

WHD

Dec. 22 - Olga Brest

Possibly send days to  
MEMORANDUM Sam and Ruth - Dec. 4,

Dec. 7 - Dorsey Hardman  
THE WHITE HOUSE

Dec. 7 to Press Women - ask Liz  
WASHINGTON  
Thursday, December 1, 1966

Finished & ready to  
give to Library.  
Check the very fine  
turned down paper  
with Harry C. J.  
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July 4, 1986

Dec 120 Sol LeWitt / maybe Walter J. J.

I left for New York on the shuttle, and at 11:00 with my ubiquitous

Mexican straw bag, signed a large stack of pictures for Christmas to the Staff during the 40-minute flight, and read my little speech over a couple of times. And then arriving at La Guardia with about 30 minutes more time than it took to get to Mary's house, we drove along, found a quiet stopping place, and I finished autographing the pictures with a sigh of relief. I had that basket full of work laid by! I was ~~was~~ at Mary's beautiful home a few minutes before 1:00.

~~The~~ color is Queen there. And the paintings, the flowers, all the beautiful appointments of the house -- walls, rugs, drapes -- were mostly a soft elegant white -- ~~A~~ perfect foil background <sup>for</sup> her collection of Monet, Matisse, Picasso, Roualt, ~~some~~ some Corots, Marc Chagalls -- such a wealth of beauty!

We sat in the lovely sitting room. Three of the walls are glass and look out on the river. And I listened to Mary and Liz and Nash, Laurence Rockefeller and Henry Diamond, talk about the coming year and what we could each do about conservation-beautification. Mary has a bold idea for me doing a TV show about the cities -- good things being done in certain cities -- Fresno, California, the Mall, the waterfront in Louisville, Kentucky, and of course Hartford would no doubt be in it. It is a mammoth undertaking, and I think nobody flinches more than me, unless it is the two networks she might ask.

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Once we were lucky with my ABC show on Washington. I can't face trying it again.

Laurence<sup>a</sup> and Diamond had just come from a two-hour talk with Governor Nelson Rockefeller hearing his plans for parks and recreation in the coming year. He has certainly been bold about it. I think we all sense that we have reached a kind of a plateau. We need impetus, something to keep the ball rolling, the excitement mounting.

We talked about the need to get more understanding, cooperation, more enthusiasm, ~~from~~ the highway department, ~~for~~ the use of the funds -- small though they are -- for beautification.

It was 3:30 when Liz and I left, and went to the lovely retreat of the Carlisle. I always feel that it is the <sup>1</sup>power of the Princess. I read and rested and then Lynda came in. I had called Mary and McGeorge Bundy. They came over and had a drink with us. And the four of us in the beautiful living room looking out on the lights of New York had a happy half hour. There is no doubt that man has met job in this wedding of McGeorge Bundy and the Ford Foundation. I told him about my trip to Los ~~Angeles~~. And the delicious <sup>with</sup> line which Lyndon had summed up Asia and its problems in his goodbye to Dr. Chandler, the head of the Rice Institute. He said quite cheerfully, "Well, Dr. Chandler, you just keep on producing better strains of rice. And Margaret Sangas<sup>as</sup> folks keep on doing what they are doing, and this old world might be saved yet!"

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Lyndon has a remarkable way of synthesizing a mass of problems, in one sharp sentence, and often funny. Mac said if he had just to choose one project from all the Ford Foundation's beneficences Los Bonos would be his favorite.

I had my hair done high on my head, put on a lovely gold dress that Mollie Parnis had made for me from fabric that I believe Ayub Khan had given me.

A little after 6:30, Liz and I fared forth for the Plaza for the Awards Dinner for the National Institute of Social Science. This organization of leading industrialists has for 50 years been giving an award for distinguished service to humanity to a rather ~~very~~ varied group of winners -- four or five or six each year -- lustrous names in diverse fields. I had read them, very impressed, months ago when I was trying to decide whether I could firmly accept.

