

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, June 12, 1967

Page 1

It was ^{the} ~~a~~ third of the season's big luncheons. The first, the Senate wives for me and then the Congressional Club for me, and now my return engagement for the Senate Wives' Red Cross Unit.

The morning was one of those frustrating wast⁺lands of work, the sort of digging away at paper that doesn't seem to accomplish much, an hour on the Australian dinner list, autographing ⁱⁿ ~~an~~numerable pictures. About 2 weeks after I've returned from a trip there is a ~~big~~ big stack on my desk of pictures to be autographed for all the people who have helped on it. One thing that makes me keep on doing it is that I remember the glow I used to get when Mrs. Kennedy would have pictures sent to me from White House functions. They were not signed but each one to me represented a big event in my life. As this luncheon approaches I always phone Mrs. Truman to invite her before sending out her invitation. And for the first year or two to this as to all similar events, I phoned Mrs. Kennedy. Finally when it became too painful for us both I think I asked Bess to phone her secretary. The answer of course has always been that she cannot come. And of course I always phone Mrs. Eisenhower. And last year she came and this year she is coming. I am delighted and her presence helps make the party.

I dressed in my Ben Zuckerman and went down a minute or two before 1:00 when I heard that Mrs. Eisenhower had arrived. She was beaming, looking well, had come straight from the hospital where the

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, June 12, 1967

Page 2

General had gone on I think it was Monday with a stomach attack. Later I read in the paper that Winzola McLendon said, "Mamie Eisenhower came back to the White House as a guest yesterday, looking not a day older, some thought looking younger, than when she was First Lady." For all that she doesn't oblige them with interviews and such, she really is a favorite with the press, now. Or is that one of the bonuses of being an ex-First Lady? I wonder.

First, Mrs. Eisenhower and I had our pictures made in the Green Room on the Daniel Webster sofa, and then with after ^a glass of Sherry we stood for the line to come in.

All the Cabinet was there -- every one of the 12 -- a most unusual event. And of course Muriel.

First in the line of the Senate ladies were the two Henriettas -- Henrietta Anderson of New Mexico, helping Henrietta Hill of Alabama who can barely walk -- Parkinson's disease I believe it is. They are two of my oldest and best friends among the Senate ladies. And then Bethine Church who spent much of the Spring campaigning back in Idaho in preparation for next year. And much as her husband deserts this Administration's foreign policy, my fondness for Bethine still holds. And smart, amusing Lorraine Cooper wearing knit stockings, shoes that looked like the Pilgrims ~~xxxx~~ owned them -- black with big buckles and at her throat a jewel -- 7 star sapphires set in what appeared to be a galaxy of stars. She told me it was the ^{Pleadians} Pleateas -- the 7 sisters. She

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, June 12, 1967

Page 3

has dash and style and is very entertaining. I like her.

All eyes were on the new Mrs. Daniel Brewster who seemed quiet enough, pleasant, slender, not as pretty as the last Mrs. Brewster I thought. But in this crowd I would say the cards were stacked against her. The married women's union will not feel kindly toward her for at least a year, two years.

I noticed that Grace Dodd did not come, and I was sad. But some of those who never come showed up. Mrs. James Eastland was there, always warm and courteous in that southern manner. And both Ethel Kennedy and Mrs. Ted Kennedy -- the last ravishingly beautiful and very pregnant. Her baby is due the last of June she said. This is about the only party ^{at} which the Kennedys ever darken the door. And yet we keep on inviting them when the occasion is appropriate.

I smiled to myself when I thought of how Lyndon always teases me about loving Washington and about how I shall be coming back many years from now, on my cane, tottering to these parties for indeed several ladies did come on canes. Mrs. Ernest Gruening came on two, moving with great difficulty. And Mrs. Henry Parkinson ~~K~~yes in a wheelchair, huge and ponderous in a purple dress. Her relationship with the Senate *Ladies* is very tenuous. Her husband was a Senator from New York, Lord knows how long ago -- perhaps about 1912 -- but this is a party she never misses. I wonder if we are grist for the mills of some of her books. And Mrs.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, June 12, 1967

Page 4

J. Ham Lewis who has not shown up at a party in over a year came, tottering feebly escorted by a colored nurse in uniform who waited outside after she had delivered her to the table. She told me that this was her debut. I was flattered that she would make the effort to come. And Lou Tower who is far too young to need a cane came with her leg in a cast remarking laughingly that someone had said they had heard the Republic women had had a big fight up here but they didn't know it had been that bad.

