

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Sunday, August 20, 1967

Page 1

Sunday, August 20th, I spent in Montreal at Expo. And I was so pommeeled, assaulted, hit by a rat-a-tat-tat of sights, emotions, sounds, experiences that the day becomes a vast montage and everything melts into everything else. I do remember that I woke up at 7:15 and that one of my ambitions these days is to sleep until 10:00. I dressed and continued my reading about Expo. And then Max and Marietta came and we left a little past 8:00 and drove to the Fair. And I was as excited a visitor as they have ever had. Actually I went with three sets of eyes -- an ordinary and eager tourist; a Texan in whose well-loved neighboring town there is going to be another Fair next Spring and I want to see what the competition is, what we'll have to try to measure up to in even a small way, what are the good techniques. And third, and really most important, the set of eyes that wants to learn about the art of exhibiting because within two or three years, the Lyndon Johnson Library will be locked-in in concrete and steel and it will either be a wonderfully creative interesting imaginative changing thing with great exhibits, or it will be mediocre. And the more we learn and know the better we can evaluate what to put before us as a possible way of exhibiting, of telling the story of Lyndon's three or more decades in Government, his life, his effect upon this country. And where could I possibly see in the time allotted between now and then a better showcase of all the fashions of exhibiting. So we had planned two of the busiest

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Sunday, August 20, 1967

Page 2

possible days, and we arrived at the U. S. Pavillion about 8:40. They had very generously opened it ahead of time for us. Ambassador Tupper took us through.

What do I remember of it? The great, gleaming geodesic globe by Buckminster Fuller. The building itself is a triumph with its escalators rising skyward and its changing moods on a gray day and in brilliant sunshine. And at night when it glows. I am wonderfully proud of it. And I think it will be the trademark -- the most photographed, the most remembered building at Expo. And I love the way the "mini rail" comes right through the building sort of expressing the symbol that we are open to the world -- amusing -- a great psychological coup. And the exhibits -- they are intentionally low-key. But I did not find them as impressive. They do not speak to my heart or to my head as I would have liked, except the one on space. And it was spine-tingling to see those vehicles that were still seared from the intense heat as they had reentered the atmosphere of the earth. Once for the photographers I walked on the simulated crust of the moon reproduced from a picture in the area where Surveyor I had landed in June of '66.

And then we went on to the British Pavilion. And this in all my two days was my great, great favorite of the Fair -- not the building, the contents. And the critic who called it "dramatic, whimsical, witty" was just right to my thinking. I like to see a country. And there was

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Sunday, August 20, 1967

Page 3

one small hall where we saw lined up the most wonderful color slides of English countryside from northern Ireland right on down to the white cliffs of Dover. And then in the middle of this small hall a round sort of a pit where you hung over the edge and look down and below you was a screen, and it was just like being in a helicopter flying low and looking down and seeing the English countryside below you. That was a good technique. And there was Carnaby Street with its fashions. And another fairly small hall where there were pictures of English great in every walk of life -- Milton and Disraeli and Newton -- covering hundreds of years, and maybe just one line or two below their picture. It had impact on me at least. But almost my favorite thing was a small exhibit that said, "We tolerate, we believe, we love". And below each of these maxims there revolved sentences -- expressions -- such as "Below we tolerate criticism of things British". Some of it is true. The disarming, the charming thing about the whole exhibit was that they were able to laugh at themselves. I found it mature and reassuring. And there were some wonderful papier-mache figures. I remember one old woman sitting down with her shoes off looking at a tiny TV screen. Her expression was as good as an old master. And one funny little exhibit of two cats all dressed up in ladies clothes having tea that I feel sure must have been Tibitha Twichet from Beatrix' Parlor.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Sunday, August 20, 1967

Page 4

For me the British museum did go to my heart and to my head. It explained the British people and it was fun.

Then I went on to the Mexican Pavilion with high hopes because of all the countries I have visited I think I feel the most sympathetic with, hopeful about, wanting to champion the Mexicans. Here I was met by a madeachi band -- all familiar sounds. And later in the paper I read where several of them had played at the Ranch. But I was vaguely disappointed in the Pavilion. It did not live up to the creativity of their wonderful museum in Mexico City -- the Museo da ochio lahea. Although there were some wonderful Mayan and Taltec and even Omec exhibits, my fat-faced friend from Vera Cruz. And some great church pieces -- a golden altar and a silver altar and a whole line of Santos. I cannot say what was missing. There simply did not come through as interesting as they are to me.

