

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Thursday, April 27, 1967

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It was one of those tremendous staccato days in the White House which left me ^{exhilarated} ~~accelerated~~ and satisfied and exhausted and against which other days are soft music.

I had breakfast early. The first appointment of the day was at 10:00 in the Queens' Room with Liz and Nash and Mary Lasker and people from the National Geographic to discuss another book -- another White House publication. This one on flowers of the White House and flowers in Washington. They wanted me to write the script. I am concerned lest we be competing with our other publications. They had a markup prepared. It was beautiful, very enticing and I wanted to do it. The barrier: would I have time to do it myself and do it well? There is something revolting about having someone else do it for you and then signing your name. And then I must check it with my always advisors -- Carol and Abe -- to see if there is any reason why not.

A little past 11:00 I went down to the Library for pictures with Bob Dowling. He has just given to the White House a tent that can be used in the Rose Garden, thereby extending the square footage of this house. We use the garden in broiling days in the summer, and on threatening days when the likelihood of showers give Bess and me nervous tension. And a tent like this with variations can be lined with pink and decorated with flowers. It will be a life saver.

And then the big event of the day took place. At 11:30 I met the guests who were coming for the bus tour and the luncheon -- the members

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of my Committee ~~and of the Society~~ for a More Beautiful Capital, the donors -- the possible donors.

I wonder if ever before bus tours were a big part of a First Lady's life? They seem to be of mine. The purpose was to show them what had been accomplished in Washington in the two years and two months that the Committee has been in operation -- the things that their generosity has made possible. The 89 Squares and Circles and Triangles where the streets come together -- the legacy of ~~la la~~ ^{L'Esprit} -- the 9 schools we've done, the entrances, the freeway planting, the work for the future on Haines Point. I shall love to come back 10 years from now and see what it looks like. And on New York Avenue. Our big failure on Rhode Island. The half-hearted attempt on F Street by the merchants. The whole kaleidoscope of the city.

There were five buses. Stew narrated on one. We ~~have~~ had a lively script poetically put together by Sharon who narrated another. And Jane Freeman did a wonderful job on a third. Sharon I think was the star, although Nash is hard to beat. And Katie Louchheim did the fifth.

Among the 200 or so guests, there were the ladies, my speakers bureau -- Lindy Boggs and Marvella Bayh and Mrs. John Sherman Cooper. This I hope was as nonpartisan as you can get. And there were the press who covered the beautification beat -- Betty Beale, Roberta Hornig, Carol Secrest, and Wolf ^{Va} ^d Blinckhardt, whose knowledge and heart are so deeply

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Entwined in it, though I dare say he thinks we are pretty superficial.

And there were great and little donors -- Roger Stevens who gave ^{the} ~~some~~ crab apple trees for ^{the} Pennsylvania Avenue ^{Circle} And gay Brooke Astor who is doing Buchanan School, staggering ^a ~~big~~ large project -- several hundred thousand dollars. Dr. Peter Bing who is giving ~~a~~ playground equipment for a Georgetown Park. And David Burp ^{le} who gave us 50,000 packages of flower seeds for schools. And an old friend Mr. Burton of Burton's Nursery who started off our first school. And Robert Inch of the S. Klein Co. to whom Nash goes back time after time when he just can't complete a project. Mrs. Morris Cafritz whom we hope -- and I think it's already signed up -- will do a fountain by the Smithsonian. And Joseph Danzansky, President of Giant Stores, who is already working on his second well-landscaped super market -- an enthusiastic pioneer. And darling Phyllis Dillon whom we hope we can interest. And Pearl Mesta. And Lloyd Garrison of the Tachonic Foundation. The Curriers before their tragic death had made a real stamp on our Committee. I was surprised to see the Leonard Goldens ^{on} there. And then I remembered if anything ^{had} ~~not~~ presented our story to the Nation it had been the ABC show. And Kay Graham ^{at} the Post ~~and~~ and her own Foundation, are doing two schools and their consistent, knowledgeable reporting is, I believe, building this into the ~~kind~~ consciousness of this city. ^{This} wave, this feeling, of working on a more beautiful Washington. A moderate ^{sized} ~~size~~ donor and a very useful

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guest was Lynda Bird, who along with me changed buses at every stop -- there were five -- and first and last we rode on every bus. The Fred Langs from Texas to my great pleasure had been fairly substantial helpers. The David Lloyd Kreegers and Polly Logan we hope to draw more into the circle of real commitment. And the Willard Marriotts who work both ways -- that is they gave some beautiful planting for the circle at the end of I think Key Bridge, but he is still going ahead with his plan to put up a huge sign on top of his Inn. And Scooter and Dale who through the Inaugural Committee are making one of the handsomest gifts -- about \$42,000 I think. And I was so pleased to see Mrs. George Maurice Morris with whom I had had such a delightful time on Sunday. It was a fun crowd. I knew nearly everybody. I wanted to talk to nearly everybody. We all had so many interests in common. It was like firecrackers going off all at once in all directions. Alas, the weather was not with us -- not the golden brilliant day we had looked for, when there are little kids chasing each other across the Park and parents sunning on a bench with a newspaper over their face and Government girls eating their lunch and lovers sitting in the grass by a fountain holding hands. No, the sky was dreary. But the tulips were a great splash of color everywhere, and the azaleas on Pennsylvania Avenue. And it was a satisfying, useful trip. And in many cases I felt that electric spark of interest, excitement running. Actually I would have liked to grab the microphone and be the tour director myself. Enthusiasm bids me. But I know that I am not as

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articulate as Sharon or as well founded in facts as Nash Castro.

Little rolls and coffee were served on the buses, and the script didn't interfere with a little lively chatter among the guests -- many of them knew each other.