I think Betty Fulbright and I always impart a little extra warmth to our greeting because our husbands these days are finding each other prickly companions. And the same applies to Pauline Gore.

There were lots of old-timers -- Mary Holland of Florida who looked ill. Ivo Sparkman and Coy Stennis, looking much as when I had first met them years ago.

Mrs. Dennis Chavis⁴³ and Lucille Connolly. Esther Freer, bright and sweet. And serenely beautiful Rosemary Silvercreek^{my}

And the long roster of widows -- Lou Engel and Elizabeth Hennings. And Mrs. Irving ^{Gues} ~~Eyes~~ of New York -- we practically fell into each other's arms. We've been good friends on the International Club. And gingery Katie Malone. She and many, many others greeted Mrs. Eisenhower with a hug and a kiss. It was so pleasant to watch Mrs. Eisenhower with the ladies -- the warmth, the conversation with many of them. And she greeted

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, June 12, 1967

Page 5

all the photographers and said to one of them, "How is your son?" And she called several of the servants by name and asked about others.

I had laid out on the round table in the Blue Room several of my albums that I thought the ladies might look at while having a sherry and a duobonnet -- the history of the Senate Ladies themselves -- their gift to me, an album they had given me another year and now filled with pictures of my life here and Luci's wedding album which she had given me at Christmas.

Bess and I had searched for little things to add to the gaiety of the party. Once more we were using China from all the Administrations beginning with George Washington -- a different set on each table with a sign denoting the Administration so that the State Dining Room was a ^{potpourri} ~~popery~~ of history. And we had chosen the menu after we searched through old cook books coming up with favorite recipes beginning with quaking jelly from Monroe's days -- the recipe for which said take three calves feet with the hoofs still on, boil for five days, but we had decided to use Knox' gelatin instead. And then going on to one of Thomas Jefferson's favorites "tomma cakies" which are really crepes filled with chicken and crab meat. And a beautiful bouquet of vegetables which are said to be a favorite of John Adams -- especially for the 4th of July. And then for ^Sdesert there was ^{brulee} ~~creme brele~~ heritance -- Andrew Jackson's favorite ^Sdesert which he called "burnt cream".

That star in the White House's crown -- Sandy Fox -- had done up

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, June 12, 1967

Page 6

the menus in the most delightful, old-fashioned script, and it made a rather good conversation piece except alas most of the ladies were too old to be able to see it very well without getting out their glasses.

Bess and I had chosen my table carefully. We were seated right under President Lincoln. On my right I had Mrs. Eisenhower. And next Mrs. Dirksen and Mary Ellen Monroney, an asset at any party, and Vicky Hruska, one of my favorite Republicans and the first Vice President in the Senate Ladies Red Cross. And lovely, slim Helen Jackson -- Mrs. Scoop -- in whose home we've had two such delightful evenings. And Mrs. Tobey because she is really the heart and soul of the Senate Ladies Red Cross as well as having wit and charm. And Norma McClellan of Arkansas. And Muriel on my left who was leaving almost immediately afterward for another trip. They are constantly gone these days.

// Everyone was asking Mrs. Eisenhower about the General of course. She said, "He's doing better. He's having his first solid food today. But if he wasn't alright, I wouldn't be here". I asked her if she played bridge. She said, "No, that's the General's game." "We never do anything together. Maybe that's one reason why we've been married 51 years." //

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The new Mrs. Brewster naturally came up in discussion and the sticky question of whether one remained a member of the Senate wives after one was divorced from one's Senator husband. A question not quite resolved by the by-laws of the organization. And in the course of talking about the remarriages of some of our older friends, Mrs. Eisenhower said

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, June 12, 1967

Page 7

the nicest thing about her husband. She said, "You know, Ike never has a bad word to say about anybody." I indeed believe it, and I think it adds so much to his mental health and enjoyment of life. I was inwardly praising her own radiance and zest. But somehow like a wound-up top that has been spinning until it is about to run down I found myself unable to sparkle and give forth although this is one of the days in the year that I look most forward to.