Frank Pace met me -- all smiles and warm phrases. We went to the manager's office where there were the other winners -- Keith Funston, President of the New York Stock Exchange, and Cardinal Spellman, and General David Sarnoff -- a surprise to no one. And dear, funny Danny Kaye. There were <sup>in</sup>numerable pictures, all together, two of us at a time with the gold medal. ~~And~~ quite handsome it was.

And then in another room, we met, not in the receiving line, but rather casually, a group of the members of the National Institute of

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Social Sciences. I gathered it was a sort of the old-timers or Board of Directors. I was impressed and grateful at how many of them spoke to me quite earnestly of my small work in conservation-beautification. I knew I was meeting a great tapestry of New York -- its power structure. Unfortunately I couldn't identify the strands of threads, although in print many of the names I recognized. They ranged from Charles Lindbergh and Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, <sup>even</sup> ~~even~~ Le Gallienne, and Mrs. August Belmont, and Arthur Hayes Sulzberger.

We had a delicious dinner of too much, beginning with lobster <sup>by isopod,</sup> and then very rare prime ribs and ending with cherry jubilee -- vast change from the Ranch and Mary's simple good cooking.

And then it was time for the citations. Frank had put me first. I think likely it was Liz' suggestion. And how glad I was because that meant I could enjoy the rest of the evening. And from a theatre standpoint, it was the best thing to do because mine was the least impressive speech. And I regretted it because I had worked on it, taking the first draft -- it was a beautiful bunch <sup>of</sup> words -- and turned it into something personal, painting two pictures of what I had seen in my own frontyard. The mood of that night in October, '57 when we heard that the Russians had put Sputnik I into orbit -- the mood of colossal, impossible obstacles facing us. Stunned silence. And then only nine years later in my own front yard, the ceremony of giving awards to the astronauts and scientists

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and industrialists who had brought the Gemini program to successful conclusion. Now we had 430 satellites in orbit. So man can. And that was the spirit that I wanted everybody to have as we faced the seemingly insurmountable obstacles of our crowded, ugly, traffic-ridden cities and what to do about them.

They gave me a nice moment of applause. And I sat down, vastly relieved and listened to some good speeches. Keith Funston was handsome, suave, competent, and intentionally humorous in his talk about the handling of money -- a skillfully read speech.

And then General David Sarnoff who read his also. He talked about the vast technological achievements of this century and the perilous gap that lies between them and our ability to get along with each other and to spread the ~~fruit~~ fruits of those advances to all the earth's people. There was a marvelous line: "In most of the world life is still an earth-packed floor, an empty bowl and a premature death." ~~What~~ What a bare bone sentence, and how strong.

When he sat down I congratulated him on it most earnestly. And he gave me the copy of his speech.

And then next there was Danny Kaye. And he didn't read a word. He simply talked from the heart, impassioned, humorous, charming, about the world's children, about UNICEF. It was a dear speech. He is a giving man. I was feeling a little apprehensive. They hadn't closed the evening with Danny Kaye. Cardinal Spellman was still to come.

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I need<sup>not</sup> have been. He topped us all. Like Danny Kaye, he read not a line. And with the assurance of his years, in great humor, he told us about his attempts to be a chaplain. And then about his visits to troops wherever they were, across the seas at Christmastime for the last many, many years. I think it is about 13. And he said that he would be going to Viet-Nam in two weeks for still another Christmas. It was a warm, touching, delightful close to the evening. And I particularly enjoyed it as a contrast to the open air, non-competitive -- that is, intellectually, and for me only -- life at the Ranch. A sharp interesting evening.

It was nearly 11:00 when I said goodbye to all my fellow winners and to all of the members of the Institute that I could shake hands with as I left. And to Frank Pace who took me to the door. And I returned to the Carlyle. Lynda Bird was not spending the night with me. She had gone out with the McGeorge Bundys to have dinner and then to go to a play with someone else. So I read myself to sleep at the close of a good day.

I was really proud of that citation. We had increased our awareness of our land's resources and whetted our pride in splendid settings of our national heritage. But of course its real usefulness was in keeping beautification and conservation before the public. It prod<sup>sed</sup> everybody to work in that direction -- a pat<sup>and</sup> to those who have been working for so long.