We were back at the White House by 1:00, and I had time to go upstairs and change from my red suit ~~to~~ that useful coat and dress by Marquise -- to my blue silk with the lovely turquoise pin from Brazil. And amusingly enough now that I am in my 50's I am actually getting interested in jewelry. And then back downstairs for a cocktail and into the State Dining Room for lunch. Once more Bess had done a charming job of decorating it. There were the topiary trees in boxes. We had used them the night before for the Diplomatic Reception. And the thin fair branches of the birches, artistically decorated with big Mexican paper flowers in every shade of pink. I enjoyed telling the guests that they were left over from Luci's wedding, had been used at Lynda's dance for the Princess and to decorate the buses when we took the 50 Governors' wives out. The hit of the meal was the desert -- a real little earthenware flower pot filled with ice cream from which rose a real Spring flower. This we had borrowed from Neiman-Marcus. My table was great fun with Laurence Rockefeller and Polly Shackleton and Mary and John Hechinger and Mrs. Lloyd Garrison, Phyllis Dillon and Nat Owings and Francis Saul who is a part of the family of Rose Zalles, out of town today, who is one

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of our most generous donors -- the big gift for the West Ellipse.

At the end of the lunch I thanked them -- "To everyone of you here who has added something special to this city, I wanted to thank you for the time, conviction, and creativity which you have put into it and have you see some of the results." And a small statement of our aims -- "We can set a few examples, be the catalyst, add a few ingredients." And then about my own personal reaction: "The deeper I get into this the more concerned I've become. The more I see with new eyes, take more delight in those things that are beautiful in what we have accomplished. And have more impatience and yet more hope about all the things that need to be done."

Stew Udall talked on the national implications of our work. And Laurence Rockefeller made the best talk in my opinion on beauty and the business community. We are going to try to expedite the trend of burying power distribution lines. Then we are going to concern ourselves about air pollution through the use of atomic power plants. It was brief, substantive, right to the point, and left me feeling hopeful. And then Walter Washington talked on the inner-city neighborhoods, what cleaning up and painting up and planting can do to keep the city 'cool baby', to keep down that spirit of frustration and hostility whose final ^{fruit} ~~note~~ is riots.

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A ~~rather~~ unnerving thing happened right in the middle of the luncheon. Lloyd Garrison came over to me and said, "I've just had a phone call and I shall have to leave early. A body has been washed up on a beach in Puerto Rico and they think it might be Audrey Currier." That's a long crucifixion for that family to have to endure.

It was over about 3:30, and I had that happy elated feeling that it was a success. I went upstairs for just a brief rest and worked on mail with Ashton. Then changed clothes to a green dress for the 4-H. And then downstairs for a receiving line of what was supposed to be 150 young people and I think must have turned out to be 350.

First, there were pictures and they gave me a big bouquet of flowers, and then a pen that signified I was a partner in 4-H. I am very happy to be. And a bound copy of a report on their activities in conservation and beautification. And then I stood in line and met them all and had a brief chat here and there about where they were from, a happy word of recollection with several whom I had remembered had come down to the Ranch right after Christmas -- especially Steven Pierce who was co-chairman of the Youth Beauty Conference. There were two words very much in evidence -- "CRUD" -- which at first sounds alarming, but is really an anti-litter drive organized by Lorretta Shadow of Rustin, Louisiana, and gets right down to the business of cleaning up her town, enthusiastically engaged in by young 4-H people. And the other word -- "MAD" -- which is

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mobilization against debris -- the same sort of a project headed by Steve Mullin in Rowley, Massachusetts. I like 4-H youngsters. They are as clean and fine and wholesome a group of young people as this country produces. I look at them and I feel hopeful.

I went into the State Dining Room with them and found the cookie platters were devastated, though the punch bowls managed to stay full. I spoke to ~~Terma~~^{Terma} and Johnny about getting more cookies. They gave me a despairing look and departed for the pantry. Not only is our money for entertaining running low, our Fiscal Year ends the last of June, but we had really only expected 150 or 200.

Everyone gets revved up by the mounting excitement, the intensity of the work of a day like this, when you try to ~~make~~ make a sort of contact with each of several hundred people, but I felt moved to take the microphone and thank them for their work in conservation and beautification. And then tell them how much I ^{thought} ~~was~~ of the 4-H.

It was nearly 6:00 when I was back upstairs to change my clothes quickly to go over to Lyndon's office and say goodbye. A strange trio were we in the back seat of the big black limousine -- Father Schneider in his broad brimmed black hat, looking like he had stepped ~~right~~ out of a Dutch portrait -- ^{Hebein} Colbine or Holgarth. And we off to Andrews and into a Jetstar for a pleasant ride, two drinks, a sandwich, twilight while I read the story of Santa ^{Victoria} ~~Victoria~~ and relaxed and came down off of the mountain which had been the work of this day.

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And then at 9:30 Texas time -- oh, the wonders of Jet travel -- we came to a stop in front of the hangar and there was Clarence Knetsch. And I found to my delight that Lyndon had taken him to Germany too. What a remarkably thoughtful man he is. It would be a lifetime memory for both Father Schneider and Clarence and Fritz. And they all greeted each other in German. James carried my luggage on into the house and I went to bed in the West Carnation Room -- completing my mission of testing out all of our guests rooms to see what was the matter with them -- what was good and bad. And here I certainly found something. The reading light, way on one ~~xx~~ side of the bed, the telephone pads, pencils, a place to put cigarettes on the other. You would keep wallering across if you wanted to both read and smoke.

I went to sleep with that truly satisfied feeling of having spent a day of my life well -- maybe accomplished a little something. I certainly enjoyed it.