

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, September 19, 1967

Page 1

It was one of those tumultuous days in the White House, maybe like what precedes an opening night in the theatre. I was getting ready for my trip to the Midwest. And to add to the drive and the tension of the day there was an important State Dinner for the evening.

First, there was a fitting with Lucinda. Luci's urging, Helen's silent disapproval, Mollie Parnis' politely qualified hopes, have finally driven me to raise my dresses another inch or so and that means work for Lucinda. And then from 10:00 to 12:00 there was work with Mrs. Provenson on my speeches for the Midwestern trip in the Queens' Room once more. And Liz joined us midway, and I went through them searching for the right emphasis, underlining with red, changing a phrase here and a thought there while Liz, whose job it is to get it all xeroxed and in the hands of the press well before we leave tomorrow morning at gray dawn, grew more and more nervous that I wouldn't finish them.

Mrs. Provenson who has a broken knee cap had her legs stretched out in front of her, ^{but} with her manner as cheerful as ever. I think she really cares that I do well in this. It has been a great help working with her, and I feel better for everything that I do, if I go into it prepared, my homework done, understanding. If I counted a small list of people that I've come to regard as my friends in these last four years here, I feel that she would be on it. There is no substitute for working together -- with the frustrations and labor and sometimes achievements -- a sense of ^{exhilaration} ~~acceleration~~ shared.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, September 19, 1967

Page 2

At 12:00 I had a session with Ashton on my desk -- loaded -- and I like to keep it clean. And then Lynda and I had lunch on the Truman Balcony -- a golden Autumn day. We talked about her wedding list and her plans to go to Acapulco and when we would get together to finish it.

Then a brief trip out to my friend Dr. Turchin. And back to the White House for a short nap.

For this State Dinner I knew I could not have house guests. With a 7:00 departure in the morning I must get to bed as early as possible. And the reason to have them is to visit with them, to achieve that rosey glow of friendly conversation that is so seldom possible at a State Dinner with 140 people or more. And so as a substitute I had asked three couples that I had particularly wanted to see to come for tea -- the O'Neil Fords of San Antonio -- Architect of ^{Vietnam} ~~LaVista~~ and sometime co-worker with Lyndon from NYA days; And Dr. and Mrs. Hackerman -- Vice Chancellor of the University, who I am told is really the administrator of the Austin campus -- I yearn to know the University better -- for my pleasure and for our future; And the Bill Greens from Albany -- ^{lively?} ~~dotting~~ spirits from the "bandang". She's the one who had first written me a letter ^{about it.} And that casual communication had ended with the "bandang" coming to entertain us for the Latin-American weekend at the Ranch.

The 7 of us sat down in the Lincoln Sitting Room a little after 4:00 for tea and much conversation. I called Bess in and it was a

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, September 19, 1967

Page 3

delicious hour -- O'Neil Ford reporting on the tribulations and possible glories of HemisFair, [^]And the Bill Greens on all the fun of this purely indigenous entertainment at Albany -- a town of only 2,000 people in which 500 of them participate in an annual pageant about early Texas history.)

And then I sent them off with a good guide for a thorough tour of the White House -- especially the rest of the upstairs rooms.

My moment with Dr. Hackerman had reinforced my hope that the University too really wanted the School of Public Service to be one that turned out potential public servants that would "hit the cold water," running for election for Mayor or Representative or maybe someday Senator or Governor -- and not just professors of Government.

It was a real sweet part of the day.

And then a long session with Jean Louis, interrupted by a call from Vivian Hackney which gave the information that the bank had made an arrangement for the contractor for the Post Office to tear down the old store building and use the bricks in the Post Office. I was under the dryer and so Ashton took it. But if it works out what a useful, permanent memory of my daddy in that little community, because as long as there is a U. S. Government, the Post Offices will be maintained and I know something of how expensive and how difficult it is to do something with a building that has some frail claim ^{to} with historic interest.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, September 19, 1967

Page 4

The glorious golden day made me think it would be appropriate to wear my yellow Stavropolous dress with the daisies -- a sort of a goodbye to summer. ~~And~~ Jean Louis gave me an elegant hair-do,

^aAnd only a few minutes past 8:00 we were ~~on~~ the North Portico to meet President Saragat of Italy, immediately trailed by the redoubtable Fanfani who pops up in role after role in the Italian Government.

Upstairs, there was reunion with old friends -- the Chief Justice and Mrs. Warren are back. And greetings to a new Ambassador -- the Ortonas -- he looking like a very arch type of Diplomat -- distinguished and suave. And Mrs. Ortona -- smoothly fitted to her role. The Katzenbachs were standing in for the Rusks. And right under the surface of my mind, a thought of the reason why they were away.

I was rather pleased with our gifts -- an authentic replica of Thomas Jeffersons' lap desk. President Saragat is said to be a student of Thomas Jefferson, ~~The~~ usual pictures and books, ^aAnd cowboy outfits for his grandchildren. And some needlepoint pillows with the designs of Southwestern wild flowers for his daughter who is at home. And then the one that aroused the most interest -- a small sample of uranium fuel from Oak Ridge -- well shielded of course, in a handsome presentation case.

~~And then~~ Behind the color guard we started downstairs -- I with Fanfani at my side, ^{ATKINS} pictures at the bottom of the stairs and then on into

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, September 19, 1967

Page 5

the East Room.

If you ever really want to know who settled this country -- maybe amend it to ~~the~~ who settled it and then went into politics, just have a dinner for the Irish head of State or the Italian head of State!

