

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, October 10, 1967

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It began at a very civilized hour with a breakfast tray being brought into me. President Brewster had already left for Paris -- on a 5:00 plane in fact.

I dressed leisurely and said goodbye to Mrs. Brewster, and we drove for over an hour through the lovely New England countryside past roadside stands where big gold pumpkins were piled up in front of cornstalks and mounds of red apples to say autumn is here.

In front of many doorways there would be a pumpkin or ears of corn tied to the knocker. I love the customs that speak of different parts of the country. I never see this down home. But it was a foggy morning, and the plane couldn't meet us at the first airport. We drove to the Westchester County Airport, and there was Mr. Linen's plane, alas, without the pleasure of his company. And earnestly assured that everything was safe we left in a pea-soup fog that did not lift until we were close to the ground at Washington. And Liz was clutching the arm of the closest Secret Service man in very real fear. Mostly, I've gotten over this.

It was 12:20 when I arrived at the White House -- had a brief session with Ashton and Bess, read the guest list, had a comb-out, and by 1:00 went into the Yellow Room for our luncheon in honor of General Ankrah -- the President of Ghana -- and Mrs. Ankrah.

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The General and Lyndon had been in his office working and walked over together. And Mrs. Ankrah came with Ambassador and Mrs. Debrah. Dean and Virginia Rusk were there. And Trudye and Joe Fowler. Our Ambassador Franklin Williams. The Chet Carters. And Mr. J. E. O. Nunoo, the Chief of Police of Ghana.

General Ankrah was a very black man with a wide smile, heavy glasses, in assured and jovial manner, wearing the Ghanaian national costume which looks like a blanket draped over the left shoulder rather like a toga. And it's worn over what appears to be a white shirt.

Mrs. Ankrah's costume was quite similar -- a sort of blouse or shawl with a bright geometric designs in it.

Our gifts were the desk set, the engraved clocks for each, the space photo, the President's photo. The only unusual item -- a gardening kit for Mrs. Ankrah -- one I would have liked to have myself. And then the General asked in his perfect English if we would step over to see their small remembrances. At this point he began to dress Lyndon in the ceremonial costume of Ghana which they had brought him -- at least that is the toga part, draping it around his shoulders while I stood by in amazement. General Ankrah's smile was so big that there was nothing to do for Lyndon but to smile in return.

And then my turn came. Mrs. Ankrah had brought me some of the gold jewelry -- mined and fashioned in their country -- a quite nice

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design. She fastened the necklace around my neck, and just then the colors arrived, and we lined up to descend the stairs.

From the Senate there were the Carl Curtises. And if I ever felt resentment at the cuts he takes at Lyndon it melted at the sight of the raw pain in Mrs. Curtis' face when she said to me, "Lady Bird, you know I lost my daughter." And there was Pete Williams without his wife. I don't believe I've ever met her. And the attractive Fred Harrises of Oklahoma. And Senator and Mrs. Robert Griffin of Michigan.

Only one Governor -- Shafer of Pennsylvania.

And thanks to Barefoot's diligence, a sizeable contingent of House members.

There were old friends -- the Bill Baxters and Dr. Otenasek, National Committeewoman from Maryland, fondly remembered from campaign days.

And very old friends, the Cliff Durrs of Montgomery, Alabama. I had put them on hurriedly when I had heard they were in Washington for a visit. And Walter and Bennetta Washington. It gives me satisfaction to address him as Mr. Mayor.

And a very sizeable contingent from the world of entertainment. These people who earn their living at night find it difficult to cancel a concert or step out of their role on the stage and are always more eager to come to a luncheon. Pearl Bailey, who is opening in "Hello Dolley",

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and Cab Calloway who plays with her, were there. And a young actress, Jill Haworth. The jazz pianist, Earl Hines. And Robert Joffrey who has done ballet here at the White House for us. And Kathleen Dabney. And it is here that I get a great big D- as a hostess. I had put her on the list. She's the daughter of J. Ed Johnson of Brownwood -- our old friend -- who had written me proudly that his daughter was acting on Broadway, and he hoped sometime she could come to the White House. I had so quickly reviewed the guest list that the name Kathleen Dabney didn't register with me, and she walked down the line unknown to me as J. Ed's daughter. Later I was crushed. I would have seated her at Lyndon's table. And that would have been a thrill for her I think.

Next to the General, I had Trudye Fowler, always a good guest. And then the Secretary of State himself. And by him, Mrs. Wilhelmina Harris, the Curator of the Adams house in Quincy, Massachusetts, who had given me such a wonderful tour through in June. And it gave me the greatest pleasure to see her so obviously delighted at being here. And I had one of my Texans, Mr. E. C. Sullivan of San Antonio. And next, Mrs. Tupin whose husband is a doctor of psychiatry at the University's Medical School. And then Jerry Vale, a very pleasant young singer. Too bad I don't have my daughter Lynda's knowledge here with entertainers. And then LaDonna Harris, and Mr. Nunoo, the Chief of Police.

