

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Saturday, April 22, 1967 WND

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Lyndon is leaving tomorrow for the funeral of Chancellor Adenauer.

I am not going because on Tuesday there are two of the most important things of the year. My annual committee meeting ^{for} ~~from~~ the preservation of the White House, and getting Mr. du Pont signed up for a date between all of his Boards and Committees is harder than getting one with the President. And then the all-important Senate ^{Ladies} luncheon from the Capitol. Third, the reception that evening to honour Mr. Justice Black on the occasion of his thirtieth anniversary of coming to the Supreme Court.

There is a mood about Saturday that makes it hard to work for me and especially with Lyndon leaving tomorrow. That sense of holiday, of ^{disciplines} ~~relaxed~~, has already set in. Do I begin to plan tomorrow all the things I wanted to do -- go to see Mrs. George Maurice Morris' house, maybe arrange a trip down to Fredericksburg to see Monroe's memorial Library and law office, maybe to be taken through by Mr. Lawrence ^{Governor Hoes} ~~Governor~~, maybe go to the theatre.

And so, for these projects, and for playing bridge this afternoon, I made a lot of calls. Betty Talmadge had suggested that we have a bridge game this weekend at her house if I were free. I phoned her that I'd love to and she set it up for 2:00. I did spend an hour with Marilyn on the family album. Any secretary is good or mediocre in some proportion to the way the boss works with her or him, making her aims, her phrases, the way she does things, come through loud and clear, and giving the secretary a sense of participation and hopefully some inspiration. I do not do enough of this. I am boundlessly

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fortunate in having with me people who have known me so long. But it was a good hour spent with Marilyn and I think the family album will profit from it. I began doing this in '46, but actually I went back collecting pictures from my marriage in '34 and continuing on through the years. At first one album could contain five or six years. Now each year uses up about four albums and there are still many things that I would have loved that didn't get in. The criteria is significant ^a ~~of that~~ ^{event}, extraordinarily good photography, something with an emotional or personal appeal in the subject matter of the events we shared -- Lyndon, me and the two children. State affairs in which we didn't participate are left for his office to record.

// I had lunch on a tray and a little after 1:00 I started to Betty Talmadge's to play bridge. But I went the long way around, by Watts Branch, in fact, that dismal, forlorn area on the outskirts of Southeast Washington into which Lawrence Rockefeller had poured about \$100,000 through the National Park Service just two years ago. I believe it was last year when we had the dedication ceremony. I went with some misgivings because I thought I would find it trashy, unused. That wasn't the case. It was a thoroughly gratifying experience. This little stream that meanders through a rather dull part of town, not a slum, just drab. The banks were planted and here and there there was a little park area with some benches. A man was sleeping on one and four children were running around and around. The stepping stones across the stream are inviting and up the hill in the shade some camellias were blooming and

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azaleas would soon be coming out. There were two "tot lots" and they were used but the day was rather chilly. I want to come back in mid-summer and see how much. Under the trees were three or four little Negro boys. One of them hollered out, "Is that Lady Bird Johnson?" I said "Yes" and waved to them. And then he turned around to his comrades, pointing and jabbering, and they all exploded in giggles. It was rather fun. It was well kept and used. And I shall love telling Lawrence how it looks on a quite unplanned visit.

And then I had to hurry because it was nearly two and I was a little late arriving at Betty's. But what a fun thing to do, to simply take three hours off on Saturday afternoon and play bridge with three friends. It turned out to be Mary Ellen Monroney and Mrs. Maxwell Taylor, all good players. They played just right to suit me. That is, better than me, so that I had to strive and not so much better that my ^{gayer} ~~game~~ made me uncomfortable. And it was fun talk. Mary Ellen began telling some of the adventures her mother had had with the brand new maid who had just come from the cotton fields. She was explaining to her how to serve. First the service plate, then remove it and put down another for the first course. Never let the place in front of the guest be empty of a plate.

After about a week, the maid left. Mary Ellen's mother, puzzled, knowing that it wasn't very much work, asked her why -- what had she not liked about it? The maid replied, "There is too much shuffling of the dishes for the fewness of the food."

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I thought of Lyndon's impatience with service plates here at the White House. And one of the women told of having an English woman to tea, a very proper ^{elegant} ~~elegant~~ English woman, whom she desired to impress, ^W With having the tea served just right, ^T The tea table was set charmingly and the hostess was beaming about everything, and then the maid stuck her head in the door and said, "Do you want it ^{loose} ~~lose~~ or in dem rags?"