Then we went to the Quebec Pavilion. And here I was introduced to the marvelous movie technique which I found over and over is a trademark of this Fair. A screen that is split in two, that is split in four. Finally, even the next day the Czechoslovakian exhibit -- one that is most mosaic of some 112 screens. And the final height of a 360 degree screen that goes all around you in a theatre of the round in the Bell Telephone Building which was an unforgettable picture of Canada done by Walt Disney -- the whole great spread of it in the most beautiful pictures I have ever seen.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Sunday, August 20, 1967

Page 5

And finally, very weary, we arrived at the Canadian Pavilion for a luncheon hosted by a very attractive couple -- the Robert Shaws, the Deputy Commissioner. She had accompanied me all day long -- an intelligent, beautiful woman for whom I felt so much sympathy because this must have been the 349th time she has done this with some VIP.

First, blessedly, we had a drink and some quiet. They had very generously invited my party also -- Liz and Simone and Max and Marietta and Juanita and Dorothy. And Ambassador Tupper was there. And Sied Kahn, our protocol man, our old friend from the first visit of Ayub Kahn to the Ranch, and later Bashir Ahmed.

The building was charmingly done with Eskimo art. And we had far too much to eat. After the lunch we went to "Man the Explorer" Pavilion which is one of the theme Pavilions. And that too is a trademark of this Fair. They are following a theme "Man and his World" which is carried out by a "Man the Provider", "Man the Producer", "Man the Explorer", "Man and his Communities". This one which is a story of the ~~Arctic~~ Arctic and the Antarctic was supposed to be the most visually interesting. And it was great. And once more I marveled at the diversity, the pioneering, the breakthroughs of movie techniques.

There is a revolution in the art of exhibiting today, and I felt that here I was right in the middle of it, and movies are way out in front. I cannot evaluate quite truly my own feelings. Things still appeal to me --

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Sunday, August 20, 1967

Page 6

the snow shoes and the birch-bark canoe and the trappers gun in one of the Canadian exhibits spoke to me and told a story of Canada in a real sort of a way that stays in my mind. And yet in an exhibit where the movies were not present I felt a strange flatness. Somewhere I guess someone has to find the combination. If I try to give a thumb-nail sketch of Expo '67, I would have to say "Beautiful setting -- that great rushing St. Lawrence River, wide expanses of green Parks and tall trees and brilliant splashes of flowers and wonderful housekeeping." Over and over, this the visitor will remember -- the new technique of exhibits, the long lines, but with the people good natured, and for me signing a guest book everytime I turned around.

In the middle of the afternoon, we left for a small tour of Montreal with Max and Marietta and a Mr. Champagne from their Park Department whom Mayor Drapeau had sent over because he had heard I was interested amenities of a city. And my respect, my admiration, which had been aroused when I drove in last night, grew as I rode and looked. First, they have all of their utility lines buried. Second, there are street trees all up and down the main streets -- many of them tall and old. But also many of them on busy streets, delightfully shaped, some 10 or 15 feet high in metal containers of good design. And then very surprisingly hanging baskets from the street lights with what looked like white and red petunias and a sort of drifting ivy. Really terribly

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Sunday, August 20, 1967

Page 7

effective. I hear a truck comes by every morning and waters them. And then at one time we stopped at LaFontaine Park, an amusing place for children with charming lights in the shape of tulips and daisies and all sorts of familiar things in ceramics. And then little exhibits that show ordinary animals in the setting of <sup>Aesop's</sup> ~~Aesop's~~ fables or Alice in Wonderland or well-known children's books. For instance, there was the "Three Pigs" living in their little houses of straw and brick etc. And Mrs. Champagne said, "You must remember. These are city children and many of them don't get out to farms and see pigs." It was really a delightful place. We drove up to the top of Mount Royal. But the day was too cloudy for the wonderful view, but we could vaguely see spread out below us. And then back to our apartment at Stanley Towers a little before 5:00, collapsing. I never enjoyed a rest more. And if I tried to go back over my feelings, one that would surface is the fact of how French this area is. Everyone I had met -- all the officials -- spoke French. They could speak English. They were bilingual. But I felt that French was their choice, French was what they were at ease with, and French were their names for the most part. And all the signs -- they too were in two languages, but the French preceded.

