip that had been on his schedule with a question mark. He didn't go, and suddenly a whole full day was mine to dispose of. It is like winning at the horse races, waking up and suddenly feeling that it is Spring, or being 20 again!

But there was a dark cloud over the first part of it because of the death of James Moyers -- Bill's brother. We went to the funeral in the morning. There is something particularly sad about a funeral away from home. And home was Marshall. And James Moyers was only 39 and had two young children.

Back at the White House I worked for an hour on my speeches. Always, just before I leave on a trip with a series of speeches, I approach a feeling of panic -- I'm not ready, I can't get ready, how can I escape?[?] The only way to emerge from it for me is to work on them, to ~~draw~~^{winnow} out any thoughts or phrases that I do not feel comfortable with, that are not the essence of my thinking, reading them enough to get familiar with them and to get the most out of them.

Willie Day came for lunch -- hamburgers in the bedroom -- and we talked about "operation wedding presents". A few things are still coming in -- mostly of the potholder type. We sent the State gifts to the Archives. Willie Day had gotten off a list of all of the Chiefs of State and their gifts with form of address to Luci. And she has been sending back her "thank-you" letters to be mailed here. Hand written ones and very delightful ones too.

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I have read several. Willie Day tells me about others. Alas, the list of friends is still long -- probably 500 for whom we would like to have hand-written replies. I asked her to get together an immediate list, beginning with President Truman and said either she or I must check about every second day on how Luci was coming.

I phoned Luci and suggested that she set a quota for a week. Did she think she could manage 50? No, she thought closer to 30. I reminded her that all of those hand-written ones should be going out before Christmas. Otherwise we would simply have to type them up here.

And as for Willie Day, she thinks this operation can be closed up within a couple of weeks. And after that she will take a vacation. And then what? She is not sure. There were, I gathered, four more years before retirement. I want her to feel that there will always be a place in our organization as long as we are living and have one for her. But it is not the same ^{for her} with George gone.

Next I spent three full hours working on my speeches, taking time off to go down stairs and look at the podium and have adjustments made for height. It was too low for comfort. There has to be a compromise between the height I would like to have it to read my cards from and the very low podium or none, which photographers would prefer. I felt much easier in my mind when I finished. Actually, these speeches are rather good. I feel totally in character. I am doing what I like to do. And the

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words flow. I approach it with more ease.

Then Lyndon called me to come in the Yellow Room and meet some ~~other~~ Ambassadors. He had eight of them in for coffee and to bid them farewell. Among them, John Hayes, who is off to Switzerland. And Carol Laise, a very attractive woman from the State Department ~~in~~ who is going out to Nepal. And Alexis Johnson, to handle the very delicate position in Japan.

I spent a little while working with Ashton working on the desk. Then I went bowling, expecting to be alone, ^{but} just stopped by Lyndon's office to see if he would go with me. Yes, he would. Just wait a minute. It took 30 minutes to dislodge him. And then on the way out we met James Webb who said, "Just a minute Mr. President. I have a memo I want to give you." Lyndon simply gathered him up and said, "How about going bowling with us?"

So the three of us went over to the bowling alley. There was a call or two. And then Hubert and Muriel joined us, and Patsy Webb, and we ended up by the six of us having a good game in which for the first time in my entire life, I beat Lyndon one game. He beat the others.

I called home to tell the kitchen there would be six for dinner. It was the most delightful cozy time -- sort of like being neighbors in a small town, and finding that you ~~could~~ could take the evening off. Jim Webb is one of the most capable, tough, high class, Government servants I have

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ever met. The roster of top jobs that he has held is lengthy -- Budget Director, high post in the State Department, now head of NASA.

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Bringing him back into the Government is one of Lyndon's achievements, I think, and my admiration for someone who can turn his back on making a large amount of money to remain in Government service is very great. Besides that, he is fun and handsome. And Hubert is always a delight to have around -- full of high spirits and humor and good stories. I couldn't have chosen two couples I would more enjoy to spend an evening with.

We went upstairs to Hubert's office, somewhere rather close to where Lyndon's office as Vice President was, though that ~~1~~ was a shadowy thing to me and I never felt as part of it as I did all of his offices on the Hill.

Then we came over for a good dinner, preceded by leisurely drinks and laced with good conversation. And then my exercises ^{about} which I have been rather diligent -- a massage and bed by 12:00.