An unfortunate incident occurred, Mrs. Dirksen turned to us, obviously disturbed and said, "Will you forgive me?² Joy is sick. She is down at the dispensary. I'll begin lunch, but may I leave after the first course? I am worried about her. I am going to take her home." Of course we reassured her and said she must go. And I asked if the doctor was with her -- if there was anything we could do. "No. She had just gotten up too soon after a bout with a virus."

And so after all our planning there was no one on Mrs. Eisenhower's right, which she gracefully ignored.

After Andrew Jackson's "burnt cream", a very nice young man, ^{sp.?} Dick Callman, who is playing at the National sang some familiar songs to us -- the sort designed for middle-aged female audience, "The Girl That I Marry", "For Me and My Gal". Then a little past three the party was over and I bid Mrs. Eisenhower goodbye at the elevator staying to chat with the last lady, and was back upstairs to do some more work with Ashton and lay down for a nap -- fruitless. But I find myself very

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, June 12, 1967

Page 8

weary. And though it goes against the grain to admit it I am tired of crowds of people.

At 5:00 I got up and dressed and went down to the Library to greet people. One with the unlikely name of ⁴Pizz~~y~~. He is what corresponds to the Lt. Governor of the State of Queensland, and we had met him on our never-to-be-forgotten trip to Australia. Now in line for becoming Governor, he is out to spend three months seeing the world -- a ⁷delivery cram course. Lyndon was in the Library having tea with them. I joined them and we talked about Expo '67. They talked about the Australian exhibit there -- a comfortable room, lined, floor, walls, ceiling with their chief export white wool, with the form fitting chairs into which you can relax and hear very quietly a tape in Lord ^{with Menzies'}~~Mindes~~'s wonderful voice of the story of Australia. A very good idea for ~~x~~ foot-weary travelers.

And then upstairs to the Truman Balcony to see Robin Duke back from Spain for a 2-months vacation. ^{My}~~Her~~ face ached with smiling -- I was tired of trying to be pleasant, and I told Ashton all too truly that I didn't want to see any more folks. But Robin wasn't folks. She's the freshest most natural person I know. And it was a delightful hour sitting out on the Truman Balcony looking out over the tulips and watching the light change and fade. She reminded me how she had campaigned in '64 with Mary ⁴Kieserling and said, "I'm ready to go out again. I want you to tell the President."

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, June 12, 1967

Page 9

When she left, I worked awhile. Lyndon had called me that Senator Russell ~~was~~ was coming to dinner. It was nearly 9:00 when he arrived. Lyndon had asked me to bring him over to his office, and I hoped to dislodge him from what was going on and bring them both home for dinner soon.

I found ~~him~~ ^{them} in the little green office where most that's interesting takes place, with Francis Bator and Harry McPherson, talking about the Kennedy Round, trade, the European situation. We all had a drink. Lyndon, his usual root beer. And the business was so compelling and the talk so interesting that it was nearly 11:00 before we came home to dinner, bringing with us Harry McPherson and Marie and of course Dick Russell.

At dinner the ~~discussion~~ discussion got around to the Russian Ambassador and his influence, together with the rest of their propaganda machine, upon the members of the Senate and the Staff of Senate Committees. No question that they were loyal, well-intentioned citizens, but after a luncheon or dinner with Dobrynin or certain others their statements, their speeches, took on a coloration that meant they had been impressed or convinced. I was startled to hear Lyndon make the statement that the Ambassador of Russia has more influence in the Senate than the President of the United States.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, June 12, 1967

Page 10

The subject got onto press coverage at parties -- especially the Judicial Reception and the upcoming State Dinners. We disagreed flatly -- Lyndon and I. I tried to be judicious, persuasive, mild. I failed completely and I went to bed mad.