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General Ankrah was an open, straightforward, pleasant dinner companion -- excellent English. In describing the state of affairs in his country just before he took over, he said there were a thousand technicians in the country -- Russians -- and about 800 Chinese. They were really running the country. He was the Chief of Staff, but his every decision was checked by the Russians until finally he confronted Nakruma and said, "That man is not going to set his foot in my office again."

I asked Mr. Nunoo what did the British leave behind from their years of rule. And he said a good civil service which has been a basis to build on in running our country.

For dessert we had glacé Accra -- named after their Capital. And then a little before 3:00 the toasts were over and the guests were leaving.

I had asked Mrs. Harris if she wouldn't like to have a special tour with our Curator. She was thrilled. And I asked the two Texans at our table -- Mr. Sullivan and Mrs. Tupin. I had arranged with the Stjepceoviches, another Texas couple, to come back and bring their child for a tour in the middle of the afternoon.

So I called a guide and saw everyone off on a tour, and then went upstairs for an hour's desk work. And then down to the Library to meet 15 officers of the Future Homemakers of America. It was a delightful hour. I had only meant to spend about 30 minutes. But these

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youngsters were so fresh-faced and innocent and enthusiastic, I just felt like hugging them. Their delight in being at the White House was simple and unabashed. With all that you read today about the long-haired, sandal-shod, marijuana-smoking youth, it was totally refreshing to meet them.

So I stayed about an hour as they rotated around the room -- a group of three or four for five or ten minutes, and then another group coming, while we had tea and sandwiches and cookies. This is one of those days when you eat your way through it. Diana came. Future Homemakers is one of the service organizations that has joined in her "Youth for Conservation" movement.

And then at 5:00 I went upstairs to the Lincoln Sitting Room to see Virginia and Cliff and her daughter Tilla, Mrs. Parker, and her friend Miss Elmore whom I had dispatched on the tour of the house. And also her friend Mrs. Livingston from Archives.

Virginia is going to do a tape for the Johnson Library on our early years in Washington as she saw it from her vantage point. It will be a rare and fresh and lively one. I had asked Liz to join us. And the next hour was full of "Do you remember?" And "That was the time when" and a scattering of names of old friends -- Tom Corcoran and Ben Cohen and Abe and Carol. And Texan Wickie Goldschmidt. And Virginia's house guest for about a year, Decker Romley. And

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of course Hugo Black.

The years have not stilled Virginia's lively tongue, nor her warmth and joy in living. And great credit to her character -- there was no touch of bitterness at Alabama or at the South, though she must have undergone ostracism and even a sort of economic ostracism for her third of a century fight for Negroes rights and integration and repealing of the poll tax.

There was one hilarious story where she said, "Well, I see where Reverend so and so insulted you at Yale just like he did me." Alas, the Reverend's insult -- whatever it was -- had really rolled off me like water off a duck's back because I didn't remember it, although I do remember Liz saying something about him putting in a commercial in the prayer. I think he discussed our stand in Viet-Nam adversely in addressing the Lord. Anyhow during one of the marches in Montgomery Virginia had noticed in the paper that a good friend of hers from the East was coming down to participate in the march. There were about 14 Negroes from the East and there was the Reverend so and so. So Virginia called up her good friend and asked him out to her house for a drink. He mentioned that the Reverend so and so was along with him, and she said she would be delighted to have him come along too. She received a withering reply from the Reverend to the effect that he could not come to her home for a segregated party. Such a nut. I wonder if he would

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stand a third of a century really fighting for the Negroes with his family and life-time friends in a community like Montgomery. And then she told a very sweet story about Mrs. Johnson -- Lyndon's mother.

Mrs. Johnson was visiting us, and she had invited her to come for lunch. She thought she was such a pretty woman, a very patrician face, so well read and cultured. And then she happened to glance down at her hands which were rough and red. I remember that. Mrs. Johnson had done a lifetime of hard work. Virginia's countenance must have showed what was in her mind. So Mrs. Johnson told her a tale about when Lyndon was a very little boy and used to see her washing dishes for their big family or with her arms up to the elbows in the week's wash -- "Don't you worry, Momma. When I grow up, I am going to take good care of you. You can just sit on the front porch and fold your pretty hands in your lap."

Cliff got in a word every now and then. He looked boweled but unbroken by his years of living back in Montgomery. It was truly delightful to see them both again. He was off to lecture in London. I bid them an affectionate farewell, and then keeping Liz with me, joined Beryl and Jake Pickle and Les, and Liz's cousin, Ann Robertson, whom I had met at Salado and Mollie Schulman in the West Hall. We had drinks. And then down in the theatre we saw the movie of my July 6th

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trip through the old 10th District with Jake to Lockhart and Round Top. It was such fun -- we saw it over and over -- about three times. Then I took them all bowling. We had about three good games. Anne turned out to be a star. I was particularly glad to have her because it is one little thing I could do for Liz. I remember so well how it is to have a house guest, someone you love, and hope your friends will join in helping her have a good time.

Upstairs I had a rub and watched TV -- the height of self-indulgence. And then Lyndon came at 10:15 with Marie and the three of us sat down to dinner and to bed before midnight.