There were 13 Congressmen of Italian descent, and a few others thrown in because their constituents are also heavily Italian -- the largest Congressional delegation I can ever remember at a dinner. And of course Senator Pastore -- his wife accompanying him for one of the few times she has ever been at the White House. And there was Governor Volpe of Massachusetts and the Phil Hoffs of Vermont -- happy recollections of my New England trip. And I was very glad to see that the Paul Johnsons of Mississippi came. I do not want to read Mississippi out of this Union, and I can certainly understand from the massive expressions of the press and TV they could think that they are ruled out.

And of course from our own White House staff, Joe Califano. And Lyndon had worked in at the last minute his mother and father -- one of the dear sort of things Lyndon does, even if it did mean that Joe himself ate in the Mess along with two other good friends! And of course the dinner would have been incomplete without the Valentis.

It was a rather star-studded guest list -- Clare Boothe Luce, former Ambassador to Italy was there, wearing her Italian decorations.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, September 19, 1967

Page 6

And our old friend Perle Mesta who ^{had been} was married to an Italian.

~~It was a rather star-studded list~~

From the entertainment world -- Rosemary Clooney and
Connie Francis -- the dramatic dark-haired singer who I thought shared
honors with Joan Kennedy as the most beautiful women in the ^{room} world.

Mrs. Kennedy's blond hair was in what the papers called "Gainesborough
curls", and her black lace dress was sheer coquetry.

Besides my Texas guests who had come to tea, there was an
illustrious Texan -- Dr. DeBakey -- always with a cluster around him.
And our old friends, the Charles McGahas. And our sometime friend,
sometime opponent, Allan Shivers. And also from entertainment --
Lynda's young, handsome and delightful friend, Beni Montresor.

There was much talking and embracing and swift chatter of Italian
as the line went past. Justice Michael Musmanno -- ebullient as always.
And others eminent in their varied fields -- Patrick Cardinal O'Boyle,
jockey Eddie Arcaro. And distinguished Walter Hoving of Tiffany's.

There was a barrage of educators this time, and one myself I
had put on the list and was so glad to see -- Dr. and Mrs. John King
of our own Huston-Tillotson in Austin.

I thank ^AErnest Cuneo as he came down the line for his golden
words.)

It was an interesting, mixed, glittering guest list. And I was
proud.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, September 19, 1967

Page 7

We sat at the long table. This is always the best solution when we are full packed, and perhaps a little more impressive for our honored guests.

The President was a pleasant dinner companion, and our conversation was mostly reminiscent of my visit to his country -- the room after room of beautiful art treasures in the palace where he lives. Actually he told me he used it as an office and a place of entertainment and really lived at his own home -- an estate outside Rome whose size I must have misunderstood. I thought he said 24 square miles.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Fanfani, was on my left -- short, voluable, courtly.

It was a pleasant evening but no deep talk. It was President Saragat's birthday. Lyndon made a graceful toast saying that it is a custom of our country to spend this day with your family and good friends and that President Saragat had present his son and his son-in-law Dr. Santacatterina. And that all of us here were his friends. He even brought in a birthday cake and put it down in front of him. But~~ter~~ thankfully we didn't all join in singing "Happy Birthday".

And then we were out in the parlors for coffee and liqueurs. And as quickly as possible into the East Room for the entertainment.

All evening I had been conscious that it must be an early night because I would be up the next morning at 6:30.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, September 19, 1967

Page 8

It was just about my favorite entertainment that we've had here in the White House! Richard Kiley singing excerpts from "Man of La Mancha". And with him ^aSancho Panza whom I didn't know -- Harvey Lindick. He'd started practicing just the day before with Bess and the military band in the East Room. And the music was written in a different register or key from his voice, and it was one of the many White House crisi^s in entertainment that was ironed out by patience and good humor and hard work.

I sat entranced as Richard Kiley sang about "Dream the Impossible Dream, beat the unbeatable foe, go where the brave dare not go....." And I think the audience enjoyed it as much as I.

I led President Saragat up on the stage when it was over to thank Richard Kiley and Harvey Lindick. And Lyndon motioned to the Humphreys to join us -- he always does. He is an extraordinary, thoughtful man in so many ways.

Sancho Panza had been delightful. And even better, he seemed to be enjoying it. Bess told me later that he liked Lyndon, followed his career, admired him as much as I admired their play. And that warmth, even effusiveness, was in his greeting. I wanted to say it all because I knew I wouldn't get to linger with them afterwards.

And then rather quickly, we were out in the hall.

Lynda and Chuck had come in for the entertainment, and many eyes turned to them. Lynda had been upstairs with us earlier where

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, September 19, 1967

Page 9

President Saragat had given her the most beautiful small alligator bag. And in fact it was Chuck who had escorted out the honor guard with Lyndon whispering to President Saragat that that was his future son-in-law.

The President and his party made an early departure a little before 11:30. The band was prepared for dancing, but we did not lead off to encourage it. Lyndon needs early nightsnow. Work is closing in around him so heavy, and clouds of troubles. And with tomorrow mornings' alarm clock in my mind, I had a snatch of conversation with Clare Luce and the Dante Fascells whose wedding anniversary it was. And with Perle Mesta. And thanked Ernest Cuneo^{again} for his ^{beautiful} golden words. And then I was upstairs before 12:00 -- one of my earliest departures from a State Dinner, and I regretted it because there were so many people there that I would have loved to talk to. But I left on the wave of satisfaction that it had been a good dinner.