Betty brought in some delicious iced tea and watercress sandwiches and little hot-toasted rolls with orange marmalade, and it was a real womens' bridge party, which was delightfully off-beat for me.

It was 5:30 when I returned to the White House, just in time to get a comb-out by Jean Louis before our dinner guests arrived. I wore my brown lace and joined them in the yellow oval room about 7:00. Eric Severin ^{led} and the Max Frankels, Senator McGee and Loraine ^{Mc} and the McIntyres from New Hampshire. And then late and bouncy, Hubert and Muriel and latest of all, Lyndon. When I had come in from bridge, he had still been sitting at the lunch table, ~~last~~ past 5:30, going through the Texas newspaper editors. And he had gone back to his office to clear his desk and look at the ticker and answer phone calls, so it was nearly 8:00 when he came. But he ^{practically} never has a drink these days.

When he arrives at a room the talk begins to revolve around him. The conversation becomes one circle and he is in the middle of it. So I had used the time before then to ask ^{Who? Ch. tape} and explain to him what he thought of the

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Punta del Este Conference. He was frankly enthusiastic. He said, "If you don't have an ^{Arosamena?} [erosamena] at a conference, you ought to invent one." He had this lone President arose to protest, oppose the United States, and it was up to his fellow Latin-American Presidents to put him down, to speak for the other side and to expose the inadequacies of his argument. He thought Lyndon had conducted it quite skillfully, it appeared. This made mighty pleasant listening ^{from} a New York Times newsman.

And then I got Hubert to talking about his trip to Europe. Specifically, he spoke of the evening he had spent having dinner with the Queen at Windsor. The very words are exciting! When it was over Prime Minister Wilson, ^{ad}escorting Muriel and Hubert to their quarters, and at the door Hubert said, "Would you come in and have a night cap?" and ^{they}went in and didn't find any whiskey handy. Wilson said just a minute, he would get some. He gave an order and presently some appeared and the two men put up their feet comfortably, had a drink and sat down to quiet conversation which Wilson began with a philosophical comment, "pretty good for the son of an elementary school teacher and a small town pharmacist, drinking the Queen's whiskey in Windsor."

It was a good conversational evening.

A little past eight we went into dinner. I had Hubert on my right and Senator McGee on my left. Muriel was the toast of the evening for her handling of a press conference in London. They are such good people to work with.

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Zephyr had fixed a delicious dinner. Sliced serloin and mushrooms, asparagus with hollandaise and ending with strawberry *meringue* ~~marange~~. I have still to find a great chef whose deserts I like as well as *Zephyr*.

It was a good evening. Lyndon was a gay, amusing, delightful host, a wonderful raconteur.

After dinner, the ladies and I settled in the West Hall for about 30 minutes conversation. Otherwise, we never seemed to get our words in. And then when we finished coffee, we went to the Yellow Room to join the men. Lyndon was giving them a tour of the Lincoln Room and the Treaty Room, and when they came back the evening launched into a series of reminiscences about the great figures in the Senate. Lyndon would tell a story about Senator *Hay* of North Carolina with his flower in his lapel and his clawhammer coat, and his way of calling people he really liked "*Beloved*". There was a choice about when one time *Sen. Hay* ~~he~~ had been persuaded by Senator Russell of Georgia that he must change a vote he had given his commitment to make. And he said, "You must give me a few days, I've got to go back and rub out some tracks." And each story would spark another. Hubert would come out with a tale about Senator Kerr of Oklahoma which would remind Lyndon about something about Tom Connolly of Texas. And so it went on and on. I wished we'd had it recorded. It was a real flavor of two decades of the U. S. Senate.

It was nearly one when the guests left. I knew it was getting late but I was shocked to see the clock as we walked back up after having put them in their cars.

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And tomorrow morning Lyndon leaves. I wonder if I am imagining it or if it is really a feeling in a man that we are emerging on a more satisfactory plateau of handling foreign affairs, of quiet restraint in Manila and in Guam and now in Punta del Este, behind which our strength is evident? I believe I see Lyndon emerging in the public understanding as a man of strength and patience and toughness. *make no sense - ch. Tapa* Academic character are paid of him, of bombasting the funny by some of the press. *of* The thing I liked most/all during the evening was one phrase he used. It was very simple -- I wish I could quote it exactly, but the gist of it was this: what will concern the next generations, what will make or break the world in the decade just around the corner, is *the* population explosion and the food supply -- those two things and their interplay. Everything else is chicken feed -- all the problems we face now.

It would have been an interesting evening to remember some day in the rocking chair down on the front porch as we watch the Pedernales.