We had two hours of rest blessedly. And then dressed in my green silk Alaskine ensemble I went with Max and Marietta to City Hall where Mayor Drapeau received us in a brief but gracious informal ceremony in a handsome chamber of the old building. And I met all of

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Sunday, August 20, 1967

Page 8

the city Commissioners. And also went out on a delightful terrace which overlooked the city. It was bordered with flowers and had a gay canopy over it. Tonight it was rainy, but it was apparent what a charming place it would be for official entertaining.

We drove back to the Fair grounds for dinner as the guests of the Belgian Ambassador to Expo, Mr. Geree. The Shaws were there, and a slight, mustached, very French, very bright young Professor named Dosua who was Director of the Theme Exhibits. He had been a professor of Political Science. But I'll bet he doesn't go back to it because he has discovered a more exciting world. And a very handsome young man named Bobyan with a classically beautiful blond wife from Boston, and he is Director of Operations.

It was a fascinating evening which I was almost too tired to really fully take in. We talked about the Fair and how they had the daring to go ahead with it because obviously it was a gigantic undertaking calling for about five years of work and the joint efforts of all the provinces and it early became apparent to me that they have as many differences as Mississippi and New York and the Federal Government and the city of Montreal and those countries that are bringing exhibits. The whole philosophy was that they would not set out to make money. They would charge \$2.50 for which you could come inside and see everything all day long. And you didn't pay for anything except food. And so they



MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Sunday, August 20, 1967

Page 9

told me they lost money within the gates. The amount rose as the plans proceeded from some \$75 million I believe it was on up to where they now anticipated a loss of close to \$200 million. Nevertheless they knew they would make back a great deal -- perhaps all -- in terms of sale taxes on hotel rooms and food and gasoline. But really it's a great "PR" venture. It's just Canada saying "World, here we are". And about 330,000 people per day are coming from April through October. They expect I believe they told me a total of 55 million if it keeps on as it has been going. And many of these will come again and again to Canada after this introduction. I think I shall and many will go home with the respect and admiration and an interest and both tourist and commercial and cultural that they never had before in Canada. I really took off my hat to these gentlemen and I seldom sat down at a table with more attractive ones -- the Shaws and the Dosuas and the Bobyans. Incidentally, the gossip was that he someday might be the Prime Minister of Canada. He is interested in politics and comes from a fine old family that traces its line back 300 years in Canada's life. I thought how wonderful to be in politics and be named "beautiful good" -- Mr. Bobyan. Our host too, Ambassador Goree was charming. He was the Ambassador from Belgium to Expo. But he had been posted before in Paris and I think he said in Russia -- in many of the Capitals of the world. He expressed sympathy and

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Sunday, August 20, 1967

Page 10

understanding and approval of our stand in Viet-Nam, although I rather gathered he just as soon not be on the front page of the newspaper with that. He said that he had told many gatherings of people that they could go on about their normal business today because of America and because we have the bomb. I have decided we either serve too little at the White House or they serve too much up here -- so many courses, delicious and too abundant.

After dinner we toured the Belgian exhibit -- some wonderful paintings and tapestry and treasures of old. And then we went out to ride the minirail. And that is a sight I will never forget. It is a fairyland at night -- all twinkling and sparkling, and the United States' Pavilion takes on another personality indescribably bizarre and beautiful. The day could not have been more full, or more exhausting. And it was past 12:00 when we returned to Stanley Towers and to bed. And it had been one of the most interesting days I'll ever spend. Gradually as the day had gone along, people had begun to recognize me and calls of "There's Lady Bird," "Hello Lady Bird! How's your grandchild?" "Tell LBJ hello". Never one unpleasant word. A sort of a rising wave of awareness and interest and pleasure in my presence. And I liked it. And I was grateful that they felt that way. But it was time -consuming because I want to turn and smile and thank and give out. And yet my first objective here -- what I came for -- was to learn. Well, as far as our feet and our minds could take it, we have today.